

Research on the Inscriptions on Ancient Bronze Objects and Related Issues under the Visual Threshold of Calligraphy National Exhibition

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Abstract: In recent years, the selected rate continues to rise in the calligraphy works taking as the model of inscriptions on ancient bronze objects in national calligraphy exhibitions, which reflects the current situation of taking as seal characters' models in the calligraphy circle and the aesthetic orientation of calligraphers. Based on the analysis of the relevant data of seal characters in the calligraphy national Exhibition, this paper reveals the status and development trend of works taking as the model of inscriptions, and further discusses the gains, losses and prospects of calligraphy creation taking as the model of inscriptions in the national exhibition.

Keywords: National Exhibition; Seal Characters; Inscriptions on Ancient Bronze Objects; Model.

1. Introduction

In the evolution of Chinese characters and calligraphy, the emergence of inscriptions of bronze holds immense significance. On one hand, it signifies the gradual maturation of Chinese character forms and calligraphy as a writing skill. On the other hand, spanning over 1,800 years from the Yin and Shang dynasties to the Qin and Han dynasties, its development can be categorized into Shang and Zhou inscriptions of bronze as well as Qin and Han, forming an extensive system with diverse styles. The mature writing techniques and profound historical background of inscriptions of bronze have greatly enriched the style and aesthetic essence of Chinese calligraphy. In recent years, inscriptions of bronze have increasingly become a significant subject for seal calligraphy creators. This paper aims to explore the model taking as inscriptions of bronze along with related aspects by analyzing seal calligraphy works showcased in national exhibitions.

2. The Current Situation Taking as the Model of Inscriptions on Ancient Bronze Objects in Calligraphy Exhibitions in Recent Years

Since the Song Dynasty, bronze objects have been unearthed, which has attracted the attentions of many scholars. For example, Ouyang Xiu, Zhao Mingcheng and Liu Chang, who pioneered the study of epigraphy, reached its peak in the Song Dynasty. However, the study of epigraphy in the Song Dynasty mainly focused on the study of the history of classics and the study of philology, and paid little attention to calligraphy. The seal script in this period mainly took as the models of "two Lis". The Song Dynasty epigraphy laid the foundation for the prosperity of the Qing Dynasty epigraphy, especially the study of ancient bronze ware. In the Qing Dynasty, the scholars were often calligraphers. The dual identity of scholars made them not only study the classics and prove history through the materials of the epigraphy, but also put their eyes on the calligraphy of the inscriptions on ancient

bronze objects' style. The style gradually became the objects learned by calligraphers, and shaped a large number of famous calligraphers, such as Yang Yisun, Wu Dacheng and Wu Changshuo, who had extremely high attainments in the style. Since the 1980s, the exhibition sponsored by the Chinese Calligraphers Association (referred to as the "National Exhibition") has become the most important calligraphy competition at all levels for its high specifications, large number of contributions and strict evaluation. As a national calligraphy competition, the calligraphy National Exhibition has also attracted the attention of the calligraphy circle and creators. The works of national exhibition can reflect the level of calligraphy creation and the aesthetic orientation of calligraphers to a large extent. This paper makes data statistics on the seal character works of national Exhibition of calligraphy, and reveals the situation and development trend of taking as inscriptions on ancient bronze objects' model. The following table is the preliminary statistics of the relevant data of important exhibitions sponsored by the Chinese Calligraphers Association in recent years:

The data in the table above shows that: (1) In all the seal characters exhibited in the past, the Inscription on ancient bronze objects of Shang and Zhou Dynasties accounted for 30% to 38.8% of the total number of seal characters, of which the style of Western Zhou Dynasty were the main ones. (2) The proportion of the inscription on ancient bronze objects in Qin and Han dynasties continues to rise, becoming a new highlight. (3) The number of inscription on ancient bronze objects in the total number of seal characters has increased year by year, reaching a maximum of 46.1%. It can be seen that Inscription on ancient bronze objects has become a popular choice in national exhibitions in recent years, especially in taking as the seal characters' model; In addition, from the 11th National Exhibition to the 3rd exhibition, the total number of inscription on ancient bronze objects into the exhibition accounted for from 27% to 42.3%, reflecting the calligraphy creation is still "of primitive quality" aesthetic taste.

