

Article

Exploring Composition of Guizhou Miao and Buyi Batik Patterns Based on Social Psychology

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Abstract: Batik takes appropriate shape and pictogram as the main shape, and copies and abstracts natural objects with the color of rich national character. After a long historical development, it forms today's wonderful national folk art. Its production process is rich in ethnic characteristics and national traditions with rich composition, imagination, and uniqueness. Among them, the Miao and Buyi batik in Guizhou is a typical representative of dyeing and weaving technology in China. From the perspective of social psychology, the composition of batik is inseparable from people's stimulation of the response process, that is, batik is the corresponding psychological response of ethnic minority women by receiving the stimulation of external things (natural things), and putting this reaction into their behavior. Different forms of batik compositions reflect their pursuit and desire for a better life.

Keywords: Batik, Composition, Stimulation-Reaction, Cultural Implication

1. Introduction

Buyi batik is a special technique among ethnic minorities in Guizhou, Sichuan, Hunan, Guangdong, Guangxi, Taiwan since the Qin and Han dynasties, Sui, and Tang dynasties. It is known as "a wonderful flower of national folk art", which comes from the production and life of ethnic minorities to be a symbol of wisdom and perseverance. Women take batik as accessories to express the psychology of personal beauty, the sentiment of beauty, wishes, and looking forward to the ideal and future. The batik technology in Guizhou province is brought by the Miao people from their original residence during their migration. The special ethnic complex, strong ethnic self-esteem, and ethnic identity of Guizhou and Miao nationality are formed due to historical reasons (Zhou Ying 2012, p.3). In addition to the unique natural environment, this folk art has been well preserved, continued, and carried forward. Compared with the surrounding provinces, the batik technology of Guizhou Province is unique and is worth research. Therefore, we explore and analyze the composition psychology of these two ethnic groups for batik, the traditional folk handicraft of Miao nationality and Buyi nationality in Guizhou as by considering the research perspective in social psychology.

2. Batik Pattern

2.1 Style of batik pattern of Miao nationality

The batik pattern of Guizhou Miao nationality has various shapes (Wang Lvzhu 2008). The modeling process is designing the theme figure, shaping the space between the shapes, and forming sizes, interwoven method, harmonious adaptation with rich styles and connotations. The batik figures spread in Danzhai County, southeast Guizhou (Song Lirong 2010, p.106-107). The production process of the batik is carried out by Miao women. In the wax flowers, different sizes of the cloth are underlaid which is dipped in wax directly with the cloth drawing figures. They draw irregular figures, and after the theme figure appears, the second figure is drawn in the remaining space between the first figures. The process is repeated to create vivid and reasonable graphic structures. However, as it is difficult to learn the skill, women with rich experience and superb skills are producing the batik.

2.2 Style of Buyi ethnic batik pattern

Buyi batik in Guizhou evolved from ancient tattoos. Therefore, this skill is considered as the continuation and externalization of the national tattoo custom (Liu Shibin 1992, p.3). The batik patterns of Buyi nationality are mainly pictographs, which are mostly

composed of animal patterns such as dragons and snakes. The other common shapes are geometric figures, waveforms, vortex shapes, and chain shapes (Xu Yiqing 1988, p.175). Geometric shapes such as triangles and diamonds have evolved from snake patterns. In addition, the figure from the worshipped totem is a more common batik pattern of the Buyi people (Gu Yin 1999, p.5). For example, the Buyi batik cloud and thunder pattern is the pictogram of the thunder totem.

3. Composition of Batik Pattern

3.1. Pattern type of batik

The Miao batik has two pattern types: natural and geometric.

The natural pattern comes from natural objects, which is shown by certain artistic techniques. Most patterns of Miao batik in Guizhou have natural forms such as flowers, fish, butterflies, and others. However, the Miao batik patterns often exaggerate the morphology of the original animals and plants but with appropriate changes or rendering to form a pattern with special meanings. For example, flowers show the luxuriant scene of the competition, the birds with butterfly wings, the rooster crown with flowers, which show the Miao people's love for life and are full of interest. The batik form is more common in southwest Guizhou. Geometry is mostly used to represent abstracted figures which are points, lines, and surfaces. Through the alternation and fusion of these elements, a clear hierarchical form is formed, giving people a beautiful visual feeling. The geometric patterns in Miao batik mainly include plants, texts, and geometric patterns. The flexible lines are smooth and rich in continuity, often showing an esoteric meaning. In particular, texts and lines both reflect and accompany each other. The technique of expression is unique for expressing certain meanings. The Guizhou Miao batik has patterns of ten thousand words meaning longevity. Plant lines are variants of vegetation and others. Miao women design exquisite and flexible geometric patterns that have an ideology, point, line, surface combination changes, overlapping composite, or dislocation. They look like a symphony with visual beauty. For example, the "nest" in the Miao costume of Guizhou shows a spiral pattern on the sleeve and collar, composed of eight circles and distributed on the two sleeves. Only when the two sleeves are completely combined, the whole picture of the "nest" is seen. Buyi batik abstract geometric patterns from fish, animals, flowers, birds, insects in irregular geometry.

