

艺术思想的片断



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艺术思想的片断(上)

Segments of Art Conception (I)

(by Xie Qingqing)



Preface

In the history of the development of Chinese print art, the influence from Buddhism plays a key role, engraving printing was first vastly adopted in the production of the Buddhist scripture which accounts a large percentage of the existing engraving printing masterpieces domestically. It also verifies that the necessity of the early religion spread is the primary momentum for the form of the engraving printing technique. Buddhist scripture has a great impact on the Buddhist mission, so that almost all the engraving Buddhist scriptures have the Buddhist illustrations on them. China witnessed a quick change of dynasties from the Sui to Tang and Qing dynasties as well as the tremendous social change, nevertheless, Buddhist print enjoys an unfailing vitality because of its being deeply rooted in its believers. Most of the Buddhist prints are produced by famous artists, boasting of delicate engraving and close-knit composition and presenting a sense of grandeur and elegance. Buddhist print is a unique flower which is bred by Chinese engraving printing and Buddhism culture, it has a particular culture taste and directly influenced the woodcarving illustration on the books of the Ming and Qing dynasties during when they presented a splendid light, thus Buddhist print becomes the originator of the Chinese visuality print.

In the face of the tremendous amount of Chinese ancient print, it encounters greater difficulty in collecting and researching Buddhist print compared with other subjects such as novel, drama, Confucianism, topography, technical skills and agriculture. With the process of the times, it is unavoidable to increase the extent of the damage, unclearness and disappearance. In spite of its long art history, there are seldom special

works left. Due to various reasons, for instance, decades of centuries' time passing, the difficulty to find circulated editions, the scattering of the print on different works, all of those make it rather hard to find, as a result, a complete and systematic collection, exploration, classification and research couldn't have been carried out successfully, let alone appreciation and utilization.

Mr. Zheng Zhen-duo is the father who contributed much to the collection, publishment and research of the Chinese ancient print during modern Chinese history. He dedicated himself to the collection of the print from 20's of 20th century, among which were mainly illustration print on novel and drama of the Ming and Qing dynasties and partly Buddhist print. On the basis of this collection, he published some editions such as The Catalog of the Chinese Ancient Print (《中国古代版画图录》), Print Selection of the Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties (《唐宋元明清版 画选》), Chinese Ancient Woodcarving Print Selection (《中国古代木刻画选 辑》), recording a number of Buddhist print which amounts to 30 pieces. Mr. Zhou Wu also covered Buddhist print in his two books, one is Chinese Ancient Print Collection《中国古代版画百图》, the other is Chinese Art Colleted Edition·Print Volume (《中国美术全集·版画卷》). Ms. Ge Wan-zhang collected the print from Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma (《妙法莲华经》) of the Song and Yuan dynasties' edition which is collected by Taiwan Palace Museum on her book named as The catalog of the Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma (《妙法莲华经图录》), she has also been in charge of the publishing of multi-media disks in recent years, covering the Buddhist printing which are collected by the museum. In his works of the History of the Chinese Ancient Books (《中国古代书籍史》) and thehe Authentication of the Ancient Book Edition《古书版本鉴定》, Zhi-zhong has special chapters to discuss the illustration print on the

ancient books. Besides, article titled Survey of Chinese Ancient Print(《中国美术全集·版画卷》) which is written by Mr. Wang Bo-Min also involves Buddhist print. Chinese Ancient Buddhist Print Collection(《中国古代佛教版画集》), chiefly edited by Mr. Zhou Xin-hui from Capital Library was published by Xuanyuan Publisher in 1998. It can be regarded as an outstanding work, coving over 600 pieces of Buddhist print, hundreds of editions from Tang dynasty to the end of the Qing dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China, it is so far the most complete work, it also attaches Mr. Zhou Xin-hui's article A Summary of the History of Chinese Ancient Buddhist Print(《中国古代佛教版画史综论》). No doubt, it will have a great contribution to the research and appreciation of the Buddhist print.

In addition, our national treasures, vast amount of early Buddhist print works which were snatched by Britain, France and Japanese countries from Mogao Grottoes at Dunhuang are still collected abroad, they embody the whole picture of the history of the Buddhist print, we are expecting those Dunhuang scripture volume would be made public soon, it will definitely have a marvelous meaning to the research of the spread and evolvement of the Buddhism in China, the history of the Chinese ancient print and engraving art, making the past serve the present as well as the reference and appreciation.

