

Discussion on “Lingering Charm” of Sculpture*

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Abstract—Since ancient times, sculpture has the dual function of practicability and aesthetics. “Lingering charm” is where aesthetic value of sculpture artwork lies, being one part of the major content of inherent tension generated through interaction between sculpture artwork and artistic society. The concept of lingering charm is “where Marx’s ‘everlasting charm’ of art lies”, and it is also “the inheritance from traditional excellent initiative of appreciator and ‘implicit’ beauty valued by Chinese aesthetic consistently.

Keywords—lingering charm; artistic function; artistic generalization; artistic abstraction

I. INTRODUCTION

Introduction: Seen from the development of Marxist aesthetics, Wang Zhaowen’s sculpture aesthetic ideology takes lingering charm as its core concept on the basis of inheritance from China’s Marxist aesthetics ideology in the 1940s, starting off from empirical conclusion of sculpture artistic creation and artistic appreciation from bottom to top. The concept of lingering charm is based on Wang Zhaowen’s judgment that sculpture as modeling art absents itself from the peak or gets close to the climax, including contents concerning pure form, rich content, basic form, stylization and allowance for unforeseen circumstances.¹

Since Wang Zhaowen puts forward the theory of lingering charm in the 1940s, he regards it as one basic feature shared by all art rather than the professional theory of sculpture art. “He puts forward a clear viewpoint in *Art Notes*, namely at all times and in all over the world, all successful artworks share one basic feature: ‘lingering charm’, or, in other words withstanding repeated appreciation. It seems ordinary, but contains the reflection of life in art as an important feature of art distinguished from life. Many facts show that all successful artwork at all times and in all over the world shares the basic feature of ‘lingering charm’, where the ‘everlasting charm’ of art described by Marx lies”². Considering development process of Wang Zhaowen’s thought, development of lingering charm leads from the period of basic artistic feature to the stage of special aesthetic feature of sculpture art. With deepening of his understanding of aesthetic features of sculpture art, slight changes occur in his understanding of the theory of lingering charm.

II. APPEARANCE OF “LINGERING CHARM”

Lingering charm is an original viewpoint put forward by Wang Zhaowen in research on sculpture aesthetics and aesthetic theory, being the core of sculpture aesthetic theory. In *Twenty-Four Poetic Qualities*, Sikong Tu lists “implicit” as a style of poetry, namely “It is unnecessary to express implicit artistic conception in words directly; implicitness rather than explicitness can fully show the abundant implication. When people get extremely sad, although they adopt no direct expression of inner feelings, their emotion can be hinted through side contrast. It seems that there is a creator controlling the heaven and the earth and poets, although the creator is invisible, poets rise and fall together with the creator. Latest brewed liquor contains implicit pure sweetness and spring flowers in initial blossom contain implicit beauty. Through small dust, we see the broad world. Through tiny spindrift, the deep ocean can be measured. Therefore, no matter how wide or deep the universe and the ocean are, we can show their wideness and great depth through tiny points. This kind of classification contains understanding of implicit feature in historic poetry, “distinguishing different types of artistic conception of poetry” and “discussing aesthetic essence shared by artistic conception of poetry”. Namely, “‘artistic conception’ represents the ‘state’ combining virtuality and reality, vivid natural view and Dao(Qi) as the noumenon and life of universe rather than isolated images”³.

“Whether an image has lingering charm depends on its content. In order to achieve lingering charm, we need to see life with sculptors’ eyes, namely, we need to conduct research on material carefully in combination with features of sculpture, and try to understand beauty in the hero we intend to create. For the sake of a novel theme, we need to explore a corresponding form which can’t be replaced easily, thus creating the unique feature of a sculpture image”⁴. Seen from this perspective, the standard to judge whether artwork has lingering charm lies in its artistry. However, the standard is not totally suitable for artists doing art for the sake of art. Wang Zhaowen is always emphasizing that there is no existence of pure art created for the sake of art, and all art can’t do without its social function. It can be said that, compared with artwork’s artistry, function theory of art is the final standard determining whether art has lingering charm. Or, we can express it in a more accurate way: The fundamental principle to judge whether artwork contains lingering charm is to realize social function of art through its artistry. In other words, no matter how greatly we emphasize artistry and aesthetic relation of art, it’s just a tool with limited existence, the key point lying in its

