

Confusion and Path and Direction of Value

Study on the Aesthetic Experience of Ethnic Minorities in China from the Perspective of Aesthetic Anthropology*

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Abstract—The study of aesthetic experience is an important and confusing problem both in the study of traditional aesthetics and modern aesthetic anthropology. From the perspective of traditional aesthetics, due to the vagueness of aesthetic experience cognition, the diversity of the concept of aesthetic experience and the diversity of aesthetic experience in "aesthetic distortion", the aesthetic experience has been in a puzzling state for a long time in the study of aesthetics. From the perspective of aesthetic anthropology, the study of aesthetic experience of China's ethnic minorities should be oriented by "problem awareness" and stick to the combination of theoretical research and empirical research. It should pay attention to the realistic expression of the aesthetic experience of ethnic minorities in China and the complex problems of cultural representation, and deeply explain the internal connection between the macro "Chinese experience" and the micro "national aesthetic experience". It tries to reveal that the aesthetic experience of ethnic minorities in China not only has the function of inheriting culture and tradition, but also has the value and significance of transcending tradition and leading to the future.

Keywords—aesthetic anthropology; chinese minority aesthetic experience; research path; value orientation

I. INTRODUCTION

The study of aesthetic experience is a fundamental issue in the study of aesthetics. Different nations have different aesthetic experience, thus formed different aesthetic systems. Professor Wang Jie, a well-known expert in Marxist aesthetics and aesthetic anthropology in China, pointed out: "The theoretical foundation of Chinese aesthetics should be based on the interpretation of cultural anthropology of Chinese experience, which includes the peculiar mode of production, way of life, the system of social organization, and the psychological and aesthetic habits restrained. These all determine the way of thinking, emotional characteristics and expression of Chinese people." [1] According to Wifried Van

Daumme, a Dutch aesthetic anthropologist, the research on aesthetic anthropology should be of a grandfield of view including empiricism, contextualism and cross-cultural comparison. [2] It can be seen that the study of aesthetic experience is complicated and important in the study of aesthetics and aesthetic anthropology. However, the study of aesthetic experience is a question full of charm and perplexity both in the field of aesthetics research and in the field of aesthetic anthropology research.

II. THE CONFUSION IN THE STUDY OF AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF AESTHETICS

The study of aesthetic experience has always been an important and confusing one among many aesthetic problems. On the one hand, as an important content of human social art and aesthetic activity, aesthetic experience always dominates and affects human artistic creation and aesthetic practice. On the other hand, as a special "aesthetic" experience in human society, aesthetic experience often makes people "confused" or trapped in the dilemma of "interpretation limit". "Art is experience", "the ultimate aesthetic experience" are the representational forms of two prominent theoretical "being intending to mystification" and "demystification". German aesthetician Jausss once asked: "What does the aesthetic experience mean? How does the aesthetic experience show itself in the history of art? What significance might aesthetic experience have for the current art theory? For a long time, these questions have been on the periphery of aesthetic theory and literary hermeneutics. Whether before or after aesthetics becoming an independent discipline, in all the thinking of the theory of art, these questions were overshadowed by the its legacy from Platonism's ontology and the metaphysics of beauty.....Where the reality of art is given precedence over the experience of art, it often conceals the legacy of Platonism, which makes people feel that Platonism is still alive in the philosophy of art of our time. But the aesthetic activity precisely makes the objects integrated into the works through the artistic experience. For this reason, the question of aesthetic practice, which underpins all the art of production, acceptance and communication, has not yet been made clear and is worth revisiting." [3] There are many reasons why the study of aesthetic experience is an "unsolved" problem. In my opinion, there are mainly three reasons.