Table 1. Statistics table of the proportion of taking as inscriptions on ancient bronze objects' model in national exhibitions in recent years

	The 11th National Exhibition(2015)	The 3rd Seal characters exhibition(2015)	The 12th National Exhibition(2019)	The ninth new show Exhibition(2021)	The 3rd facsimile exhibition(2023)
Seal characters' amount	50	206	92	30	26
West Zhou	13(26%)	70(34%)	23(25%)	9(30%)	8(30.8%)
East Zhou	2(4%)	10(4.8%)	4(4.3%)	2(6.7%)	1(3.8%)
Qin and Han	1(1%)	6(2.9%)	8(8.6%)	3(10%)	3(11.5%)
Inscription on ancient bronze objects' amount	16(31%)	86(41.7%)	35(37.9%)	14(46.7%)	12(46.1%)

3. Promote the Feasibility of Integrating Inscription on Ancient Bronze Objects into the National Exhibition

3.1. The Richness of Inscription on Ancient Bronze Objects

The richness of inscription on ancient bronze objects is reflected in two aspects. One is the large number. According to the statistics of the Digital Processing System of Shang and Zhou inscription on ancient bronze objects, there are more than 15,000 bronze wares with inscriptions, especially in the Western Zhou Dynasty, the number of inscriptions has changed from a few words in the Shang Dynasty to hundreds of words, forming a complete aesthetic system of inscription on ancient bronze objects. Second, the style of inscription on ancient bronze objects is diverse. Mr. Hu Changchun, calligraphy College of Zhengzhou University, divides inscription on ancient bronze objects into 24 styles and lists representative inscriptions according to the classification method of Huang Yue's The Twenty-Four moods of paintings. This is Mr. Hu only on the Shang and Zhou Dynasties inscription on ancient bronze objects' style division, and Qin and Han inscription on ancient bronze objects also have many items, which shows the richness of this style. In addition, it is also an important reference object for people to learn the self-appearance formed by the Qing Dynasty calligraphers on the basis of the inscription on ancient bronze objects.

3.2. The Spirit of Inscription on Ancient Bronze Objects' Style Division

The ancient Chinese admired "the morality of ancient people", and Chinese calligraphy and painting art also pursued "old artistic conception", which has become an important aesthetic category in Chinese art. inscription on ancient bronze objects meets the requirement of "old artistic conception" in terms of its time and aesthetic characteristics. The bronze wares are all the elegant objects of literatis in all dynasties. Therefore, the study and research of the inscription also conforms to the value pursuit of " old artistic conception " in Chinese Confucian tradition and artistic aesthetics. At the same time, the contemporary study, mining and research of the calligraphy make the cultural information and aesthetic value carried by this font develop in the inheritance. CAI

Yong, a Han Dynasty calligrapher, said: "practicing calligraphy, first sit quietly and meditate, at will, keeping silent, regulating breath, indulging in the calligraphy mien, liking facing the Supreme, and there is no bad." " liking facing the Supreme " is the spirit of the practice of inscription on ancient bronze objects calligraphy. Bronze ritual vessels have important symbolic significance and appear in major ceremonies such as sacrifice and banquet. Most inscription on ancient bronze objects are cast or engraved on bronze ritual vessels, which are used to record major events such as sacrifice, reward, expedition, legal system and king's achievements. Therefore, inscription on ancient bronze objects is essentially a kind of ritual text, and its creation itself has the meaning of "immortality", so the text is dignified and solemn, graceful and elegant, and has a profound and bearing, so that it has an unusual ritual significance. Contemporary inscription on ancient bronze objects learning should hold this kind of reverent and solemn mentality.

