

中国户县农民画史略

THE SURVEY OF CHINESE FARMER PAINTING IN HU COUNTY

畫之鄉的美譽

裏的農民在田間勞



動之餘以勞動場面

李琰君 王西平 著

陝西人民美術出版社

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序 言

西安理工大学艺术与设计学院院长 王家民

琰君出于艺术世家,毕业于西安美术学院,文化基础厚实。他作为户县人为户县农民画写史,是合适的。

他请我写序,可能又是不合适的。虽然,先于他在西安美术学院求学时曾去过户县的涝店、陂头等地与农民画家有过“同吃、同住、同画”的经历。但那已经是上世纪的70年代的事儿了,后来还参观过几次,那只是走马观花,匆匆而过,难于把握改革开放30年以来户县农民画的新发展和新变化。好在确切意义上户县农民画的50来年的历史并不是很长,其熟悉的内容与通俗化的形式也并不深奥,那就只有勉为其难而作序。

户县农民画是民间绘画艺术的特定形态

一般来说,户县农民画的历程似乎是比较明晰的。即:一是起步于1957年左右,配合社会主义建设的群众美术和“大跃进”的墙头壁画活动;二是活跃于1963~1964年的配合社会主义阶级教育的“三史”图画(片)展览活动;三是显赫于1970~1976年“文化大革命”时期的农民画活动;四是70年代末,经过困惑、反思后的再发展、再繁荣时期。近年来,产生了一些把户县农民画划归为“政治化”的文化艺术活动而不屑一顾的现象,这是需要深入研究、认真对待的。

琰君和王西平先生所撰写的《中国户县农民画史略》,在更

深入、全面、公正、客观地研究户县农民画史的基础上,探究户县农民画的艺术特征和文化意义。他排除一般化地判定户县农民画的简单方法,把户县农民画与民间艺术整体联系起来的讨论是具有特色的。显然,户县农民画是民间绘画艺术的特定形态,是具有独立审美意义的文化创造活动。

民间绘画艺术是人民群众创作的、用以美化装饰环境、丰富民情风俗并在日常生活中应用及流行的美术创造活动,其作者主体是普通劳动者。这种民间绘画艺术活动贯穿于人民群众生活和精神活动的各个领域,直接反映劳动人民的思想感情和审美趣味,显示出他们的聪明智慧和艺术才能。诸如建筑的雕梁画栋、服饰的染织刺绣、宗教祭祀的图符壁画、节庆民俗的装饰绘画、丧葬礼俗的墓穴壁画等这些种类繁多、形制多样的民间绘画艺术,文化内涵深厚。它以稚拙简洁、朴实无华的装饰性视觉语言体现了人们对物质生活和精神审美的追求,又反映了人类童年的天真,也代表了人类对未来的美好希望。

诞生在“大跃进”时期的户县农民画带有鲜明的时代烙印。普通的户县农民群众把传统的剪纸、刺绣、木版年画等这些用于炕围、灶台等生活装饰的民间绘画艺术形态,扩而大之并转移至户外的大幅墙面之上,绘制“用起重机吊大玉米棒或者划着豆荚渡江之类的浪漫主义的虚构图景”等作品,无疑是一种形式创新与内容的再创造。虽然受当时浮夸、冒进等社会风气的影响,但它们所流露出劳动人民天真、质朴的乐观主义精神,带有民间文化的真挚、刚健气息。这些初期的户县农民画,是劳动者与天奋斗、与地奋斗的颂歌,是整个农民劳动阶层为自己树立的生活纪念碑,也是他们对于理想境界中的社会主义、

共产主义的期盼。因此,无论从作者主体、画作目的与过程、内容与形式等方面来进行分析,户县农民画都是民间绘画艺术的特定形态,是对民族历史文化传统的继承和发展。也是在“多、快、好、省建设社会主义”总路线、实现农业增产增收、加速“赶超英美、争做强国”的特定历史时期进行民族自信心和民族自豪感教育的时代需要。

1988年,户县被文化部命名为中国现代民间绘画之乡的称号而成为农村文化建设的典型。这样,既是对于户县农民画艺术成就的充分肯定,也从政府的层面上解决了户县农民画的文化意义和民间绘画的准确定位问题。

户县农民画是特定历史阶段的文化符号

从艺术社会学角度来探讨,经历了半个多世纪时代风云变化的户县农民画,无论是从作者与作品、艺术与商品,还是从艺术生态与再创造等层面上都是能与时并进、不断转化与发展,而成为一个又一个历史阶段的特定文化符号。

