

# 闽 文 化

MIN CULTURE

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With the increasing favor for regional culture,  
the treasure of Fujian culture is being dug up and the specific charm  
and profound connotation of the culture is arousing the  
interest of more and more people.



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## PREFACE

With the increasing favor for regional culture, the treasure of Fujian culture is being dug up and the specific charm and profound connotation of the culture is arousing the interest of more and more people.

Fujian is a province of songs and dances. Because of the cultures of mountains, rivers and sea, songs of farmers and fishers occupy a very important place in the Fujian folk songs. In addition, the rural and regional songs, such as work songs, poem singing, canzonet, songs of dance, children's songs and the tunes of life, are active and popular in different regions. For example, the children's song *The Cloudy Sky*, popular in South Fujian, describing an old couple who don't agree with each other on the flavor of the dish of loaches—to add more salt or not and who argue and break the pan, is very interesting and amusing. There are more than twenty kinds of folk songs in Fujian, of which *nanqu* (also called *nanyin*, the South Music) has the longest history and the greatest influence. *Nanqu* is not only the fading sound of the Yan music of the late Tang Dynasty and the Five Dynasties, but the echo of the South Opera of the Song Dy-

nasty. *Nanqu* is a major kind of music in China, with the richest and the most complete musical culture of the old times, being regarded as living music history and musical fossil.

Fujian is also a province of opera. There are five operas, *Puxian* Opera, *Liyuan* Opera, *Gaojia* Opera, *Min* Opera and *Xiang* Opera, which are famous at home and abroad with rich patrimony. Take *Puxian* Opera for example, it has more than 5000 traditional plays and more than 8000 copies, which conserves more plays of South Opera and the old plays of the Central Plains than any other kind in the country and which is also a library and a museum collecting opera the most and the richest works worldwide. The traditional plays, music and roles of *Puxian* Opera and *Liyuan* Opera have great relation to the South Opera, and their music and music playing somewhat succeed the music of the Tang Dynasty and the Song Dynasty, so they are referred to as the fading sound of the South Opera and the living fossil of the traditional plays of the mid-land.

The calligraphy and painting of different generations in Fujian are abundant and colorful, which greatly enrich the treasury of arts of the country. Fujian painters have been syncretizing the strong points of different styles of drawing, presenting a strong creativity. Hui Chong, from Jiangle in the Song Dynasty, his paintings were idyllic of the scenery of the south of Changjiang River, and people called them *Huichong pastorals*. Chen Rong, from Futang (now Fuqing), his painting, *Cloud and Dragon Picture*, created a precedent after the Yuan Dynasty, harmonizing poem, calligraphy and drawing in one picture. Zheng Sixiao, from Lianjiang, drew *Molan Picture* of orchids rootless and

without touching the soil, which made drawing orchids exposing root a style of painting popular until the end of the Qing Dynasty. Shangguan Zhou, from Changting in the Qing Dynasty, focused on the vividness of persons in his drawings and started the drawing style of Min (Fujian). Huang Shen, from Ninghua and one of the Eight Eccentrics in Yangzhou, was the first one who inosculated calligraphy with portrait painting.

There were quite a few famous calligraphers in Fujian such as Cai Xiang, from Xianyou in the Song Dynasty, who learnt writing skills from different styles and then created his own, Huang Daoshu, from Zhangpu in the Ming Dynasty, whose calligraphist style were considered coherent to his character and Yi Binshou, from Tingzhou in the Qing Dynasty, were regarded as the pioneers. of the *Lishu style* in epigraphy carving in the Qing Dynasty. The tradition of calligraphy and Chinese painting in Fujian has been going down from generation to generation up to now and the Ministry of Culture named successively the counties of Longhai, Tong'an, Jinjiang, Putian, Zhao'an, Jian'ou and the town in Zhangping *The Home of Calligraphy and Painting*.

The folk arts in Fujian are various and colorful. Pictures for the New Year here are mainly woodcuts, the content covering almost all the aspects of people's life. In Zhangzhou old style of such pictures always give their way to new ones, embodying both the characters of straightforwardness as in the North of China and the gracefulness as in the South. The pictures in Quanzhou always depict the folkcustoms, widely accepted by the overseas Chinese in South of Asia. Those in Fuding have a u-

