

Development and Decline of Christian Civilization in Western Medieval Art

Xing Li

Sichuan international studies university, Sichuan, China

Abstract: The word "middle ages", the earliest Renaissance era. It is the 15th century to the 16th century Italian humanism more than ong linguist and historians and others first. Because they are admirers of Greek and Roman classical culture, they believe that in the western Roman empire and their own time between this a long time, is a cultural decline and the period of "barbaric", also think it's age is highly developed classical culture "Renaissance" period, so the classical culture decline to this period of time before the Renaissance, called "in the middle of the century", namely "middle ages".

Keywords: Western medieval art, Christian civilization, middle ages

1. INTRODUCTION

Since 476, when the western Roman empire to the Renaissance in the 15th century; also have considered that began in 313 promulgated the "ordered" Christianity by the Roman empire became legal religion; also have considered began in Rome in 395 divided into the Roman empire.

2. THE CHRISTIANITY CIVILIZATION

2.1 The produce of Christianity

Christianity is the origin of the Hebrew religion, Greek philosophy, its predecessor is Judaism, absorbs the teachings of Judaism. Produced in the first century of the Roman, originated in Palestine, formation and development in the Roman empire. And widely spread in the eastern Mediterranean region, to 3-4 centuries, it has gone from exploitation and oppression against the lower people's religious gradually evolved into the dominant independent religion, its early nature, social foundation, doctrine, church groups, and Canon etiquette is huge and deep changes have taken place, has increasingly become the rule of the Roman empire the government tools. Also becomes a church of Rome.

2.2 Christian civilization

Christian called the Jewish Bible Old Testament, and compiling the New Testament, and the New Testament and the Old Testament together became the Bible of Christianity.

Bring about Christian art: early influenced by Christianity against idolatry, technique of expression with the moral and symbolic, such as the fruit of the vine, the symbol of Christianity, fish and good shepherd symbol of Christ, the pigeon said heart, peacock said forever, heart symbolize love, etc.; Affected by hierarchical characters proportion exaggerated; Rejection sculpture image simplification to unreal planarity.

After Christianity split into two most things, architectural style is also divided into two big systems, in Western Europe, the Roman arch structure and Byzantine to the development of shape of the church; In Eastern Europe, the development of the ancient Roman dome structure and centralized shape the church. The adornment of the early Christian architecture is indoors, mainly adopts colorful materials and display; Splendid marble pillars and stigma; Lower wall and the ground is the color of the marble Mosaic, wall act the role of porphyry, mother-of-pearl, agate, etc., the upper half of the wall Mosaic mural is the biblical story.

Early Christian sculpture due to prevailing burial popular carved on the sarcophagus.

2.3 The role of Christianity

(1) positive aspects: at the beginning of the Middle Ages, the Christian church in promoting the formation of the feudal system and the preservation of ancient culture, Islam in accelerating the unity of the Arab countries, has its positive role in history.

Christian church in Western European feudal hierarchy, retained for the Roman culture and development, and for the preservation of the agricultural production techniques and contribute to improve. Such as: the world's common era calendar passage is on the basis of the Christian era calendar. Medieval architecture, painting, etc, are all church pioneer of characters, such as the Gothic, Roman, and Renaissance church building, the Last Supper of Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo's Genesis, "Armageddon", Raphael's the School of Athens, are all church frescoes and zenith.

(2) the negative aspects: in the Middle Ages, the church's run and ridiculous superstition, as well as the cultural despotism and obscurantism. Seriously block the progress of thought and culture.

3. THE HEIGHT OF THE MIDDLE AGES (1050-1300) OF PROSPERITY

3.1 The development of agriculture and farm tools

10 to 11 centuries, social productivity improved significantly. Along with the increase in iron tools and the improvement of farming land, especially with the horse traction pulley iron

pear and two nursery, three nursery system widely popular and large area of cultivation, productivity is growing. Water is also widely used, Netherlands, invented the wind mill. Horse neck harness improvements, such as leather collars and horseshoe Ma Cheng for effective weight of animals, and number of horse to drag heavy plow or truck and drove into team. Wind mill and power efficiency to provide a new source of power.