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One is the ambiguity of aesthetic experience. In the western aesthetic field, there are mainly three different views on what is aesthetic experience. One view is that aesthetic experience is a unique aesthetic experience that distinguishes daily lives, as Ernst Cassirer argues: "Our aesthetic perceptions are more diverse than our ordinary sensory perceptions and they belong to a more complex level. In sensory perception, we are always content to recognize some common invariable features of the things around us. Aesthetic experience is incomparably rich. It breeds infinite possibilities that can never be realized in ordinary sensory experience. In the artist's work, these possibilities become reality: they are exposed and have a definite form. The inexhaustibility of everything expressed is one of the greatest privileges and charms of art." [4] The second view is that aesthetic experience and daily life experience are both internal emotional expressions of people, and there is no essential difference between them. Aesthetic experience cannot be separated from daily life experience, which is a kind of comprehensive, perfect, balanced and systematic life experience; the third view is in the middle of the first and second view. It contends that aesthetic experience is not a special experience in contrast with daily life experience. Aesthetic experience is derived from daily life experience, but different from daily life experience. Daily life experience is the foundation and source of aesthetic experience and it is transferred to aesthetic experience through "aesthetic feelings". Aesthetic experience is the most pure, perfect and clear climax in daily life experience, which is the "peak experience" generated in daily life. From the four dimensions of aesthetic experience: the value dimension, phenomenology dimension, semantics dimension and demarcation definition dimension, Schuster summarized the understanding of aesthetic experience in the western aesthetics circle. In his view, "first, the aesthetic experience is basically valuable and enjoyable, which is the so-called dimension of evaluation. Second, the aesthetic experience is something vividly and subjectively experienced, which deeply attracts us, makes our attention to immediate existence, and thus stands out from the flow of daily experience. This is the so-called phenomenological dimension. Thirdly, aesthetic experience is a meaningful experience, not a simple feeling. This is the so-called semantic dimension. Fourth, the aesthetic experience is a kind of distinguishing experience, which can distinguish the art of beauty from other reappearance art, and this is the so-called demarcation definition dimension. [5] Because of the different perspective of cognition, it also leads to the difference and ambiguity of aesthetic experience. In the field of Chinese aesthetics, the understanding of what is aesthetic experience is quite different from that of the west. If the western aesthetics research on aesthetic experience focuses on the metaphysical inquiry of the aesthetic "experience" and the exploration of its origin, the study of aesthetic experience of Chinese aesthetics focuses on the perception of aesthetic "experience" and its detailed description of these perceptions. The aesthetic experience is represented by "expressing emotions, observation, making friends, satire and remonstrance", "subtle enlightenment", "lasting appeal", "image", "artistic conception" and other forms. The aesthetic experience from the perspective of Chinese aesthetics is often integrated with

the ethical experience and artistic experience in daily life. The aesthetic experience is often presented as a kind of "fuzzy" emotional experience and aesthetic conception, which has real meaning but is hard to tell.

The second is the diversity of aesthetic experience intonations. Throughout the history of Chinese and western aesthetic development, there is no unified definition of aesthetic experience. In the history of western aesthetics, aesthetic experience is often replaced by aesthetic terms such as "aesthetic", "aesthetic experience", "aesthetic taste", "aesthetic consciousness", "aesthetic attitude" and "aesthetic concept". In the history of Chinese aesthetics, aesthetic experience is often regarded as "subtle enlightenment", "expressing emotions", "mutual appreciation", "taste", "interest", "charm", "scene of interest", "spirit", "charm", "image", "artistic conception" and other concepts. "Although the aesthetic experience has long been regarded as the most basic aesthetic concept in the field of art, it has been increasingly criticized in the last half century," said Schusterman, "not only its value but also its existence has been questioned." [6] As different concepts have great differences in the content, level, depth and breadth of aesthetic experience, it directly leads to various uncertainties in aesthetic experience research. Especially in the era of globalized media, the aesthetics of daily life and the daily aesthetics will become increasingly popular. Various aesthetic objects have broken the traditional single existence pattern. With the extensive application of various simulation, virtual and adhesive technologies, various aesthetic objects are merged into one, which makes the study of aesthetic experience more complicated. The definition of aesthetic experience is full of more uncertainties. As the famous American aesthetician Frederick Jameson put it: "In a culture so dominated by vision and our own images, the concept of aesthetic experience is both too little and too much." [7] The so-called "too much" is that in the face of a rich and colorful modern society, different aestheticians' understanding and definition of aesthetic experience show various forms. The so-called "too little" that there is no relatively unified understanding and definition of aesthetic experience.

Third, the aesthetic experience has the diversity of "aesthetic deformation". In Marxist ideology theory, aesthetic deformation is essentially human's aesthetic transformation of realistic relations in the process of social practice while art is the historical accumulation of human aesthetic experience and the aesthetic expression of realistic relationship. "Art arises from the social need for people to grasp real life relationships and to communicate with each other. In fact, there is a profound contradiction in its origin: the contradiction between the sociality of aesthetic communication, the standardization of aesthetic symbols, the fluidity of realistic relations, and the individuality of aesthetic experience." [8] Whether in the production of art or in the acceptance and exchange of art, aesthetic deformation is always accompanied by the whole process of artistic production, acceptance and communication. As an important factor of the writer's artistic creation and the reader's aesthetic acceptance, aesthetic experience always affects and dominates the aesthetic transformation of art. In the process of artistic creation, aesthetic experience is