nique style. For example, the picture *The Eight Hammers Fight in Zhuxian Town* mingles pretty ladies and fighting soldiers together, which is rare in such paintings. Fujian's stone engraving is famous at home and abroad, the most remarkable kinds of which are that of Huian's and of Shoushan's. Of Huian's there are four sub-classes, circular engravings, basso-relievos, deep engravings and shadow engravings, works of which people can see everywhere in the world, such as the *Huabiao* in Zhongshan Tomb in Nanjing, the eight pairs of dragon columns in Longshan Temple in Taiwan, the seats of the columns in the People's Great Hall of Beijing, the garden of Monk Jianzhen of Japan, and so on. And of Shoushan's there are five sub-classes, circular engravings, bassorelievos, throughengravings, filmcarvings and signet carvings, which include nearly a thousand designs. Folk wood carvings are also popular in Fujian. The twenty-four wood carvings, *Flying Musicians*, on the bucket arch of the Kaiyuan Temple in Quanzhou are precious treasures. The famous puppet image maker Jiang Jiazou has merged the skills of wooden image carving and facial makeup in opera and made quite a lot of art treasures. Paper-cut is one of folk arts in Fujian that countryside women love very much. Zhangpu County was once named the *Home of Paper-cut* by the Ministry of Culture, and twice edited and published *Album of Paper-cut of Zhangpu, Fujian, China*. The books and thousands of paper-cuts have been sold abroad. Fujian has a long history in ceramic making. The black glazed porcelains from Jian Kiln in Shuiji, Jianyang County in the Song Dynasty were marvelously attractive, the typical of which was *Jian Zhan* that was once brought to Japan as a Japanese na-



tional treasure collected in a well-known library of Tokoy. In the Yuan Dynasty, the white glazed porcelains from the kilns in Dehua County were commonly called *Jian Bai* which was white and light yellow, crystalloidally bright, smooth and strong. In the Ming Dynasty and the Qing Dynasty, the blue and white porcelains were mostly produced from the kilns in Dehua County and Anxi County, and they were all precious.

The writers in Fujian were famous for their argumentation. There were no other provinces whose literary theory was as flourishing as in Fujian. The real notes on poets and poetry began in the Song Dynasty and the *Cang Lang Notes* by Yan Yu in the Song Dynasty was the most remarkable and onwards the most influential book of the notes. The *Poet's Notes* by Wei Qingzhi was an indispensable collection of the notes on studying the poetic theory in the Song Dynasty. The *Hou Cun Notes* by Liu Kezhuang and the *Ao Qizhi Notes* by Ao Taosun were representative works of the remarkable popular poetic theory. The *Poet Rules*, *The Right Resources of Poetics and Rules of Rhyme* by Yang Zai in the Yuan Dynasty were important works of the notes at that time. The *Collection of Comments on the Poems of the Tang Dynasty* by Gao Bing in the Ming Dynasty began the debate on the poems of the Tang Dynasty and the Song Dynasty, leading the tendency of the literature of that time. Wang Shen zhong's theory of poems was looked up to as the standard. Li Zhi's *On the Childlikeness* and his other literacy theories were taken as the creed of the new literacy thoughts in the late Ming Dynasty. Xie Zhaozhe's incisive statements on the story and the opera enhanced their importance in the literacy history. In the

Qing Dynasty and in the modern times, the literacy critique in Fujian was by no means inferior. Lin Changyi's *Comments on Poems in Sheying Mansion*, Liang Zhangju's *Notes of Poems Beyond the Southeast Bridge*, Chen Shiyi's *Remarks on Poets and Poetry in Shiyi's Room*, Yan Fu's and Lin Xu's argumentations, etc. played a very important part in the Chinese history of literacy critique.

Fujian has been paying great attention to education since the Tang Dynasty when Fujian was in the exploitation period. When Li Yi, a member of the Tang imperial family, was an inspector in Fujian, he carried out the policy of "building schools and brightening the custom". When Chang Yan was an inspector in Fujian, he "built schools in the towns and invited good teachers to teach the local people". Chen Yuanguang, the prefectural governor of Zhangzhou, encouraged the local people as well as his followers to study more and hard. In the Five Dynasties, Wang Shenzhi, the King of Fujian, built many schools, requiring that all the school-age children should go to school. In the Song Dynasty, there were eight prefectures and each had a prefectural school, and many counties also ran local schools. You Zuo, from Jianyang, and Yang Shi, from Jiangle, went to the Central Plains to search for teachers and they stood deep in the snow, waiting for the master to accept them. In the Song Dynasty, Fujian had so many schools with such high quality and such great affect that it was rare in the country. Free schools, public schools and private schools were also popular. Reading became a common practice. Not only in Fuzhou "one remembered the light and silence of the street and bridge, hearing the sound of reading aloud in the

lanes and alleys", but also in the remote county Taining "sound of music and reading aloud could be heard from house to house". The flourishing of education made miracles in the history of imperial examination. In the Five Dynasties Fujian only had a population of about 700 thousand, but there were 74 learners obtained the *Jinshi* degree. In the Northern and Southern Song Dynasties, in Fujian, there were 5987 learners received *Jinshi* degree and 22 won the title of *Zhuangyuan*, which was on the top in the country according to the proportion of population.