"Agricultural revolution" (about 1050) from 1050 to make the food more abundant, and for the economic development and the growth of other fields provides a solid foundation. Population increase rapidly, and urban development, so that we can call it a "revolution" city.

A. the condition of agricultural development: (1) until mid - 11th century, European civilization focus shift from the Mediterranean Sea to the north Atlantic region. In order to develop from the south of England to the ural mountains most of northern Europe, is a vast, wet and very fertile alluvial plain. Must develop new farming tools and methods. (2) the right climate, lasted from 700 to 700, Western Europe, the emergence of a crop breeding "optimal condition". (3) good government provides agricultural expansion required a more lasting peace. (4) the introduction of three field crop rotation system, the new farming system helps to allocate labor in a year of farming. Increase the output of 1/3 to 2/3. (5) the tremendous increase of arable land quantity and has cultivated land more elaborate cultivation.

B. the development of the farming tools: (1) the use of heavy plow, heavy plow can not only deal with thick soil, furthermore, it put on a new parts, can ploughing ditch, keep soil sufficiently breathable. Its effectiveness is immeasurable. The heavy plow facilitate farming land previously pastureland, (2) the use of the mill, mastered the complex technology of hydraulic mill 1050, in 1170 built wind mill, using wind mill see-saw, processing cloth, oil, beer, for calcined iron champs power as well as the paper pulp. (3) the improvement of the harness horse replace cattle as farm animals, about 800 years. A gasketed horse yoke used in farming; Roughly a century later, iron horseshoe first to protect the water chestnut; About 1050 years before and after. Before and after the double horse against harness the use of, make the mark of pull before. (4) wheels and the use of the rake, rake used for leveling the land, the seeds of ploughing after mixed in. 5. The widespread use of iron, to enhance the strength of various kinds of farm tools.

3.2 Trade and the development of the city

The development of tools and arable land expansion appeared large-scale agricultural business diversification and specialization. In many areas and sheep breeding, cultivation of grape wine, or cotton crops and dye. These new industries in local consumption, but there are many many products used for long-distance trade, or provide new industrial raw materials, the most important thing is weaving industry. We will see, the growth in trade and manufacturing help trigger and support the growth of the town. The surge of agriculture also in another way to help maintain the growth of cities, the huge population explosion.

The revival of the trade and the development of towns is with the agricultural revolution, the liberation of the serfs and noble life increasingly sophisticated in inseparable. With the constant improvement of the professional, wine, or cotton category can be used to far away places. In addition to the land transport, rivers and the sea voyage line were used. In addition to the development of money and credit. Towns are also greatly promote the trade increase rapidly. On the other hand, the development of trade, the economic life of the common active is the main cause of urban growth.

The significance of urban revolution: (1) is the driving force of economic development, providing market, manufactured goods, keep the prosperity of the whole economic system. (2) the rise of towns, enormous contribution to enrich the knowledge of the west life. (3) making an important contribution to the development of town to the government, such as tax, file storage and decision-making of public participation and so on a series of new system.

3.3 The rise of the feudal monarchy

In 476 AD, the destruction of the western Roman empire, is an important symbol of transition from slavery to the feudal system of Western Europe, to the 11th century, the western European feudal process is basically complete.

With the diversification of large-scale agricultural management and specialization and scale in the agriculture farm land. Estate first appeared in the era of add lorraine, which in turn until the 12th century, it has been in northwest Europe in most places the main form of rural social and economic organization. With the development of the agricultural revolution, in the 13th century, the most of Europe, estate in the disintegration of the serf system gradually. Social productivity and the development of urban economy. The domestic market formation and the increase of the public power of the feudal "grade monarchy" countries. From the late 15th century to the about the century, in Europe, Britain, France and many other countries in the absolute monarchy instead of "level of the monarchy". The feudal monarchy and the system of ancient Rome or system compared with lorraine. It makes more people directly involved in the political life of the actual operation. The monarchy nation with can build a more powerful government.

3.4 Religion and knowledge by leaps and bounds

1050 years later, Pope became the highest religious leader of the western Christian world, the Pope after get power, injected new vitality into the Christianity itself. At the same time. The western knowledge and cultural life also get great revival.