4. The Gains, Losses and Prospects of Inscription on Ancient Bronze Objects in the National Exhibition

4.1. Gains and Losses

In recent decades, the aesthetic pursuit of "calligraphy diversification" has become more and more obvious in national exhibitions, and a variety of writing styles and various styles of works have blossomed. Seal characters are numerous in quantity, diverse in style and rich in expression, and the seal characters in national exhibitions also show the trend of diversification. At present, seal script works' styles from the National exhibition are indeed more extensive than before. Not only oracle bones, inscription on ancient bronze objects, but also special materials such as bamboo slip and silk and jade script have become the resources for the creators to create new works. However, the breadth and depth of learning about inscription on ancient bronze objects are still to be explored. As mentioned above, at present, there are more than 15,000 bronzes with inscriptions, but in various exhibitions, there are still many similarities in the selection of this kind of calligraphy. On the one hand, the creators have limited access to materials, on the other hand, the exhibition works learn from each other, and even some creators simply copy the exhibition works. It is worth noting that although the proportion continues to rise in Qin and Han' inscription on ancient bronze objects in national exhibitions in recent years,

the number of works taken from Qin and Han' inscription on ancient bronze objects in various exhibitions is still relatively small, which is worth further exploration. However, in recent years, the inscription on ancient bronze objects works are quite rich in form, and the art of composition have the patterns of lines with columns, lines without columns, and no lines without columns. The whole work is accompanied by intensive minor script or cursive hand, forming a contrast of density, dynamic and static; Drawing on the bold use of ink in the cursive script of the Ming and Qing dynasties to form a strong contrast between dry and wet; In addition, multi-color splicing, imitation rubbings and other forms are also creative.

4.2. Prospects

4.2.1. Attach Importance to Improving the Electronic Database of Inscription on Ancient Bronze Objects Materials

In the continuous promotion of a large number of previous sorting work and calligraphy digitization projects, many paper versions of inscription on ancient bronze objects pictures and research documents have been digitized, and researchers can browse these materials through the Internet. However, there are some bronze inscriptions that have been lost abroad that are still difficult for researchers to see, although older scholars have tried to investigate and compile a book of lost artifacts. For example, Umehara Sueji published in 1933 "The Essence of the Ancient Bronze", Chen Mengjia compiled in 1963 "Chinese Bronze Relics looted by American imperialism" and Li Xueqin and Aylan published in 1995 "Chinese Bronze Relics in Europe", although some overseas public and private collections are included, but only a small part of them. Some museums in China have also published catalogues of their collections, especially in Taiwan, where high-definition electronic images are still difficult to obtain. At present, the classification of inscription on ancient bronze objects is mostly divided according to the collection place, royal lineage and philology standards, and there is no comprehensive and systematic classification system based on the style of inscription on ancient bronze objects calligraphy. The collection, classification and digitization of inscription on ancient bronze objects calligraphy materials should be promoted as an important work of calligraphy digitization project, so as to provide greater convenience for calligraphy creation and theory study.

4.2.2. Improve the Philology Literacy of the Creators

In the creation of ancient Chinese calligraphy, the primary attention is paid to the correct use of words, which is not only the guarantee of the quality of artistic works, but also the embodiment of the creator's cultural literacy. In recent years, the weight of text reading has strengthened in the evaluation rules of national exhibition, and put forward new requirements for the use of text by creators. However, the key to really improve the standardization of the use of words by creators lies in the study and research of ancient Chinese philology. In the "Traditional cultural cultivation and contemporary calligraphy Creation" advanced research class sponsored by the Chinese Calligraphers Association, the teaching and discussion of philology are also added, but the depth is not strong and the target is not strong, and the audience is small. The reform of the review mechanism of the National exhibition has greatly strengthened the role of provincial and municipal Calligraphers Association associations in the review of the National exhibition, and greatly improved the organization of the creator groups. Like the high-level research class sponsored by the Chinese Calligraphers Association, it should be vigorously promoted in the Calligraphers associations at all levels to continuously improve the popularity of philology knowledge.

Under the diversified trend of calligraphy aesthetics and creation, the old artistic conception, interest and spirit contained in inscriptions of bronze calligraphy provide rich creative ideas and aesthetic style for contemporary calligraphy practice.

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