3.2. Wax-colored pattern color

In terms of color, the Miao batik pattern in Guizhou is different from that of the Buyi nationality. The Miao batik is rich in color, beautiful, clear, and stable. Miao women show favorite mountain flowers, birds, insects, fish, and animals in various colors to form batik patterns. This process is for showing the unique beauty of batik which is abstracted by the Miao women from natural patterns and completed in the creation process affected from the imagination as works of art. Blue is the main color of Guizhou Miao nationality batik, but the tone is all different (Song Lirong 2010, p.106-107). Chinese red means simple and healthy and stands for human skin. Buyi batik color is relatively simple and elegant, often green and white, and reflects the unique aesthetic and feeling.

3.2. Characteristics of batik pattern

From the perspective of the pattern composition, the batik pattern of Guizhou Miao people is rich in imagination with many exaggerated compositions. The pattern form is simple, mainly based on flowers, birds, insects, and fish in nature. The picture seems peaceful. The materials are diversified to express the creator's observation, imagination, experience, refining, and the appearance of natural things, not as a copy of real objects. The Buyi people, mostly living by mountains and rivers, are familiar with the reproduction and habits of fish. Therefore, the primitive ancestors of the Buyi people worshipped the fish totem, and the characteristics of its batik patterns are mainly reflected in the abstraction of the shapes of fish and other totem objects (Zhang Jianmin 2010, p.4). In the production of the pattern, the process of Guizhou Miao nationality has a waxing and drawing wax (Fu Mulan 1982, p.10). Buyi batik is made of dots, lines, and surfaces. Spot wax is arranged with countless dots to form the shape of a pattern. Drawing wax is for abstracting and sketching the pattern in different lines. In the traditional dyeing and weaving process, the pattern becomes to have blue and white pattern through soaking in indigo liquid. With the dyeing and weaving skill, the created patterns have harmonious and clear blue and white colors in various changes. The final works are delicate and elegant full of charm.

4. Psychology of Batik Pattern

The batik pattern shows an extraordinary imagination in a certain psychological space. The Miao women in Guizhou have flexible and diverse imaginations in time and space. For example, in the batik of Guizhou Miao people, the patterns of fish with two eyes on the same side of the head are often seen. The related composition psychology has a highly artistic realm beyond the ordinary imagination. This mental projection of the batik composition maps the composition person's psychological activity. The design of the batik patterns is derived from the psychological responses of ethnic minority women. In the past, women used batik patterns to express their yearning and pursuit for a better life. Now, women use various, vivid, and profound patterns to wish a better life and

look forward to the future. The stimulus-reaction theory of behaviorism in social psychology holds that an organism has an instinct to cause a certain behavioral response when it encounters a certain stimulus. According to this, humans, as an evolved animal, strengthen the behavior produced by the stimulus, link it with the stimulus and the behavior, and finally produce meaningful behavioral results. Thus, batik is a behavioral result of ethnic minority women receiving the stimulus and putting the psychological response generated by the stimulus into action. Thus, the meaning of the Guizhou batik pattern can be observed.