Education in Fujian was still on the top in the Dynasties of Yuan, Ming and Qing. In the Yuan Dynasty, there were subjects of Mongolian Character, Medicine and Technology (also called Yinyangology). In the Ming and the Qing Dynasties, there were more than thousand free schools and in the Qing Dynasty, there were Official Pronunciation Schools to rectify the local accent, and there were also Official Schools for the Eight Banners. And in the Dynasty, the westernizing party set up a Fujian Shipping Affair School in Fuzhou.

In the Dynasties of Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing in Fujian, dominating in the field of the academic ideology was the Minnology, which was born in the Northern and Southern Song Dynasty and developed up to the height in the South Song Dynasty with Zhu Xi as the representative the core of whose ideology was moral principles. In Chinese history, there were few academic schools that had such profound influence as the Minnology did. The kernel of the Minnology was Zhu Xi's ideology which was gradually taken by the rulers as official philosophy controlling the national social ideology after the rulers recognized its theoret-

ical value. The Minnology has also been introduced into Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Singapore and some other Southeast Asian countries and merged into the society and the reality of the countries producing Zhuziology in Japan, Tuixiology in Korea and so on. And the Minnology has brought into Europe and the United States and the study of Zhuzi's theory is very active in the West. The Minnology has gradually become a universal theory. In the ancient times, technology in Fujian was also flourishing. Just take the two Song Dynasties for example, there were Su Song, who was an astronomer and the writer of *The Summary of Newly Discovered Astronomic Signs*; Song Ci, who was the pioneer of the medical jurisprudence in the world and the writer of *A Collection of Justified Cases* and Zeng Gongliang, who was the editor in chief of *An Outline of Wushu*.

Religion in Fujian occupied a special place in the religious history of the country. Buddhism in Fujian has developed since the Tang Dynasty and the Five Dynasties where there appeared a great number of dignitaries who were closely related to the five zens. For example, the second founder of the Zen of Cao Dong originally came from Putian, the founder of the Zen of Yu Men, Wenyan, was a disciple of Yi Cun (from Nan'an) of Fuzhou Xuefeng Temple, the founder of the Zen of Fayuan, Wen Yi was one of the second generation of the disciples of Xuansha Shibei's (from Fuzhou), whom Wang Shenzhi respected, the founder of the Zen of Wei Yang, Ling You, was from Changxi (now Xiapu), and the founder of the Zen of Lin Ji, Yi Xuan, was the heir of Huang Bo of Fuqing. The printing of Buddhist Scripture was also well developed in Fujian. In the Song Dynasty, there

were altogether five editions of the *Dazang Scripture* privately or officially printed in the country, of which two were in Fujian, *Congning Wanshou Dazang* in the Dongchan Temple and *Pilu Dazang* in the Kaiyuan Temple. Dignitaries in Fujian had a close relation with those abroad. In 1654, Yinyuan, a dignitary from Huangbo Temple of Fuqing, brought a score of followers over to Japan, setting up the Zen of Huangbo in Japan. Almost all the known temples in Fujian had agencies abroad. Taoism was also flourish in Fujian. It is said in *Yunji Qiqian* that Wuyi Mountain in the North Fujian was regarded as the 16<sup>th</sup> spot of the 36 ones of Taoism and Mount Zhiti (Mount Huotong) in the East Fujian was another one. And in the florescence of Taoism, there were ninety-nine Taoist abbeys. Islam in Fujian was in rather big a scale in the Song Dynasty. At that time, Muslims came to Quanzhou by way of the Silk Road, settling there and building a huge mosque, the Saint Friend's. And in the Yuan Dynasty, they constructed some more mosques there. Christianity was introduced into Fujian as early as in the Wuzong period of the Tang Dynasty, but he who had the greatest influence was the missionary Aleni from Italy, who got to know all the famous scholars in Fujian, and who was regarded as *Confucius from the West*. And the folk religions in Fujian were quite popular. The sailing guard goddess Ma Zu, the water goddess Chen Jinggu, the childbearing protecting god Immortal Wu were believed in not only by Fujian folks but also by those in Taiwan and the overseas Minnanese in Southeast Asia.

The architecture in Fujian has a special value in the history of that of the country. The "Three Alleys and Seven Lanes" of