3.4.1 Religion

(1) the reformation: with the disintegration of the add lorraine empire, religion, separation of powers, and corruption of the church. Religious reform before and after the 11th century, the Pope: first, in order to manage local secular power off or the power of control, the monastery directly obey the Pope. Second, to modify the monastery, to set up many "points the convent. When the northern iii as the Pope, the Pope system reached its peak period. In 1215 he was the fourth Lateran religious meeting in Rome. The meeting has been clear about the core teachings of the Christian faith, that the Pope in the Christian leadership is more clear.

(2) the significance of the reformation: a. the Pope of the church to strengthen the international rule the consistency of the international communication and religious activities. B.the Pope to instill church law, which leads to the increasing respect for all kinds of law, often help protect other subjects of the lack of protection. Such as widows and orphans. C. the Pope in the church to eliminate business office, improve the cleric discipline has also achieved some success.

3.4.2. Of Knowledge

The major achievements: (1) knowledge of the development of education and literacy; The birth and development of university. Classical and islamic knowledge; The actual progress on westerners in thought.

(2) the change of education: (a) the development of the school, the increase of the number of the school, the town church school is increasingly become the main European education center.) ; (b) courses increased (church officials due to other aspects of knowledge, so must open other courses); (c) the development of the secular education (around 1200, more and more not priests and never want to be a priest students start to enter the school. They began to read as a symbol of status.) (d) the rise of university (have a fixed schedule or organized staff, community composed of teachers and students, the purpose is to protect their own interests and power, about 1200, pollan of the university and the university of Paris as the prototype.

3.5 Romanesque and gothic art

3.5.1 Romanesque art

Romanesque art appeared in the 10th century, 11th century developed rapidly, the 11 century in the 12th century. Romanesque art originated from Western Europe, with the expansion of the Roman church spread eastward to the north, in the Christian world. Romanesque art essence mainly embodied in the Roman architecture, monasteries, small church (cathedral), Roman paintings mainly includes paintings, books color painting (the bible manuscripts illustration), glass Mosaic and embroidered tapestries pattern. Murals, glass

Mosaic is two Roman building interior decoration form. Sculpture is not only decoration construction also has publicity doctrine, and in harmony with the building structure, so the carved image highlights the geometry modelling or elongated or be shortened, and twisted.

(1) the art of Roman architecture style.

Roman architecture style from the 10th century, formed in the 11th century and 12th century religious reform movement to establish many new the monastery and the cathedral. In Brazil, the church architecture evolved on the basis of. It is for the purpose of through to all construction details and strictly obey the unified system show the glory in the church building. Roman architecture is very strict, therefore, emphasis on building system.

Roman architecture style is in Rome, the early Christian and Byzantine architecture and develops on the basis of the essence of the Roman architecture besides churches and monasteries, castles, monuments, town houses in the periphery of buildings and several churches and monasteries.

Basic features: arch, strong stone walls, the walls and pillars is very heavy, narrow window is given priority to with horizontal lines. Sometimes simple and bright inside the construction contrasts spelling a flower pattern and murals. Have added some sculptures inside and outside the church, this is an important invention of Christian art. The whole body of human image comprehensive appeared on the surface of the building for the first time.

Church buildings adopt arch and beam combination system, greatly expand the internal space of the building. Thick walls, majestic towers and circular cross GongQiong strengthen the robustness of building, decorative and dimension sense. Roman architecture has strong characteristics of feudal castle, is used in great quantities in the architectural decoration carving, mainly in building outside wall, and the building is one integrated mass. These adornment as the works of ancient Greek and Roman "monumental" verve, and contains a certain tendency of folk realism. The most famous buildings in Rome is the Leaning Tower of Pisa in Italy.

(2) the Roman sculpture features: 1. Not realistic. Influenced by the bible has changed the classical honesty. Exaggeration and deformation. 2. Comply with the law framework. Besides decoration carving, the modelling to obey in building its own structure and rhythm, this is the law framework. 3. More time and space. A carving performance different scenarios. The integrity of the contents of such facilitating performance doctrine. 4. The primary and secondary and clear. Christianity is the supreme god, a religious system headed by the Pope. Figure size to its status.