在“大跃进”以后,许多地方的农村业余美术活动都销声匿迹了,而户县农民画却抓住了办“三史”展览这个机会,在夹缝中求得生存和发展,这为以后户县农民画的辉煌奠定了基础。在“文革”时期,户县农民画是被提升到社会主义文化的高度来加以认识的,它被认为是代表了一种新的社会主义文化。这种文化之新不仅体现在它是以农民群众为表现对象,也在于它本身就是作为历史主体的农民群众所创造的。更为重要的是,它所创造的作为历史主体而出现的农民形象也恰好迎合了那一时期文化政治的需要,而成为艺术服务于政治、服务于阶级斗争的文化工具。

户县农民画在上世纪 80 年代“民间美术热”时期,借鉴金山农民画走上了专家们所指引的“还乡”之路,把根基扎在民间,自觉不自觉地迎合了改革开放、融入世界性的“文化寻根”热潮。画面中的形象不再是以前那个带着自豪感来的自我张扬并力图把握世界、创造历史的农民主体,而是充分运用了一些民间艺术的符号进行再创造,高扬起了民俗文化、民间绘画的鲜明旗帜。因此,户县农民画又成为对外开放、走出国门的重要文化标志。

户县农民画,是经过丁济棠、刘群汉等专业美术工作者地辛勤辅导,依赖于李凤兰、刘志德、雒志俭、樊志华、刘知贵和王景龙等一批著名作者和先后涌现出来的 200 多名农民画家为创作主体。他们一手拿着锄头,一手拿着画笔,勾勒出了一幅幅美丽的图画。他们画土地、画庄稼,画猪狗牛羊和农家小院,他们在生活中创造艺术! 50 多年来,户县农民画经久不衰,生机勃勃,成果丰硕,累计创作作品 3 万多件,其中 1500 多件作品在国家级刊物发表,400 多件在国内各美术展览中获奖,9000 多件应邀在日本、美国、澳大利亚、新西兰、加拿大、英国、瑞典、法国、挪威、丹麦等 68 个国家和地区展出,18700 多件被国际友人和国外博物馆收藏。户县农民画既通过各种媒介走进了中国的千家万户、走进了人民大会堂,又走进了国外的许多家庭和公共场所,还被作为珍贵礼品馈赠给许多外国元首。

户县农民画的表现手法地域痕迹明显,色彩以大红大紫为主色,描述奇特夸张化,主题寓意深邃,风格简洁明快。关中平原美丽的田园风光,逼真的农家生活,壮观的劳动场面和喜气洋洋的节日庆典场面均包罗其中,充分体现了现代民间艺术的

特点。他们不是用双手在画画,而是用心灵在画画,其构图、造型、色彩无不充分体现了丰厚的文化底蕴,而且洋溢着现代艺术气息。具有很高的学术价值和收藏价值,艺术品位不俗。显然,户县农民画已经成为世界了解中国民间绘画艺术的重要组成部分,且在我国经济建设大潮中较好地解决了艺术与商品的关系问题,把农民的艺术创造转化为文化商品和文明结晶。

户县农民画非物质文化遗产的价值与期待

户县农民画,植根于中国绘画艺术沃土,具有鲜明的关中大地域特色。它把我国传统的民间剪纸、皮影、壁画、民间年画等造型艺术表现手法,以现代意识运用到表现当代农村生活的绘画作品中去,充分体现了现代民间绘画的特点。关中美丽的田园风光与栩栩如生的农家生活,气氛热烈的生产劳动场面与欢天喜地的节日庆典,以及北方农民豪爽而刚毅的精神气质等,共同构成了户县农民画的地域特色。因而,它已不是简单意义上农民绘制的画,而是在传统与现代坐标上,通过“纵向的继承,横向的移植”,紧密结合,多层面地拓展了农民绘画的空间,给延续了几千年的中国民间绘画艺术注入新的血液,带来新的活力。

时下对“户县农民画”、现代民间绘画及有关艺术理论、市场等方面的研究,已经超出“画”的范畴。这不仅是关于民族与地域、文化与伦理、习俗和生存的价值观问题,而且更多地涉及“非物质文化遗产”保护的诸多问题。农民画作为一种传统文化形态的现代化发展,其中的是与非、长与短的争论没有停止过,关于原生态的保护与文化基因的扬弃矛盾是否存在,作为非物质文化遗产的“算”与“不算”、“管”与“不管”等方面,还需

要更多的志士仁人做更多的思考、更多的工作。

琰君和王西平先生的《中国户县农民画史略》，可能在朝这个目标上走出了重要的一步。期望他们再接再厉，不懈努力，在推进户县农民画的繁荣与发展、推进户县农民画的非物质文化遗产建设等方面做出更大的成绩。

2008.8.9 于曲江池畔

Preface

Li Yanjun was born in a family of arts of Hu County. He graduated from Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts and has the profound cultural foundation. With such personal background, it's very appropriate for him to write something about the history of the Farmer Painting of Hu County.