Chapter One Early Buddhist Art

Section One Introduction of the Buddhist Art

Buddhism is originated from India. According to the record of Buddhist scripture, Buddha Shakyamuni, also called Bhagavat or Sakya, was born on 565 B.C.(Spring and Autumn Period, the 7th year of Emperor Zhou Ling-wang,), he was almost at the same age of China's saint Confucius. Not come singly but in pairs, Muni has the same meaning as Saint, while Sakya was the name of a nation and kingdom of the north ancient India. It is said that Shakyamuni was originally the prince of Shuddhodana (about 618 B.C.-518 B.C.), the King of Kapilavastu of north ancient India (in the south of present Nepal). His mother Siddhartha dreamed that a white elephant came into her body and pregnant, then she gave birth to a son from her left rib under a banyan next year, and she called him Siddhartha Goutama, who was later became Buddha Shakyamuni. As described on the Buddhism scripture. auspicious and fantastic signs came from the sky when he was born. For instance, he could speak as soon as he was born and walk without others' help. Each of his seven steps appeared lotus, and there were nine dragons revolving above him, sprinkling to him for a bath, this is so called the story of Nine Dragon Welcome the Birth of Buddha. He was standing on the lotus, with one hand pointing up to the heaven, the other hand down the earth, shouting as loud as a lion: "I'm the highest one in the world." Such kind of recordation is certainly of some religious legend, serving for the supreme position for the Buddhism.

Born at a royal family, Shuddhodana hoped to cultivate Shakyamuni to be a wise king, he took care of him considerately, giving him an extravagant life with beauties around. With the touch of the sufferings of the sweet-bitterness, at the age of 29, Shakyamuni decided to abandon his royal life, the kingship, wealth, wife and children, be a monk to practice a religious life in a forest to find the truth of the death and life. He led an ascetic life under a Bodhi tree in Gaya Hill near Nairanjana River for seven years, overcoming various obstacles and finally got enlightened. On that very moment, the earth shook for him, gods glorified him, stramonium, golden flower, silver flower and lotus-flowers of seven jewels formed rain of flowers. Later, those symbols became the common background and decoration on the Buddhism art works.

After then, Buddha Shakyamuni traveled around the middle India, propagated and had a great many disciples. At the age of 80, he predicted that he was going to pass away and was buried under a Bodhi tree near the suburb of Kusingara Prayag. From the angle of the religion, he is the founder and father of the Buddhism, owning lots of disciples. From the angle of the world, he is the wisdom of the history of ancient ideas that persevered in exploring the truth of life, a philosopher who enlightening the whole generations of the art history. Therefore, stories of Shakyamuni from his born, religious cultivation, attainment of Buddhahood, propaganda to his being wiped out have become the most important subject of the Indian Buddhism art, Chinese Buddhism art and Buddhism print art.

Indian Buddhism art reached its peak during the period from about the 5th century B.C. to the 11th century A.D. No matter it is grotto statue, fresco or printing, all of them enjoyed a high level. Around the 11th century, The Islamic Crusades frequently intruded into India, temples and Buddha status were largely destroyed, thus Indian Buddhism art declined. Meanwhile, it is at the height of power and splendour period of Chinese Buddhism art. Compared with each other, it can't keep us from thinking that time brings a

great change to the worlds.

In accordance with the record on the volume 13 of *Cha Xiang Shi Copy*(《茶香室丛抄》) by scholar Yu Yue of the Qing dynasty: when Yan Zhaowang was still on his throne during the period of War State, an aged man from Sindhu came for a visit, he called himself Shi Luo, it's said that his finger can reach the top of the ten-story pagoda, three feet tall, he is a god from the heaven. It's recorded on *History*. *Dawan Biography* (《史记·大宛传》):" The southeastern of Daxia is Sindhu." *Index*(《索引》) quoted from Meng Kang: "Tianzhu is Buddha tower." Sindhu is actually the transliteration of India, tower refers to Buddha which is also called "Fo Tuo"("佛陀"). This aged man Shi Luo scilicet was a Buddhist coming from India. This is the earliest record indicating the introduction of Buddhism and Buddhism art to China.