(3) Roman painting features: less prominent in the Romanesque art painting, mainly within the church stained glass paint, silver inlaid and frescoes, manuscripts and popular books of miniature illustrations. Stained-glass embedded with ICONS and saints story is given priority to, used to decorate the church Windows. It begins with the lorraine dynasty, had reached a peak in the gothic art, in France in the summer of Abbey 21 century glass paintings are the most famous flower. Mosaic is mainly affected by the east Roman empire, Byzantine art style, in Venice, Italy st. mark's church a Mosaic of religion as the typical representative, is also popular in Tuscany, Rome, Sicily, etc.

The Romanesque period of biblical manuscripts illustrations mainly in northern France, Belgium and the monastery hand-written workshops in southern England. They are generally with clear and strong line draw the outline of the outline of characters, then assign to bright beautiful colour. Screen clear and concise, highly decorative. Inherited from the Irish manuscripts and green coloured drawing or pattern the characteristics of Romanesque art is abstract and line of two important influence. The codex painting is in the ancient Mediterranean art, Byzantine art, and "barbarian" art developed on the basis of.

3.5.2 Gothic art

The word "gothic" was originally by Italian Renaissance scholar "invention", is used to describe the late medieval architecture style popular in the north of the Alps region. Then it gradually used in gothic painting and sculpture.

Gothic age began around the year 1150, approximately extends for three centuries. Gothic style involved in the late middle ages almost all of the plastic arts category, in addition to the so-called pure art in the field of architecture, monumental sculptures and murals, such as traditional drawing board. Also includes the Mosaic color window craft sculpture, book binding and woven carpet design, etc. First from the development of gothic architecture, sculpture, painting (including mural painting, board painting, printmaking, codex enamel and even stained glass Windows) the development of the order.

Gothic sculpture to around 1200 which took out of the building and for the independence of the confiscated from its highest achievement is in in 1220 and 1420; From 1300 to 1350 in half a century gothic painting appeared a creative peak in Italy, Florence's Giotto more western painting will be led into the creation of a new peak.

(1) the artistic style of gothic architecture

In the twelfth century and 13th century, Europe's most parts of the Roman architectural style is replaced by the gothic style. Gothic architecture is lightsome, desire to fly, vertical lines and over all the details. The gothic style is more complex than the Roman architecture style, more refined, more exquisite.

Basic features: the pointed arch, cross ribbed vault and the flying buttresses, appear light and high; The skeleton structure of the vertical axis; The towering spires, rose window, exquisite stone flower pane, carved reliefs, multiple colonnade, grotesque statues and genie statue for decoration. External decoration generally focus on the church, in addition to the stained glass Windows, and wood and alter the fine carving on the outside, the interior is quite simple.

(2) features of gothic carvings: gothic sculpture art portraits of main show is the center of the church family relief, as well as the tickets are in and stand on the virgin and Christ and the saints stands resemble. More human than Roman sculpture, richer and more freedom, like the story of Jesus' youth and passion, highlighting misery and sad mood.

(3) the gothic painting: including glass Mosaic, hand-written illustrations, murals, similar to carving. Glass Mosaic due to the expanding of the church Windows had great progress,

stained glass portrait smaller, more delicate than the Romanesque period, colour is more diverse, more complex images.

4. THE DECLINE OF THE MIDDLE AGES (1300-1500)

The cause of the decline: (1) all kinds of disaster hit the whole Western Europe. Such as: soil depletion, climate change cold and too much rain, famine and plague. The spread of the plague has greatly contributed to Europe's economic crisis (2) war, (3) agricultural development has reached the limit, do not use scientific farming system, crop yield cannot be improved, the production and the cultivated land are reduced, resulting in economic recession. (4) mid 14th century Europe still excess population, population growth is faster than the growth of the food supply. Now that the continuing rapid population growth and the decline in grain production, food supply and grain prices soaring. (5) the decline of the feudal system and the reformation of expansion and disintegration of religion.

REFERENCES

- [1] RuXin editor, karanjia: the western architecture [M], higher education press, 2010.
- [2] written by na zhang: "the Summer Palace," [M], jilin literature publishing house, 2009.
- [3] written by Li Shujian: "the suzhou garden" [M], jilin literature publishing house, 2009.