Yet maybe it is not proper for me to write this preface for him. When I was a student of Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, I went to such places as Lao Dian and Po Tou in Hu County, stayed there and did the drawing with the farmer painters there together. Though this experience took place earlier than his, it happened in 1970, a long time ago. In following years, I did visit the places several times, but always in a hurry, so it is unlikely to grasp the new developments and changes of these peasant paintings over the 30 years since the reformation and opening of China. Fortunately, Farmer Painting of Hu County, in the specific way, has only a history of about 50 years, and the contents familiar to people and the popular form are not so difficult to understand, so in some sense, I can get this job done.

Farmer painting of Hu County — the specific form of folk drawing arts

Generally speaking, the history of Farmer Painting of Hu County seems to be rather clear. First, it started from the mural painting activity in mass arts and the "Great Leap Forward

Movement" in 1957, which aimed to promote the construction of the socialism; Then it became active with the picture exhibiting activities about the "Instruction Movement of the history of family, village and communes" within 1963—1964, which aimed to help the farmers know their past hard experiences and promote the education of socialism class; Third, the farmer painting activity became prosperous in the period of "Cultural Revolution" from 1970 to 1976; Forth, after some confusion and reflection, the farmer painting reached the stage of high level of development and prosperity. In recent years, some people classify the Farmer Painting of Hu County as some kind of "political" cultural art activity, thus holding the indifferent attitude towards it, so we need to study it deeply and take it seriously

On the basis of a more profound, comprehensive, impartial and objective study on Farmer Painting of Hu County, Mr. Li Yanjun and Mr. Wang Xiping wrote the book, the *Survey of Chinese Farmer Painting* in Hu County in which he explores the artistic features and cultural significance of Farmer Painting of Hu County. He excludes the simple and common way of judging the Farmer Painting of Hu County, and links it with the whole folk arts, which has its own features. It's apparent that Farmer Fainting of Hu County is a specific form of arts of folk drawing, and a cultural creative activity with independent aesthetic significance.

Folk drawing arts are created by the mass people. They are used to beautify our living places, enrich the folk culture and customs. They are created by common farmers and frequently used in our daily life as a creative activity of popular arts. This artistic activity of folk drawing goes into every aspect of people'

s life and spiritual activity, directly reflecting the feelings and aesthetics of the working people, and showing their wisdom and artistic talent. Various kinds of folk drawing arts such as carvings in buildings, dyeing, weaving, and embroidery in clothing, icons and frescos in religious sacrifice, decorations and drawings in festivals and folk customs, tomb fresco in funeral, they all carry profound cultural values. Through the simple and concise visual language, they reflect the people's pursuit of material life and spiritual aesthetics and human being's naivety, and all this represents people's wish for the good future.

Farmer Painting of Hu County, born in the period of the "Great Leap Forward Movement" takes on its historical feature. The common people in Hu County use such folk drawing artistic forms as cutting, embroidery, and graphic arts, which are frequently used to decorate their kang (*a kind of bed made of bricks and earth*) and hearth, and then develop them and apply them to the outdoor walls' decoration. They draw such imaginative romantic pictures like lifting the maize cobs by using cranes or crossing the river with bean pods, which is undoubtedly the innovation of the form and recreation of the content in painting. Though influenced by the social trends of over-pomp and rising, the naive and simple optimistic spirit reflected in these pictures still carried a sincere and strong spirit of folk culture. The early farmer paintings of Hu County is a carol of the working people who struggle with the physical world, a life monument erected by the working class, and also a kind of aspiration for socialism and communism in their spiritual world. Therefore, whether from the viewpoint of the painters, the purpose and the process of drawing or from the angle of the content and form,

Farmer Painting of Hu County can be regarded as a specific form of folk drawing art and the development of national and historical cultural tradition. In the period guided by the principle of increasing the agricultural production and income and “surpassing the UK and the US, striving to be a strong power fast” in a “more, quicker, better and economical way”, it is a necessary thing to enhance the education of national confidence and pride in the particular historical period.

In 1988, Hu County was named “the hometown of Chinese modern folk drawing” by the Ministry of Culture, thus becoming the model of rural cultural construction. This not only gives approval to the artistic achievements of Farmer Painting of Hu County, but also recognizes the cultural significance of Farmer Painting of Hu County and finds the proper position for “folk drawing” from the governmental level.

Farmer Painting of Hu County—the cultural symbol of specific historical period

Farmer Painting of Hu County has experienced the change of more than 50 years, but from the perspective of artistic sociology, either in the way of the painters or the works, arts or the way of commodity, or artistic ecology and recreation, Farmer Painting of Hu County can proceed with the time. It changes and develops continuously and becomes the specific symbol of various historical periods.