Fuzhou was first shaped in the late Eastern Jin Dynasty, which is typical of lane style in the construction of historical cultural cities in China, which is one of the rather complete existing ancient lane blocks in the South of China and where a number of houses of well-known historical persons and of buildings of the Ming and the Qing Dynasties, regarded as Museum of Architectures of the Ming and the Qing Dynasties. Zhaojiabao Village of Huxi Town of Zhangpu County has kept undamaged structures of Kaifeng, the capital city of the Song Dynasty. Tulou scattered in the Southwest of Fujian is the most typical and fascinating of the folk buildings in Fujian, which is "a great marvel in the the historical development of architecture" in China, even in the world and which can be "compared beauty with the Great Wall". Fujian is one of the areas that has the most ancient temples. Located in the Xi Street of Quanzhou, Kaiyuan Temple is the oldest and the greatest of the wooden structures in the South Fujian and it embodies a great number of break-through innovations dexterously combining the art of engraving and the techniques of structuring that have special cultural values in the history of architecture in the country. Situated in the Tumen Street of Quanzhou, Qingjing Temple, a treasure of architecture, is the oldest Islamist temple in China with its architectural typical of Islamist temple of the Middle Ages modified with Chinese traditional crafts. Bridges in Fujian are also well known; Luoyang Bridge and Anping Bridge are two out of the ten great bridges in Quanzhou. There is a saying that goes that bridges in Fujian are top in the country and bridges in Quanzhou are top in Fujian.

Although it lies in the southeast corner of the country far

from the political and cultural center, Fujian has produced a great number of brilliant persons from generation to generation like bright stars in the sky, among whom there have been quite a few that have had a great effect on China's history, not to mention such outstanding persons as Zhu Xi in the old times. In modern times in this tiny coign there emerged in a very short period scores of important persons like Lin Zexu, a national hero who was the first claiming prohibition of opium and resistance against western capitalist invasion, and who was regarded as the first one of the modern China "opening the eye toward the world" and whose patriotic verses, "to the benefit of the nation devoting the life and from the danger the country is in never shunning" quoted from his *Words to Family on setting off to Defend the Border*, have become a motto to the politicians dedicating their lives to the nation. Yan Fu was a well-known bourgeois enlightener and translator in the modern times, who was the first one systematically translating and introducing western bourgeois academic thoughts and who was praised as "top in studying both the west and China". Besides, there were some other outstanding figures as Lin Shu, Shen Baozhen, Lin Changyi, Guo Bocang, Chen Yan, Liu Buchan, Lin Yongsheng, Sa Zhenbing, Fang Shengdong, Lin Juemin, Lin Xu, etc. They were politicians, militarists, educators, writers, thinkers and translators who, to our surprise, covered various fields and played a very important part in Chinese modern history. The excellent traditions, such as the strong patriotic spirit, the determined truth pursuit, hearted aspiration for the strength of their motherland, have lasted to the present days.

## Chapter One

### History of the Min Culture

#### I. In Remote Antiquity Period and Shang-Zhou Period

According to the general cultural relic investigation before 1960s, there are as many as 1100 ancient relics in Fujian. The representative ones are as follows:

##### 1. Zhangzhou Culture in the Paleolithic Age, the Neolithic Age and the Shang-Zhou Period

The Paleolithic Age cultural sites of Zhangzhou are scattered on Lianhuachi Mountain and Zhulin Mountain in the northern suburb of Zhangzhou, which were discovered in a highway construction project in 1989. Gathered from the protophyte layer, are 27 pieces of the stoneware made in the Old Stone Age, with 23 pieces from Lianhuachi Mountain and 4 pieces from Zhulin Mountain. The stoneware can be cataloged into four kinds—kernels, slices, cutters and sharpeners. The Neolithic Age cultural sites of Zhangzhou are in Fuchuang Mountain in the suburb, Wangbao Mountain in Longhai County, Xiangshan in Zhangpu County, Damao Mountain in Dongshan County and Lazhou



Mountain in Zhaoan County, etc. Most of the discoveries are pottery slices, stoneware, stone pieces, animal bones and sea-shells. From these relics we can imagine the busy lives of the primitives who dwelt here around 7000 to 3000 years age. Because of the natural effect, they usually chose bay areas and top of isles and mounds as living quarters where they could possibly avoid strong winds and face sea and lived on fishing, hunting, picking shells and gathering fruits. (*The Prehistory Culture of Zhangzhou*, edited by You Yuzhu, Fujian People's Publishing House, 1991). According to the textual researches, there are 274 sites of the Shang-Zhou Periods' cultural relics discovered across Zhangzhou, mainly distributing on low hills, plateaus, slight slopes along the river, and slopes on seashore, top of isles and delta areas. Principally, the reliquiae are of three species: stoneware, pottery ware, bronze ware. (*The Prehistory Culture of Zhangzhou*)

## 2. Pingtan Keqiutou Cultural Relics

Located in Keqiutou, Nanlong Village, Pingyuan Town of the Pingtan Island, the biggest island in Fujian, the Neolithic cultural relic is about 5500 to 6000 years of age. The unearthed tools of production are mainly stoneware, bone object, such as forging tools, polishing adze, axe, hatchet and arrowhead, and large amount of sea shells and beast bones that indicate a primitive living chiefly on fishing and hunting; the unearthed pottery are mainly hand-made granulated round-bottom pottery, such as kettles, various jars, stemmed cups, plates, bowls and spinning wheels.

## 3. Minhou Tanshishan Culture