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social function. The so-called lingering charm refers to that, the masses as appreciators can understand artwork easily without the viewpoint that artwork with lingering charm is difficult to understand, because "If easy to understand and lingering charm are set in opposition, artwork winning people's love for a long time can't be created, making it difficult to learn innovative lessons from these artwork of old times"⁵. Thus, understanding is the basis of artistic appreciation. However, at the same time of making artwork easy to understand, taking in everything in a glance is not suitable for artwork, because "Images conforming to taking in everything in a glance has no lingering charm and images with lingering charm are abundant in content"⁶, which is consistent with "limited words with unlimited connotation" in discussion on the relation of language-sense in traditional Chinese literary theory and "The more hidings, the broader the artistic conception gets; the more reveal, the narrower the artistic conception gets. It requires that artwork with lingering charm should make it easy for appreciators to understand and contain abundant contents withstanding repeated deliberation. Only this kind of artwork can realize social function of art.

"Lingering charm" is not only an aesthetic feature of sculpture art, but also a requirement for social function of art, becoming a common feature of successful artwork at all times and in all over the world, which is one reason why it is hard to connect sculpture with other art. What's more, "lingering charm" contains aesthetic value of sculpture artwork, contributing greatly to inherent tension created between social function of art and it. "I only intend to make some discussions on the connection and difference between sculpture and other art in aesthetic features and aesthetic value, content and form of sculpture, relation between time and space, relation between emerging place of sculpture and audience's spirit, and the relation between sculpture's style and sculptor's humanity around the question why sculpture has(no) lingering charm."⁷ Thus, lingering charm is the charm of sculpture art in Wang Zhaowen's understanding and his theoretical construction of sculpture aesthetics mainly unfolds around lingering charm as a feature of sculpture art. Seen from current data, the concept of lingering charm is an original creation of Wang Zhaowen in his sculpture creation and theoretical research. Although specific content of the concept is related to artistic theory at home and abroad, the concept itself is straightaway, totally conforming to his attitude to and requirement for theoretical research and writing style of articles. In addition, Wang Zhaowen regards this concept as a basic feature of all successful art. The concept contains "'everlasting charm' of art described by Marx", and it is also "an inheritance from the excellent tradition that China's aesthetics upholds the consistent value in appreciators' initiative and 'implicit' beauty of art, being an extremely important aspect of his dedication to chinization of Marxist aesthetics"⁸. Seen from development process of Wang Zhaowen's aesthetic ideology, his Marxist aesthetic ideology directly originates from Mao Zedong's Marxist literary thought, namely the series of work with *The Speech on Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art* as the representative. However, Wang Zhaowen's from-bottom-to-top thinking mode determines it is inevitable that he absorbs and constructs his own Marxist aesthetic ideology based on his own aesthetic experience. The key is connection with feelings

and experiences coming down in one continuous line with traditional Chinese literary theory and folk art experience he emphasizes in his own chinization of Marxist.

III. PURENESS OF SCULPTURE ART

Specifically, "lingering charm" is as follows: When sculpture creators are doing art, on the basis of comprehensive reflection of life, expression of thoughts and feelings, and consideration of appreciators' aesthetic requirement and ability, life and experience experience artistic abstraction with abandonment of unnecessary details, creating artistic images(forms) which can reflect creation intention, attract appreciators and contribute to imaginery⁹ formed by appreciators with characteristics of concretization. Artwork with lingering charm needs to provide proper imaginary space for appreciators in appreciation activities, making it easy for them to approach and accept artwork and making artwork able to withstand appreciators' repeated appreciation and afford for thought without going so far as to take in everything in a glance. Lingering charm is not only an aesthetic feature of sculpture art, but also the key whether sculpture art can realize its social function. Seeing from this perspective, how to understand lingering charm affects understanding of aesthetic characteristics and social function of sculpture art. Some scholars think, "If there is no great or evident effect, a thing will die gradually"¹⁰, clearly stating that the function of sculpture lies in development of what is in need, latent efficiency and embodiment of function. As an objective "subject" of modern urban space art, sculpture art definitely has its own unique value and spiritual tropism. Specifically speaking, first sculpture is the product of creation of people's existence and social development and communication. Therefore, to some extent, sculpture can meet the requirement of creation and communication, playing the landmark role of commemoration, beautification and reveal of subject features¹¹. In other words, sculpture art can not only decorate living environment and residential space and show regional features, historic culture and national customs, but also manifest spirit of the times, record culture and history and provide the spiritual harbor of poetic dwelling for souls on the go, having the function of "physical and mental care".