After the “Great Leap Forward Movement”, many local rural nonprofessional activities disappeared, but Farmer Painting of Hu County seized the opportunity of picture exhibiting in holding “Instruction Movement of the History of Family, Village and Communes” and strived for existence and development

in the crack, which served as a solid foundation for the prosperity of Farmer Painting of Hu County. In the period of "Cultural Revolution", Farmer painting of Hu County was recognized from the higher level of socialist culture and was deemed as a representation of a new socialism culture. Its novelty lies in the fact that the working people are both the painters and the subjects in the paintings. More importantly, the peasant image as the historical subject created in the paintings satisfied the need of the culture and politics in that period, thus becoming the cultural tool of arts serving politics and class struggle.

In the period of the "folk arts trend" in 1980s, Farmer Painting of Hu County learnt something from the Jinshan peasant paintings and guided by the experts, they took the road of "going back to their own life" and put its roots into the ordinary people, thus meeting with the trends of opening up and integrating into the international "searching for cultural roots". However, the image is no longer the peasants, who are trying to grasp the world and create the history with great pride and self-expressing spirit. Some folk artistic symbols are fully used to recreate their painting style and raise the banner of folk culture. Therefore, Farmer Painting of Hu County has become an important cultural symbol of opening up and going out to the outside world.

Farmer Painting of Hu County was once helped by such artistic workers as Ding Jitang, Liu Qiuhuan, and such famous painters and authors as Li Fenglan, Liu Zhide, Luo Zhijian, Fan Zhihua, Liu Zhigui, and Wang Jinglong. More than 200 farmer painters also become the main creating group. They often draw many beautiful pictures when they work with the hoe in the

fields. They draw the earth, the crops, pigs, dogs, cows, sheep, and the rural houses, creating art in their life. Over the 50 years, Farmer Painting of Hu County has remained vigorous with more than 30,000 pieces of works, among which over 1500 have been published in the national journal, 400 won the prizes in various art exhibition of our country, 9000 are invited to be exhibited in 68 countries and regions like Japan, the US, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Britain, Sweden, France, Norway, and Denmark, 18700 are collected by international friends and foreign museums. Through media of different kinds, Farmer Painting of Hu County has entered Chinese households, the People's Great Hall, many households and public areas of other countries and they are also presented to some foreign presidents as a precious gift.

Farmer Painting of Hu County has its regional features with bright red and purple as its main colors. It is unique and exaggerated in depiction, profound in theme, and simple and clear in style. The beautiful rural sights, vivid rural life, grand working scene and joyful festivals are all included, which fully reflect the features of modern folk arts. They are drawing not only with hands but also with their heart, for the shape and color all embody its profound cultural values, and are brimming with modern artistic tendencies, great academic and collection value, and high artistic taste. It is apparent that Farmer Painting of Hu County has become an important component in knowing Chinese folk drawing arts, and it has done a good job in dealing with the relationship between arts and commodity in our economic construction and the transformation of peasants' artistic creation into cultural commodity and the civilization crystal.

The value of non-material cultural relics of Farmer Painting of Hu County and its prospects

Farmer Painting of Hu County takes its roots in Chinese fertile drawing and artistic soil, with vivid regional features of central Shaanxi. It applies the artistic expression of Chinese traditional folk cutting, shadow play, fresco, folk New Year's picture into the modern rural life with modern sense, and it fully represents the features of modern folk drawing. The beautiful rural sights of central Shaanxi, vivid rural life, working scene, and joyous festival, and the forthright and strong spirit of peasants in the north, all these become the regional features of central Shaanxi in Farmer Painting of Hu County. Therefore, it's not the picture drawn by the peasants in the traditional sense, but the close combination of traditional sense and modern sense in the way of "vertical inheritance and horizontal transplantation". It broadens the space for peasant drawing in various levels and brings fresh blood and new vitality to Chinese folk drawing arts, which lasts for thousands of years. The current research on Farmer Painting of Hu County, modern folk drawing, other related theories, and market has been beyond the category of "drawing" itself. It is not only about the problem of the value in a race and religion, culture and ethics, custom and existence, but also involves the problems of protecting "non-material cultural relics". As the modernized development of traditional cultural form, the debate on both sides of Farmer Painting of Hu County has never stopped. Whether the contradiction between the ecological protection and cultural genes still exists, whether it can be protected as non-material cultural relics, such problems

are urged to be solved by the efforts from more committed people.

The *Survey of Chinese Farmer Painting in Hu County*, written by Li Yanjun and Mr Wang Xiping may have taken an important step toward this end. It is hoped that they will continue their unremitting efforts to boost the prosperity and development of Farmer Painting of Hu County and make greater contribution to the construction of the non-material cultural relics of Farmer Painting of Hu County.

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