

Research on the Creation of Picture Books for Guandong Ballads*

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Abstract—As a part of the cultural heritage of human beings, ballads are not only for exhibition, nor just need to be protected, but also need to be carried forward. "One doesn't understand the beauty of a ballad; voice comes from the mouth but expresses the singer's heart". The verse directly reveals the dual aesthetic feeling of ballads. Visual designers are duty-bound to explore the third aesthetic feeling of ballad, namely visual aesthetics.

Keywords—Guandong; ballad; picture books

I. INTRODUCTION

As the fine work of art, ballad is the crystallization of the wisdom of working people, the needs of people's life and work, and the direct reflection of social life and struggle. Rich in the character of image thinking, dignified feelings, and direct expression of emotions, it is the real voice of nature. True in feeling and bold in thought, ballad has distinctive local and national characteristics with a long history and rich content. It draws nutrients directly from social life, and thus is close to people's heart, full of humanistic care for the bottom. Also, it is a barometer of social and political life for its social critical function. With natural and simple manifestations, the essence and heart-reaching feelings of ballads all come from life, and enrich life. Its strong subjective impact of "touching the heart once entering the ear" makes it unique in the art family. Through chanting, reading and reciting, it vividly and flexibly records and expresses the feelings and customs of the nation and reflects the joys, sorrows and historical experiences of the people.

II. THE ATTEMPT AT THE CREATION ON PICTURE BOOKS FOR GUANDONG BALLADS

The "Guandong" in modern times refers to the area east of Shanghai Pass — Liaoning province, Jilin province, Heilongjiang province and the four ledge cities in East Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. Today it is generally known as "northeast", in Ming dynasty commonly known as "Guangdong", and in Qing dynasty known as three eastern

provinces of Manchuria. In the course of thousands of years of development and evolution, the region has gradually formed a regional culture with regional characteristics and become an indispensable part of the Chinese national culture. There are not only the unique cultural inheritance codes of Manchu, Mongols, Hui, Oroqen and other ethnic minorities, but also the natural nimbus endowed by its mountains and rivers. There is a long history and cultural tradition in this hot land, which has been dyed red by national resistance and there are hard-working and plain people living on this land. Therefore, the folk songs handed down here are rich in content and diverse in form, some long, some short, some euphemistic, some sonorous, but all of them are the expression out of true nature. So they need to be protected and sung.

As part of the cultural heritage of mankind, ballads should not only be displayed, nor be protected, but also should be promoted. The aesthetic and artistic characteristics of ballads determine that they are closely related to social life, and their creation approaches are civilian with popular creation effects. "One doesn't understand the beauty of a ballad; voice comes from the mouth but expresses the singer's heart". The verse directly reveals the dual aesthetic feeling of ballads. Visual designers should feel duty-bound to explore the third aesthetic feeling of ballad, namely visual aesthetics. As the era of picture reading has come, the picture books have become a cultural communication mode suitable for all ages. Both paper and the currently more powerful multimedia can be used as the carrier of Guandong ballads, which has realistic value and operable significance. Represent these ballads through paintings! It will not only record and spread folk songs, but also play a leading role in building the cultural brand of Changbai Mountain. Also, through picture books, the dissemination scope and influence effect of ballads will also be larger and broader, which will be of more educational value especially for teenagers and children. To implement the Line of developing art and literature and the three approaches of the party, the protection and development of folk songs and national customs have special value and significance at this stage.

What picture books emphasize most is the perfect combination of literariness and artistry. Less text means higher requirements. They are required to have concise stories with up and downs and be interesting and lively. In

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this way the ballads get diversified communication channels and popular audiences. Combination of picture and text makes stronger aesthetic meaning, and more outstanding educational effect. The integration of graph and text can cultivate the good image concepts, improve the continuity of thinking and enrich the imagination of children, which worth consideration.

Firstly, the ballads that have strong story and can be used as the script are to be selected from the existing collections and lexicographical books. From Guandong nursery rhymes to anti-Japanese ballads, from the ones spread orally before the liberation to those created and collected after the liberation, a large number of ballad materials have come into sight in this process. Through the study and summary of the aesthetic characteristics and artistic characteristics of the folk songs of Guandong, eight groups of themes were finally selected: anti-Japanese league ballad, folk tale ballad, ritual

ballad, labor ballad, vacation ballads, love ballad, children ballad and whistle ballad. These eight directions were used to create picture books.