Artistic beauty of sculpture and non-sculpture is discussed in *Art Theory of Rodin*, claiming that the uniqueness of sculpture art lies in showing and forecasting the existence of time through existence of space. In other words, unlike art in drama and novel with re-production of the story based on the time process of beginning, development and ending¹², it is difficult for sculpture art to show the existence of time directly. As a kind of artistic form with great materiality, sculpture art shows people features of images, expresses a certain kind of emotion, reflects certain regional, folk, national and social aesthetic interest and uses its artistic characteristics to create landscape art space for national construction and development through its own character, modeling, color and texture. Therefore, generally art is classified as spacial art and its advantage lies in the existence of materiality beyond the limitation of time. It means that although sculpture works experiences hundreds of years, they may still be aesthetic objects of the new times. In addition, sculpture art is not a

plane or three-dimensional physical presence, containing and forecasting the existence of time in fixed space. Sculpture art chooses the moment before climax as its spacial existence, the moment including everything of the past and forecasting things to happen. Thus, on the basis of controlling the moment, appreciators enrich and imagine the climax to come. It is precisely because of this that the form of sculpture art can't become the coverall existence of time. We can only select the most breeding existence and integrate time into space, endowing the form of sculpture art with the feature of pureness.

A. Pure Form of Sculpture Art Comes from Selection of Content

This kind of selection firstly refers to selection of rich life content, secondly refers to selection of the selected artistic content.

1) Selection of life content

"In terms of a thing's beginning, development and ending, the part and fragment reflected by art can't be the overall situation, entirety and ending. In terms of the unlimited development of things, various images with abundant contents fail to reach the top."¹³ Therefore, things reflected by art can only be the moment before climax, the most breeding time, rather than a complete entirety. The reason is exactly the special aesthetic characteristics of sculpture art. "It is improper for modeling art to record the whole process of a thing because modeling art can only reflect a part or a fragment. Thus it is necessary to choose a summarizing moment."¹⁴ In Lessing's opinion, this kind of selection of the moment before climax based on artistic characteristics of sculpture comes into being due to the limitation of sculpture art's imitation medium. "Because of limitation of material, artistic imitation is limited to one moment."¹⁵ The reason why the moment is chosen not only lies in limitation of artistic characteristics of sculpture, but also lies in "Whether a moment or a perspective is chosen depends on whether it can have the maximal effect, which belongs to the moment allowing free imagination."¹⁶ In Lessing's opinion, the so-called effect mainly refers to artistic effect. "Good selection of the moment can make the audience think of rather than see the peak and should be clear of which kind of phenomena making people forgetting its contemporary existence. Once the art is fixed with durability, people will feel unhappy. The two points should be combined."¹⁷ The above Lessing's words point out the moment before climax is chosen by sculpture art because the moment appears through the audience's imagination rather than direct appearance into the audience's eyes.

In terms of selection of life content, it is exactly due to the fact that sculpture art needs to select the moment before climax rather than the whole development process of things that sculpture art's selection of life is definitely a limited part or fragment and other parts are abandoned at the same time of selecting the moment. If the peak of climax is chosen rather than the moment before climax, the imagination space for the audience will disappear, making it difficult for the audience to imagine possible development of things in the moment of climax shown in sculpture works. Because, in terms of development of things, upon reaching the peak, the descending

trend comes, making it difficult to form the most outstanding conflict, thus reducing the charm of sculpture art. It is exactly due to such creation purpose and standard to select life content that it is difficult for sculpture art to show the complete picture of an era in a painting. Instead, the moment before the climax is chosen as the artistic content. In addition, seen from the perspective of constant development and changes of social life, artwork with contemporaneity can reflect life content of the current or the previous era at most rather than social life content of the future era. Although it forecasts and imagines future social content boldly, changes in development of social life can't be replaced. After all, social development on the basis of practice can't come out of artistic imagination or fiction. Although art shows the current or previous era, due to difference and limitation in artists' knowledge and interest, it is difficult for art to reach every aspect of a matter when choosing social life as its artistic content. These factors determine that sculpture art can only reflect the partial and limited social life in the moment before climax, determining pureness of artistic form of sculpture.