condensed in specific art forms. In the process of art acceptance and communication, the aesthetic experience will present various fresh activities. It can be seen that the aesthetic experience is both diachronic and synchronic. Aesthetic experience is accumulated as historical aesthetic experience in various artistic aesthetic deformation, which is connected with current aesthetic experience and future aesthetic pursuit and ideal. At the same time, aesthetic experience, as a direct experience of art aesthetics, has a very complex emotional experience and aesthetic interactivity. Therefore, there exists the relation between aesthetic experience and art. On the one hand, different historical periods have different aesthetic consciousness and aesthetic experience, which leads to artistic forms representing specific historical periods. On the other hand, when the same aesthetic experience represents the aesthetic ideology of art in different times, it will present various aesthetic deformation, and thus produce different art forms. This diversity of aesthetic deformation makes the study of "veracity" and "substantiality" of aesthetic experience a problem that cannot be clarified. As a result, in the study of aesthetic experience of art, due to the lack of understanding of the historical situation of aesthetic art and different aesthetic accumulation of art, the infinity dispute of "Each says he is right" or the borderless dilemma of theoretical interpretation often occurs.

III. THE RESEARCH PATH OF AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE OF CHINA'S ETHNIC MINORITIES FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF AESTHETIC ANTHROPOLOGY

Under the current historical conditions, the study of aesthetic experience has distinct national characteristics and the mission of The Times. In 2016, president Xi pointed out in his speech at the Symposium on Philosophy and Social Science Work: "We should follow the approach of setting foot on China, drawing on foreign countries, exploring history, grasping the contemporary era, caring for human beings and facing the future, build philosophy and social science with Chinese characteristics, and fully embody Chinese characteristics, Chinese style and Chinese manner in guiding ideology, discipline system, academic system and discourse system", in order to construct philosophy and social science with Chinese characteristics. In contemporary China, "Chinese experience" has become a global concern. The theoretical explanation of "Chinese experience", the construction of discourse system and the way of expression have become a hot topic in academic circles. It will become an important mission of contemporary Chinese philosophy and social science to figure out how to construct the discourse system of "Chinese experience" based on "Chinese experience" and the theoretical resources of foreign countries, and to interpret "Chinese experience" effectively with the expression mechanism of discourse with Chinese characteristics.

"Chinese experience" is not a general academic "label", nor is it just an abstract theoretical generalization. In different subjects, "Chinese experience" presents different theoretical connotation and problem horizon. For the study of aesthetic anthropology, the study of "Chinese experience" has its own unique theoretical perspective and academic quality, which is embodied in the following aspects:

In the problem domain. The study of "Chinese experience" by aesthetic anthropology is mainly based on "aesthetic experience". It highlights the aesthetic experience of Chinese society in the context of globalization, focusing on the aesthetic experience of Chinese nation. In particular, this paper makes an in-depth analysis and interpretation of the practical expression and cultural representation of the aesthetic experience of ethnic minorities in China.

Research methods. Guided by the basic theory of aesthetics and drawing on the philosophy of anthropological fieldwork and case empirical research, aesthetic anthropology makes the study of "Chinese experience" both academic and empirical and avoids "hollowness" of the research theory of "Chinese experience" and confusion of cultural case study.

In terms of research objects. If "Chinese experience" is a "big tradition" formed by the 56 ethnic groups in China, then aesthetic anthropology mainly studies "national aesthetic experience" and "small tradition" under "Chinese experience" and "big tradition". To be specific, it is to select the minority ethnic culture features and cultural representation forms that are representative of "national aesthetic experience" as the research object.

In terms of research content. The study of "Chinese experience" by aesthetic anthropology is not to depict the grand narration of "Chinese experience", nor to explain the theoretical basis and philosophical significance of "Chinese experience", but to take cultural events and cultural representation forms that represent the aesthetic experience of ethnic minorities as the research object. And through in-depth field investigation and rigorous theoretical analysis, this paper explains how these national cultural events and cultural representation forms converge and show the tradition of "Chinese experience", and that "Chinese experience" are accumulated in different national cultural events and cultural representation forms.

In terms of goal orientation. Aesthetic anthropology takes the study of the aesthetic experience of ethnic minorities in China as the entry point to explore the aesthetic model of the aesthetic experience of different ethnic minorities and its inherent cultural formation mechanism. It reveals the multiple manifestations and realistic expression mechanism of "Chinese experience" presented by these vivid ethnic aesthetic experiences in different regional, ethnic and historical contexts, and further enriches and promotes the comprehensive and in-depth study of "macro" and "Chinese experience" through the "micro" study of national aesthetic experience.