The difficulty of this research lies in how to unify the aesthetic characteristics of Guandong ballads with the tonality of expression in the creation of picture books. So after understanding the aesthetic characteristics of the folk songs of Guandong, the creators will naturally have a basis for its picture book design and schematized expression. Next, the design of picture books for Guandong ballads and the study of folk schematized expressions are carried out according to the content of the eight groups of themes. The styles of picture book creation are determined by the materials and techniques of picture books. For example, watercolor painting is suitable for expressing abstract style, while computer production is better for expressing realistic effect.

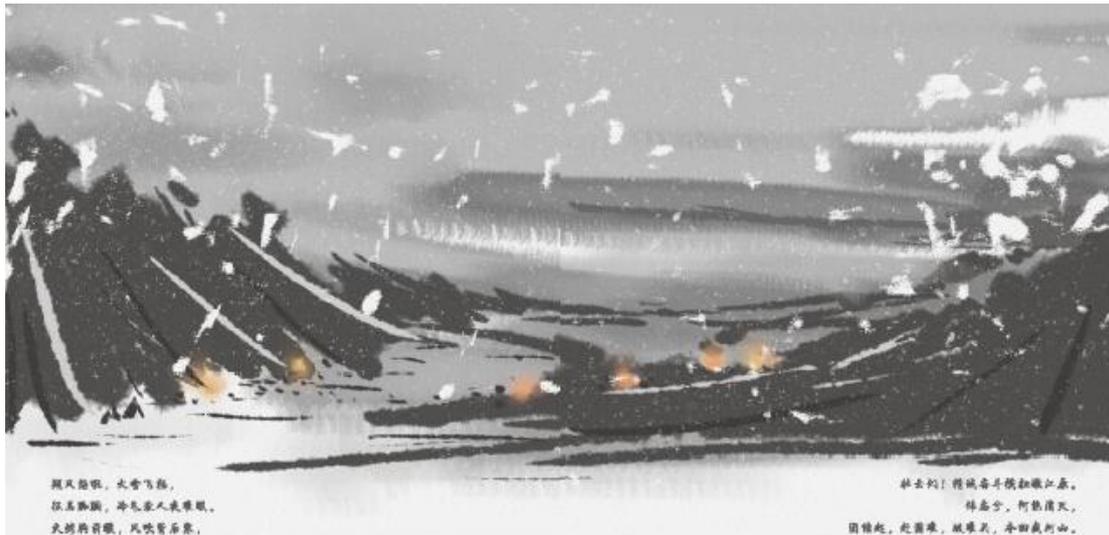


Fig. 1. A clip from "The camping song".

Taking the theme "anti-Japanese league ballad" as an example, creators have collected hundreds of ballads. In the selection of pictorial text, they abandoned some chapters that were too long and tried to search for those short ballads that were relatively easy to generate a sense of painting. The heroic of the Northeast Anti-Japanese united forces is not only a beautiful and moving history, but also a concentrated presentation of the spirit of the whole Chinese nation. Under the Changbai Mountain with great beauty, the blood of the anti-Japanese heroes spilled all over the land of Guandong. Ballads recording this phase of history are numerous, of which there are "guerrilla in the four seasons" created by general Yang Jingyu, "The camping song" in memory of general Li Zhaolin, and folk works like the "Flags flushing the Changbai Mountain", "Sister send brother to the Northeast Anti-Japanese united forces" created in as well as "A bad wind blowing along the edge of the Mengjiang river" in memory of Yang Jingyu. Among these anti-Japanese league ballads, each word and line was out of true feeling, out of blood and tears. The line "being warmed by a fire in front while feeling cooled by a wind blowing behind" has become a well-known sentence of the Northeast Anti-

Japanese united forces. The indomitable will of the Northeast Anti-Japanese united forces has been passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, when thinking about the language of picture books, the creators first came up with the Chinese painting style. Also, the print style was also tried. After experiments, the Chinese ink painting style was finally adopted for its natural and unrestrained features. As can be seen in "Fig.1", the picture is telling the story of "With north wind blowing, snowflakes fluttering about, army horses loitering around, cold air keeps us awake at night. Being warmed by the fire in front while feeling cooled by the wind behind. Men!

Sweep the Nen River plain with absolute faith and arduous efforts Great aspiration, how can it be destroyed? We are to unite as one in face of national calamity. We shall overcome. When spring comes we shall recover our lost land." A folio is used to show a large scene in the language of film and television footage — in a valley where the snow is raging, the scattered campfire represents a single spark of the Northeast Anti-Japanese united forces can start a prairie fire.