B. Selection of Artistic Contents

If sculpture art selects the moment before climax of a thing in social life as its content, an important question appears: whether everything in the moment should be regarded as artistic content. In other words, complexity and contradictoriness of things determines that the moment before climax is complicated and contradictory, generating the above question. How to solve the problem shows the level of craftsmanship, being the key of whether artistic charm is much and whether social function of art can be realized. Seen from this perspective, compared with developmental process of things, the moment before climax is a detail. If regarding it as a whole, it has many details. Details are important parts of sculpture art. "Considering perfectness of art, expressive details are indispensable in the whole image of sculpture". As to artists, "Judgment on details, whether there is mental discernment in selection and whether there is much in little effect in images are a strict and interesting test of sculpturer's artistic thought"¹⁸. Therefore, it is inevitable for the theme to be influenced by artists' creation intention and understanding of their responsibility. To some extent, we can say that the responsibility of artists understood by them determines their creation intention and their attitude on some objective things. On the whole, art inevitably vividly and deeply reflects the theme with details pointing to the theme. It means the standard of selection of details lies in whether it is consistent with the theme of artwork and whether it serves social function of art.

Details in sculpture art are for the sake of highlighting the theme of sculpture art. In order to achieve pureness in artistic form of sculpture, details irrelevant to the theme are abandoned. Pureness and simplicity of artistic form are distinguished clearly, the basic principle of which lies in whether it is relevant to the artistic theme with lingering charm details. Whether the selected details can "mobilize and stipulate the audience's interest, freedom and tendency of creating details in images" depends on "Some moving details touch me and arouse a pleasant sensation, feeling that the whole pleasant sensation consists of some details"¹⁹.

On the basis of selection from rich life content and selected artistic content, pureness of artistic form of sculpture has a firm base. However, the two selections don't mean that pureness of artistic form definitely will be realized. Reasons are as follows: First, details are complicated and changeable; second, art and social life are closely related and different. Although art comes from social life, social life doesn't equal to art. Therefore, the selected details from life (including the moment before climax) are not equal to art directly. Abstraction and summarization need to be done to turn details from life into artistic details; otherwise pan-artisticization will appear, thus decomposing the essence of art.

C. Pure Form of Sculpture Art Comes from Abstraction and Generalization of Life

Generally speaking, generalization refers to summarization of things' common features and abstraction refers to giving up individual and non-essential nature and selecting the common and essential nature among many things²⁰. The common points summarized may be the essence of things or just on the surface while abstraction refers to the essence of things. Artistic generalization is classification of and analysis on similarity of life material with common points forming or further improving artistic theme. Artistic abstraction can be understood as selection and abandonment of life material and summarized common points around the theme, creating concrete and pure artistic images. If generalization is regarded as physical change of life material, abstraction is chemical change of these materials. As to the latter, Wang Zhaowen has wonderful discussion. He thinks, "Abstraction of artistic thought usually refers to unharmed changes of specific features in objective form and structure for the sake of symbolism in images and endowing the modeling with richer content"²¹. The "unharmed changes of specific features in objective form and structure" describes three kinds of changing forms of abstraction: selection of image, adding of image and abandonment of image. Although there is no specific explanation of them, combining his analysis, we can find that the three kinds emphasize on selection, adding and abandonment respectively without complete opposition or irrelevance and they will form the artistic image of "endowing the limited artistic form with relatively unlimited content"²².

1) Generalization and abstraction of artistic contents

Seen from characteristics of sculpture art, the contribution of generalization and abstraction to pureness of sculpture art lies in generalization and abstraction of the moment before climax. Specially speaking, it includes the following content: First, it is generalization of the moment before climax. Although "the opportunity that new situation indicating abrupt changes appears wins great care from people, affording for thought"²³, it doesn't mean that sculpture art is only generalization of the fragment. Without the complete process of existence of the moment, there would be no basis for existence of its representativeness and value, becoming unintelligible fragments. Just as *Kneeling Portrait* of Wang Jingwei and Chen Bijun, without Wang Jingwei's doings, and people's hatred towards his traitorous action, hope in winning the war and aspiration for good life, the work wouldn't have aroused such great social response, even making it difficult for