4.1. Moral of batik patterns in Guizhou

4.1.1. Moral of the "grain" pattern

Several scholars believe that the "lines" in the batik pattern has three meanings: one is to mark and remember the long migration and journey of the Miao ancestors, the second is to record the vortex lines on the heads of the ancestors and the third is that women, stimulated by natural beauty, place their wishes or wishes on the symbolic meaning of batik (Zhong Shaolin 1982, p.42-25). This moral can be found in the familiar folklore known to the Miao people. The story is about a smart and capable Miao girl who was ill. Her mother picked tender fern moss from the mountain for the girl's disease to be cured. The Hmong women incorporated the grass into the batik pattern. This, later, becomes auspicious. Similarly, butterfly patterns are found in the ancient Miao songs about "Mother Butterfly". In ancient Miao songs, the myth about "Mother Butterfly" is believed that butterflies can produce all things in the world, including gods, ghosts, people, animals, plants, and lightning, and are respected as the ancestor of all things in the world. The Hmong people affectionately call her "Mother Butterfly". Therefore, the butterfly pattern has various kinds and poses which mean the protection of the mother butterfly with which the Miao people grow from generation to generation, have a prosperous life, and develop a career. Moreover, the significance of the natural patterns in the batik patterns of Guizhou Miao nationality is also similar to that of the Han nationality. What is worth mentioning specifically here is the centipede pattern in Guizhou Miao nationality batik. It is also derived from the Miao ancient song lyrics. The lyric has a story about five brothers in ancient times: dragon, tiger, thunder, centipede, and snake. Among them, the centipede was the smallest but the most capable, so its descendants as a prosperous family were respected by the four brothers and families. The Miao people like this myth and legend, so they regard centipedes as beautiful insects and include them in batik patterns, showing their desire for harmonious family life and safe and happy life.

4.1.2. Moral meaning of fish, birds, plants, and other patterns

All the patterns symbolize prosperity and beauty. The unique feature of Guizhou Miao batik is that people associate the gender of fish and birds with people and symbolize marital love and beauty. For example, birds spreading their wings and flying represent men, and fish that are light and gentle represent women. Of course, Miao women sometimes decorated fish with wings so that it looks as the birds swim in the water. In the past, this composition was the result of Miao women's yearning for equality between men and women, but now it implies the aspiration that men and women jointly shoulder the responsibility for clan inoculation and reproduction. A wonderful combination of movement, plants, and other patterns is for looking forward to a better life. Pomegranate and bat patterns often contains the meaning of fish patterns and mean longevity with bronze drum, bud tail, flower, crown rooster, bird-headed animals, birds with butterfly wings, and so on. All these patterns are rich and bold with concise and vivid compositions, rich local flavor, and various colors. It reflects the Miao women's pursuit of beautiful things and unrestrained life. The pear patterns in plants are the most local features (Zeng Chuiti 1991, p.5). The ancestors of the Miao people formed an indissoluble bond with the pear flowers on the way of migration. A legend tells when the ancestors of the Miao in the migration were exhausted, the pear flowers blossomed in the bright mountains, so they regained their strength and confidence in the life from the beautiful pear flowers, and tenaciously completed the great migration. The pear flowers in the batik pattern are not only a memorial of the Miao people but also a symbol of them to strive and pursue a happy and better life forever.

4.1.3. Moral of Buyi ethnic batik pattern in Guizhou

The Buyi has a close relationship with natural objects such as animals. In contrast, the Buyi has more desire to dominate animals, and their reliance on nature is reflected in the totem worship (Han Hongxing 2002, p.3). Since the development of Buyi batik, the totem pattern has been also gradually abstracted into a geometric form. Its batik pattern is also gradually transitioning from non-aesthetic to aesthetic. This process is closely related to the psychosocial changes of the Buyi people. Specifically, this is mainly determined by their psychological love of beauty. In the past, the long-term subject to nature and declining life made them gradually aware of the totem worship for beautiful things and regard the batik containing totem patterns as the object of releasing aesthetic pleasure. For example, because of the abundant production of fish, the Buyi people psychologically think that the fish means reproduction, and the fish pattern in batik is their yearning for rich days. Moreover, with the development, the way of thinking of the Buyi people constantly changes, and the pattern structure is becoming increasingly complicated.

4. Conclusions

Guizhou batik art is related to the natural and social-cultural environment that provides fertile soil as the premise and foundation of its formation and survival environment. The social and cultural environment has made Batik art thrive in history and culture. The Miao folk culture, constantly adding new cultural elements, strides to the broad development of heaven and earth. Diligent and brave ethnic minority women based on nature resort to their psychological reactions to dyeing and weaving their unique patterns that form the colorful batik art. Today, with the modernization process, people's knowledge is expanding, the pursuit of good things and expression becomes severe. This makes Guizhou's traditional batik change greatly in modeling, dyeing, and weaving. The traditional handicraft may also be involved in balancing between "tradition" and "modern", but people may also produce a new psychological reaction and accept the new psychological challenges.

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