Also in "Fig.2" a paragraph of "guerrilla in the four seasons" made by general Yang Jingyu is described: "In autumn the Guerrilla sees a quite different scenery where with bleak wind and wilting grass the swan goose flew over the frontier. Mother is lying against the cabinet and father leaning on the door, both wishing for their son to come back home. But since no egg can be safe and sound in a broken nest we are bound to recover the lost land! Fighting as a guerrilla in the autumn feels fresh and cool. We are beating

the Japanese and killing the traitors with the best stratagems. Breaking up the whole into parts and uniting the parts as whole we are so elusive. We launch attacks at night and the success makes us world-renowned."

Pictures on both pages in the folio design are related in terms of the composition, but they are not one in terms of content. The integration of well-designed format and the shading of ink shading are just to the point.



Fig. 2. A clip of "guerrilla in the four seasons".

It was also during the creation of the "anti-Japanese league ballad" that we determined the design style of the whole set of books. In the selection of the book size a large number of the sizes of picture books were used for reference. According to the reasonable paper cutting rules, 20 open (217*227mm) were chosen, similar to the size of a square. The number of pages was controlled within 40P, and riding nail binding was used. This is convenient for both reading and carrying.

Secondly, when conceiving and creating the second custom ballad, the creators had a lot of visual languages to try; for example, farmer painting style, paper-cutting style and modern illustration style have all been tried. But finally the paper-cutting style was used. The use of visual language of folklore to show the content of folklore has been proved more interesting through practice.

For example in "Fig. 3", "the Mongolian ballad" blessing song for weddings", it is sung that "The ukulele plays a joyful tune, the round drum play to the beat brightly. What a festive day it is today! Wish the new couple all the best for the future. The ukulele plays an auspicious tone; the round drum knocks the new beat quickly. At this fine moment of the lucky day, may the new couple live in conjugal bliss to a ripe old age." In the picture, the head of Mongolian morin khuur is inserted into the picture on a slant and the red silk ribbon and auspicious clouds are mixed together, reflecting the interconnecting characteristics of paper cutting. The jubilant drumbeat nearly knocks the round drum out of the picture. The composition is full of movement, and the joyful

atmosphere of the wedding fills the picture. Although the traditional paper-cut form is used in the picture, its composition is very modern. This is exactly the design style of this book, which is to coordinate the design of book format with modern design ideas while taking into account the cultural heritage, the design language of each article, and the design style of the whole book, as well as the planning concept of the whole set of books. The layout of the book is that left-page picture is the dominance and the right-page picture presents the text. The paper cutting style on the left page is Yang engraving, and the right page is Yin engraving.

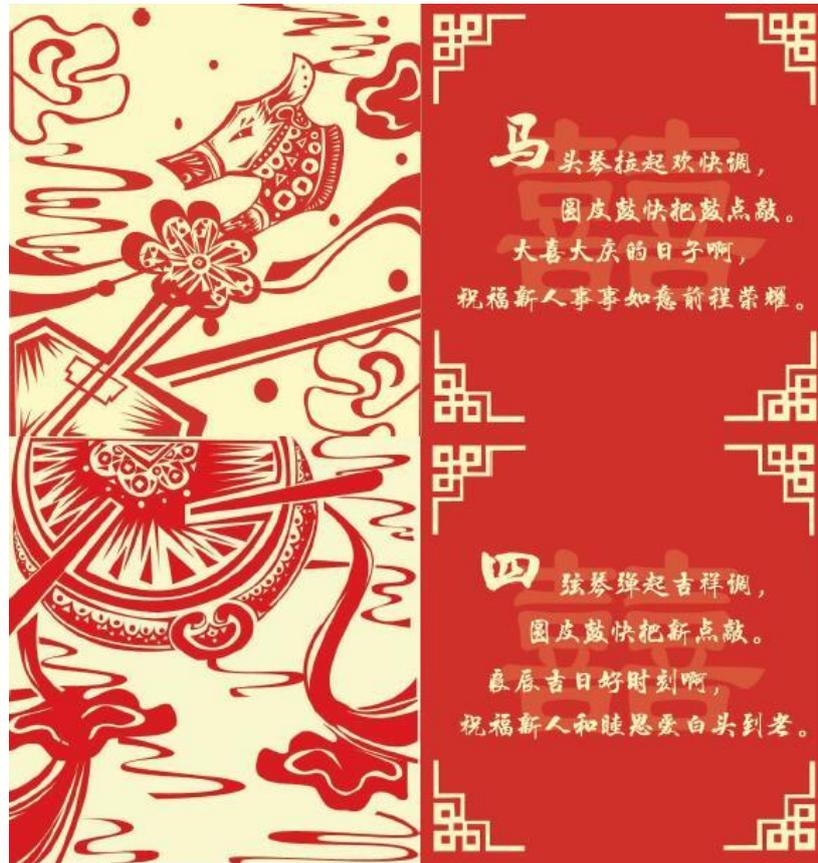


Fig. 3. A clip of "blessing song for weddings".