people to understand why they are kneeling, let alone understanding the effect of lingering charm. Thereout, generalization of the moment before climax can't do without a whole understanding of existence of the moment. In other words, only by placing the moment in the whole, can its meaning be better understood and can its role be better played. Here dialectical relationship between part and whole is shown. Speaking of this, we may as well provide a more accurate understanding of generalization of the moment before climax, namely, upon a full understanding of the moment and the whole it belongs to, we try to analyze and discover some common and regular things of the moment that can represent the whole. The unique creation of abstraction of the moment before climax is the reason why sculpture art owns lingering charm, directly forming the feature of pureness in artistic form of sculpture, because this kind of artistic abstraction "selectively deals with specific details related to completeness of the whole rather than aiming to re-produce every detail. Try to grasp vivid details and abandon biogenic details weakening expression of object. Abstraction impulse has no apriority, but abstracting power cultivated in exercises contributes to my later creation"²⁴. Therefore, selection of rich life content and selected artistic content should be done around the artistic theme and closely related to artistic abstraction. It is difficult to separate the two completely. Since the ability of artistic abstraction can be acquired, it is reasonable and available to obtain the ability through artistic cultivation and training. The result would be acquisition and improvement of artistic abstraction ability, namely enhancement of aesthetic ability.

2) Universality of generalization and abstraction

The generalization and abstraction ability of sculpture art has certain universality at the same time. Some folk entertainment activities and artistic activities also have such characteristics, changing its relation with people on the basis of changing archetype of art. "The abstraction process of conception always boasts non-separation with specific presentation as the basic feature"²⁵. In other words, apart from the feature of general abstraction grasping the essence of things, artistic abstraction links the essence with specific artistic images, forming the pure artistic form reflecting essence of things. This kind of pure artistic form reflects aesthetic personality of art creators. Just as he analyzes, "The difference between 'abstract' of artistic thought and that of logical thought not only lies in the former's non-exclusion of concretization feature, but also lies in that it shows the certain aesthetic personality of subject"²⁶. It is exactly due to artistic abstraction having this kind of concretization and aesthetic personality that it is different from logical abstraction in essence. But it doesn't mean that artistic abstraction just has these two characteristics. It is also closely related to people's emotion, because aesthetic personality of the subject of art creation contains certain emotional factors. As the emotion of attitude experience inclined to the desire of social need, it inevitably reflects artists' tendency in basic standpoint and attitude.

Art creators can't take people's aesthetic need as the sole standard and they should aim to satisfy people's aesthetic need and improve their aesthetic ability on the basis of distinguishing elegance and vulgarness, creating artwork of

high aesthetic level to play the aesthetic education function of art, thus realizing social function of art finally. On the contrary, if art aims to meet the vulgar and even physical needs, it will lose the charm art should have, failing to achieve the goal of social function.

IV. RICHNESS OF SCULPTURE ART

Rich content of sculpture art can be analyzed from the following three aspects: First, as the origin, richness of life determines richness of content. In terms of time, the richness falls into two types: diachronic and synchronic; second, since artistic creation of sculpture needs to meet the aesthetic need of people, difference in people's life experience and aesthetic experience leads to difference in aesthetic needs which bring about different sculpture art trying to provide satisfaction for it, thus sculpture art must have rich contents²⁷; third, the development of sculpture art itself contains domestic and foreign communication and integration with interactions between different art, bringing richness to development, changes and creation methods of sculpture art.

A. *Richness in Content of Sculpture Art Comes from Vastness of Life*

Based on confirming that life is the origin of art, we find that origin of richness has two meanings. First, diachronically, development of and changes in things bring about development and changes of life, like the so-called "Things change with changes of the world and preparations should be made for changes in things" (*Han Feizi·Wudu*). Since life is changeable, art based on life naturally shows diachronic development and changes with richness. Second, synchronically, many things rather than one certain thing are experiencing changes and development in the synchronic state with various kinds of relations between things, thus endowing art based on life in synchronic existence with synchronic richness.

1) *Richness in diachronism*

For sculpture art with the characteristic of lingering charm, richness in diachronism is also reflected in its complicated relation with the selected moment before climax. Generally, the so-called moment before climax refers to the special period of things' development. The reason why sculpture selects the most breeding moment is its artistic characteristic. It usually uses space to show time, unlike literature or films and television programs showing a full picture. This kind of selection seems to limit the content of sculpture art greatly, making it "monotonous". Although the special moment is relatively fixed in time, it contains rich diachronic contents (including previous development of things and indicating the incoming development of things), producing rich artistic effects. What's more, synchronicity exists in diachronism, indicating that when one thing is experiencing changes and development, so are other things. Changes and development of different things don't mean that their changes and development are synchronous. In fact, changes and development of different things are interlaced, including synchronous and out-of-step situations. The complicated richness determines complicated

richness of life, thus endowing richness in sculpture art with deeper connotations.