However, posterity has some doubt on the authenticity of this recordation. Yu Yue, as a scholar of the Ming dynasty, recorded things happened in the period of War State and in the foreign region without evidence to prove it. It avoidlessly gives us an impression of hearsay. On the one hand, it was the beginning of the Buddhism in India at that time, disciples believed that Buddha was surpassing human beings; it was a great profanity to make Buddha status. So there was no image of the current Buddha in the Indian Buddhism art during that time when is called the No Image Period in the history of Indian Buddhism art. In conclusion, how does the statement of his finger can reach beyond the top of the ten-story pagoda come about? On the other hand, there might be the person named Shi Luo, while the said beyond the top of the pagoda is incorrectly relayed.

Another recordation on volume 11 of *A Collection of Guang hongming* (《广弘明集》) by Tang shi-fa-lin has a similar record: On the second year of Emperor Qing Shihuang (220 B.C.), an artist named Lie Yi from Qian Xiao,

western region came for a visit. It's said that he could paint a group of fantastic and cunning images by pouring ink from his mouth. During the Qing dynasty, Chinese learned few about the Buddhism; it's natural that they couldn't figure out what Lie Yi was painting. Fa Lin, as a Buddhist, should present three Buddha gifts as respect instead of regarding it as cunning objects. It turns out that this recordation should have nothing to do with the introduction of Buddhism to China. In other words, we should just listen to these with all the insensibility of distrust. From the history record much more credible, the time that Chinese began to know about Buddhism should date back to West Han. The spread of Buddhism to the East is much later than it.

According to Wei Shu· Shi Lao Zhuan (Wei Shu: Historyof the Northern Wei; Shi Lao Zhi: Treatise on Buddhism and Daoism) (《魏书·释老志》): "Zhang Qian was sent as an envoy to Da Xia, he returned with the information that there was Buddhism in Tianzhu." Zhan Qian was a famous diplomat of the West Han dynasty; his reliable record shows that it was not until the middle period of the West Han dynasty that Chinese began to have some sensible knowledge of Buddhism. While its real meaningful spread to the east should be East Han dynasty Emperor Ming ages.

According to Hou Han Shu(《后汉书》The history of the late Han dynasty): Emperor Ming of Han dreamed of a golden man with rays of light above his head and god guarding him in the sky. Fu Yi who was a Lai Tai Ling Shi (an official title during the Han dynasty who was in charge of the management of the collected books) explained the dream as in the western; they called the god as Buddha who was 3.69 meter tall in golden. After then, Emperor Ming send doctor Cai Yin and Doctor Qin Liang to Gandhara area in India to study Buddhism on the 10th year of Yong Ping(67th A.D.). One year later, they brought back Forty-two Sections (《四十二章经》) and sculpture of Sakyamuni.

Emperor made an imperial order so that we have the first temple in history-White House Temple on the west of Yongguan, Luoyang, where to put the sacrifices. Furthermore, Emperor Ming ordered royal painters to produce paintings of the west region, therefore, the famous *fresco Qian Chen Wan Qi Rao Tao San Za Tu* (literally meaning that thousands of horses running around the tower for three circles) (《千乘万骑绕塔礼佛三匝图》). It marks the real beginning of the Chinese Buddhism art and plays an important role in promoting its spread in China.

Section Two Early Buddhist Art

Since Buddhism being introduced into China, it met the needs of different social classes, ranging from emperor and officials to the general public, so it spread with a fast speed and quickly replaced Taoism, Chinese traditional religion and achieved the uppermost position in Chinese religion. With this profound foundation, diversiform Buddhism art emerged soon and made a tremendous development. It took on a prosperous situation during the Three Kingdoms, Two Jins and the Northern and Southern Dynasties. In a word, there are following features of Buddhism art during that period:

Statues and sculptures in temples. During the Three Kingdoms, Two Jins and the Northern and Southern dynasties, large numbers of temples and statues were built along the YangZi River. Poet Du Mu of the Tang dynasty portrayed:" Hundreds of tempers were built in the Nan dynasty. Countless towers stood quietly in the misty rains." It appropriately described the situation then. In the book of Temples and Monasteries in Luoyang(《洛阳伽蓝记》) by Yang Xian of the Bei Wei dynasty, there is a description that when Bodhidharma, the founder of zen, stayed at Yong Ning Temple, Luoyang, he was convinced by the Buddha sculptures with outstanding workmanship,