Fig. 4. A clip of "the old eight trades".

Thirdly, the next volume is "vacation ballads", which selects several ballads about some line of work with Guandong characteristics, such as eagle training, digging ginseng, as well as the old eight trades, etc. In the study of style positioning, the creators decided after discussion to use children's images to connect the whole plot and picture. The picture was also composed with concise line, bright and gaudy color, fresh and loose images. Such methods draw

close to the aesthetic acceptance ability of children. Take "Fig. 4", "the old eight trades" as an example. The images of boys and girls engaged in the these labors as carpenter, blacksmith and mason etc. make people feel as if these distant trades are coming back to us, which makes it easier for children who read these picture books to understand things in the past.



Fig. 5. A clip from "Ama has a baby eagle".



Fig. 6. A clip from "Ama has a baby eagle".

As shown in "Fig. 4" and "Fig. 5", "Ama has a baby eagle" is a ballad about the Manchu falcon culture. In this picture, the creator divided the right P page in the layout, trying to break the overall feeling of the picture and give the reading a sense of rhythm. On the picture description, the close-up description in the film and television shooting was adopted. The frightened rabbits and the squealing suona horns were all made local reinforcement, which enhances the atmosphere, conducive to the young audience's understanding of the text.

The above are the stage results of our research on the creation of "picture book for ballads". In the research process, we gradually had our own in-depth thinking on the artistic

value, communication value and educational value of picture books for Guandong ballad.

III. THE ARTISTIC VALUE OF PICTURE BOOKS FOR GUANDONG BALLADS

The artistic value of picture books for the Guandong ballads mainly lies in the beneficial attempt to visualize the traditional oral communication culture with new design concepts and methods, and more importantly, its exploration of the visual beauty of traditional ballads. A good literary work will have a strong sense of tableau, so a good ballad can also be presented through a vivid form of painting. Therefore, the research on the creation of the picture books

for Guandong ballads is more of a synesthetic attempt based on the communication carrier, which is also the embodiment of the value of the picture books Guandong ballads in communication. Through this attempt, we have once again confirmed the old conclusion: art is interlinked. Picture books provide another spiritual trigger for people to feel art, and make folk music, a form of literary expression, come alive.

IV. THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PICTURE BOOKS FOR GUANDONG BALLADS

The picture books for Guandong ballads main target population is young people between the ages of 11 and 17, in which stage the children is crossing the two important stages of antagonistic period and growth period. Since this period is right between the enlightenment period and adolescence, children in this phase are easily guided. Therefore the information they are exposed to at this stage is particularly important. So educators should consciously provide them with positive guidance. Picture books, which are suitable for children's reading and appreciation at this age, are an easy way for them to receive information. Therefore, in order that the influence of picture books can be rapidly expanded, they should be distributed as free extracurricular reading materials after publication. In addition, consensus should be reached with relevant departments to conduct long-term and extensive cooperation in public reading Spaces such as libraries of primary and secondary schools and community service centers.

V. CONCLUSION

The Guandong area is endowed with a long history, vast territory, rich products and profound culture. But in recent years, the material and intangible cultural heritage here has not been well protected and developed. Some one-sided, distorted, playful and superficial forms of literature and art even further vulgarize the culture and art of this land. This has made some people think that culture is a Jiangnan thing while Guandong is a badland that beget cunning people, which is a modern annotation for "there is no culture in the eastern border". Some teenagers who know little about history also belittle the land that nurtures them. Although this study on the creation of the "picture book for Guandong ballads, is only a set of books designed and published, it shows the history, people's livelihood, economy and culture of the whole Guandong. It is hoped that the study can show the essence of the Guandong culture, pass on the feelings of the Guandong people, and open a new window for people who do not understand this land.

In the traditional concept, picture books are only a kind of reading method combining pictures and texts in childhood. However, through this study, a tentative discussion on the compatibility of reading objects of picture books and the publicity of their communication have also been made. The research on the creation of picture books on Guandong ballads has just started, but it belongs to the sunrise industry at the right time, and is also a sunrise art. We should carry

out research in this field as soon as possible, to achieve results and use it to guide the creation, so as to avoid detours.

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