However, facing this kind of diachronic changes and development, it is not always the situation that sculpture art loses the principle it sticks to with changes and development. Namely, it can maintain the essence of sculpture in changes and development, which is of prime importance to diachronic richness. Otherwise, sculpture art would gradually decompose or lose the aesthetic feature of lingering charm in changes and development. From the perspective of a basic principle learned and persisted in of Marxist contradictions theory, the most breeding moment refers to grasping the major aspect of major contradiction in historic choice. The key to selection and understanding of the special moment is one basic principle of selection of sculpture art. Selecting the most breeding moment means grasping the major aspect of major contradiction or the essence of things. Then artistic abstraction is done and shown through basic form and stylization of sculpture, which becomes the essence of sculpture, being the reason why sculpture art can maintain its aesthetic feature of lingering charm before richness.

B. *Richness in Synchronicity*

From the perspective of richness in synchronicity, apart from existence of synchronicity in diachronism, synchronicity boasts rich contents like nationality and regionalism. Sculpture art can reflect global property of the Chinese nation and unique property of 56 sub-ethnicities. Seen from this perspective, Buddhism sculpture of the Northern and Southern Dynasties and Tang Dynasty in Chinese history reflects not only religious and secular features, but also characteristics of different sub-ethnicities. Among traditional Chinese music, Guqin of ethnic Han, horse head string instrument of ethnic Mongol and tambura of Kazak nationality represent national characters of different sub-ethnicities.

Regionalism is closely related to nationality, because a nationality formed in history usually has a relatively fixed movement area without abandonment of regionalism in division of nationality. The more complicated situation is that nationality and regionalism are not completely equal. The same nationality can scatter in different regions while different nationalities can co-exist in one area. The two situations are usually interlaced. Upon understanding the complexity, it is not difficult to understand "Jiangdong's rhyme and pronunciation are provoking with elegant and beautiful style. Heshuo's songs are straight and strong, emphasizing inner temperament. Then the implied meaning of lyric covers the original meaning of words. Due to the elegant style, description of words exceeds the original meaning of words. Therefore, songs emphasizing inner temperament should be applied to current events while songs with elegant style are proper for praising. This is the comparison and contrast between songs of the north and the south. If they can learn from each other with abandonment of shortcomings, elegant and plain songs would appear. What a good thing." in the *Book of Sui • Literature Biography*. This kind of division of artistic style affects following development of art, like school of painting of north and south in later period. "If orange trees in Huainan are transplanted to the north of Huaihe River, they

would become *Poncirus trifoliata*" fully demonstrates the feature of regionism, which is shown as artistic styles of different regions specifically. If epochal character is abandoned, this kind of regional style is outstanding in Chinese sculpture history. Just as Wang Zhaowen analyzes, "The bodhisatva of Anyue is more suitable for my requirement of unification of deity and humanity. Mundane arhats in Bamboo Temple of Kunming are far behind the arhats with solemnity in Yeongam Temple, Linqing, Shandong"²⁸.

According to the artistic theme, sculpture art experiences selection of rich life for the most breeding moment, thus forming richness shown in pure artistic form, through which appreciators can enrich and perfect artistic contents with the aid of psychological activities, like imagination, moving from limited to unlimited and from part to the whole. In the whole process, appreciators' life experience and aesthetic experience also matter. Namely, with the aid of appreciators' rich life experience and aesthetic experience, rich artistic content contained in pure artistic form of sculpture art brings about artistic images or connotations understood and grasped by appreciators, thus richness in sculpture art is expanded from richness in life as the origin and in creators' life experience and aesthetic experience into richness in appreciators' life experience and aesthetic experience. Richness in creators' life experience and aesthetic experience contains understanding of richness in appreciators' life experience and aesthetic experience and judgment on their aesthetic needs, endowing richness of sculpture art with deeper contents.