IV. THE VALUE OF NATIONAL AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE RESEARCH

On January 25, 2017, the general office of the communist party of China central committee and the general office of the state council issued the Opinions on the Implementation of China's Excellent Traditional Culture Inheritance and Development Project, which noted that: "culture is the blood of the nation and the spiritual home of the people. Cultural confidence is a more fundamental, deeper and enduring force. The unique concept, wisdom, bearing and charm of Chinese

culture have added to the confidence and pride of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation... Chinese culture has a long and splendid history. The outstanding traditional Chinese culture, which has been cultivated in the development of over 5,000 years of civilization, embodies the deepest spiritual pursuit of the Chinese nation and represents the unique spiritual mark of the Chinese nation. It is a rich source of nourishment for the Chinese nation to flourish and grow stronger, a cultural fertile soil rooted in socialism with Chinese characteristics, and a prominent advantage of contemporary China's development. It will play an important role in sustaining and developing the Chinese civilization and promoting the progress of human civilization." The Chinese culture is inseparable from the unique aesthetic experience of the Chinese nation. Chinese aesthetic experience, as a unique spiritual symbol of the Chinese nation, plays an extremely important role in inheriting and carrying forward China's excellent traditional culture.

Human aesthetic activities have both commonality and inherent particularity, and different nations have different aesthetic experience and preference, as Fang Lili said: "When we enter into the study of people's aesthetic experience in their daily lives, or even into the study of the aesthetic experience of individual groups or individuals in the manner of anthropological fieldwork, we will find that the traditional, unified and universal aesthetic principle or essence is not completely established. There is certain sameness in the aesthetic experience or standard among nations and individuals, but at the same time there is also a group experience and individual experience that is different from theirs." [9] The generation of national aesthetic experience is closely related to the social material foundation, national culture habit, aesthetic custom and cultural ecology. National aesthetic experience needs to be conveyed and manifested by certain national art forms. For the study of national aesthetic experience, the theoretical deduction of the essence, connotation and value of the so-called aesthetic experience is meaningless if it is not combined with specific national aesthetic customs, cultural habits and art forms. In the same way, the study of aesthetic experience will fall into the dilemma of "empty" and "rootless" studying the boundary and attribute national aesthetic experience metaphysically without the specific and vivid art field and art form. In the big family of 56 ethnic groups in China, the aesthetic experience of each ethnic group has gone through thousands of years of historical baptism and accumulation, casting a variety of excellent traditional culture and colorful art representation forms. The study of aesthetic anthropology on national aesthetic experience is to use the western aesthetic experience for reference, take the exploration of the connotation of aesthetic experience of China's various ethnic groups as a basis to integrate anthropological "physical" research methods and aesthetic "metaphysical" thinking paradigm. Through in-depth fieldwork on the national survival situation, cultural habits, aesthetic customs and so on, it studied and interpreted the artistic representation form and its intrinsic formation mechanism of the national aesthetic experience. In this way, the ability of cultural innovation and construction of each nation can be improved. For the study of aesthetic experience of ethnic minorities, it is to be guided by the research concept

of aesthetic anthropology. It is necessary to draw on the theoretical results of the study on aesthetic experience in western aesthetics and anthropology, take the representative ethnic minority aesthetic experience as the entry point and take the characteristics of aesthetic experience of ethnic minorities as the main research content. We should try to reveal how different ethnic aesthetic experience condenses into artistic representation forms with distinctive national characteristics, and that different national art forms reveal the national aesthetic experience with unique temperament and character through in-depth anthropological fieldwork and aesthetic theory interpretation of different ethnic art forms.

V. CONCLUSION

The national aesthetic experience not only has the function of inheriting culture and inheriting tradition, but also has the value and significance of transcending tradition and pointing to the future. In modern society, with the modernization and globalization of culture, ethnic aesthetic experience, especially minority aesthetic experience, has become a scarce cultural resource. The minority aesthetic experience highlights its uniqueness and value as "the other". In today's cultural globalization, in the cultural development trend of "national as well as world, world as well as nation", how to maintain the characteristics of Chinese minority culture in development and retain the tradition in innovation, and finally realize the ideal state of "Each culture has its own cultural beauty, each culture adores others' cultural beauty, all the cultural beauty complements each other, and the whole world is in a great harmony." is the value and academic mission of aesthetic anthropology on the study of national aesthetic experience.

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