C. Richness in Artistic Content of Sculpture Comes from Richness in Aesthetic Needs

When seeing creation of sculpture art from the perspective of social function of art, we would discover that it needs to meet people's aesthetic needs. Due to considerable difference in people's aesthetic needs and aesthetic ability, shown as needs of different levels and types, richness in aesthetic need is formed, directly determining difference in levels and types of sculpture art and forming richness in content. For sculpture art, in order to achieve this kind of social function, it not only needs to meet different aesthetic needs of people, but also needs to highlight aesthetic features of sculpture art. Namely, use sculpture art to meet the different aesthetic needs rather than using other artistic or non-artistic means. Upon meeting aesthetic needs of people, new aesthetic needs are created for people, boosting the development of sculpture art.

Seen from the perspective that sculpture art meeting the different aesthetic needs of people, we need to clarify the content of different aesthetic needs in the first place. Due to difference in ideological understanding, education degree, characteristics of sub-ethnicities, religious belief, personal social experience and ability to understand art, the people's aesthetic needs in sculpture art boast difference and richness. Seen from the diachronic development perspective, aesthetic needs of people in different times are changing with considerable differences. Otherwise, it is impossible to understand differences in style of Buddhism sculpture of the Northern and Southern Dynasties and Wu Zetian period in Tang Dynasty.

Sculpture art meets people's aesthetic needs with its aesthetic features. In the process of aesthetic appreciation, aesthetic education is realized and people's aesthetic ability is enhanced. Since original aesthetic needs are met and aesthetic ability is enhanced, new aesthetic needs are created, boosting development of sculpture art. In order to meet abundant aesthetic needs, sculpture art needs to survey the high and low levels of aesthetic needs through artistic function theory and contains thoughts and feelings above people with aesthetic needs, meeting aesthetic needs and becoming an effective tool of aesthetic education at the same time. The thoughts and feelings higher than aesthetic needs must combine with life experience and aesthetic experience of people with aesthetic needs. Only when thoughts and feelings "are understood or speculated by people, can they educate and touch people"²⁹.

Thereout, richness in people's aesthetic needs not only directly determines richness of sculpture art, but also means that richness of sculpture art must be in close relation with development and creation method of sculpture art.

D. Richness in Artistic Content of Sculpture Comes from Diversification of Sculpture Art

Since sculpture art needs to meet abundant aesthetic needs in life with its aesthetic features, we have to consider development, changes and creation methods of sculpture art. Generally speaking, creation methods of sculpture art include shaping, carving and construction. Shaping refers to "doing manual work on malleable material; tools are needed in case there is large modeling volume, delicacy and tininess in area or representation of special effect with morphologic change in material"³⁰. Common used material is soil, paper clay and fatlute³⁰. Carving refers to "Manual work of hand with too equipment like hammer, knife and cutting machine in order of priority on materials to carve with morphologic changes in material. Commonly used material is wood, stones, bamboos and bricks"³¹. Construction refers to "a kind of organization and arrangement to reflect the same theme with combination of various parts and under a certain idea". Commonly used material is wood, stones, metal and plastic³². Thereout, creation methods of sculpture art boast abundant features.

"Like poetry, sculpture boasts important features of artistic beauty of construction in vastness of artistic conception"³³. The theory of artistic conception is the core of Chinese aesthetics. For artistic creation of sculpture, "the major thing to create is spiritual environment and sculpture has to adapt to nothing but material environment. But the feature of adaptation to material environment possesses the nature and function of creating spiritual environment (namely conquering the old environment"³⁴. The reason why spiritual environment of sculpture art is emphasized is that spiritual environment has features of non-fixation and illusiveness. "It is improper for sculpture to directly describe the actual environment of imaginary subject. Moving artistic conception can only rely on intangible illusory creation seeming to exist of sculpture images"³⁵. Seen from this perspective, due to introduction of artistic conception theory into artistic theory of sculpture and making it the goal pursued by creation with enrichment of creation methods, creation and appreciation activities of sculpture art are enriched with spiritual and material

environment brought into sculpture art, enriching representation contents of sculpture art.

V. CONCLUSION

The concept emphasizes aesthetic features of sculpture art in the first place, inherits emphasis on social function in Marxist aesthetics and combines with traditional Chinese aesthetic theory and folk art experience, confirming and deepening aesthetic value and function of sculpture art. In the process, creators and appreciators of sculpture need to possess different conditions to meet different requirements of creation and appreciation. Mutual connection and promotion exist between the two. Namely, sculpture artwork created by sculpture creators meet aesthetic needs of appreciators and improve their aesthetic ability at the same time, thus new higher aesthetic needs are generated, boosting sculpture creators to create sculpture artwork with higher aesthetic value.

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