

The Legend of Stone and the Custom of Praying for Rain

-- Based on Field Investigation in Gulang County, Wuwei City, Gansu Province

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Abstract

In this paper, the circulation form and characteristics of lingshi legend text in Gulang County, Wuwei city are elaborated, and the relationship between it and the local custom of praying for rain is analyzed, which reflects people's life values and ideals and beliefs. Thus, it presents a clear and complete form of local folk culture, which is of theoretical and practical significance to supplement and enrich relevant research fields.

Keywords

Gulang County; Lingshi Legend; Pray for Rain.

1. Introduction

The legends of sacred stones spread in Hexi Corridor are mainly based on the rich historical and cultural relics of "stone" in Hexi Corridor, which have been accumulated and spread through generations for a long time. The legend of "Ganzhou Stone" in Gulang County of Wuwei city spreads in the five places of Hexi according to different regional scope and levels of multi-cultural interaction. In this paper, the spread characteristics of ganzhou stone legend represented by Gulang County of Wuwei city are explained.

2. The Overview of Xishanbao Village and Xishanbao Village of Gufeng Township

Gulang County is located in the northwest of Gansu Province. The total area is 5,287 square kilometers. Gulang has been inhabited by many nationalities since ancient times. There are nine ethnic groups in the county, namely Han, Tibetan, Hui, Tu, Manchu, Dongxiang, Maunan, Mongolian and Yao, with a total population of 398,000, 375,800 of which are agricultural. The average altitude is 2500 meters, and the average annual temperature is 5.6°C, the maximum extreme temperature is 36.6 °C, and the minimum temperature is -31 °C. The annual precipitation is 300 mm, evaporation 2292 mm, frost-free period of about 140 days. Gulang county with one street, nine town, 10 townships: ancient town streets, ancient sea town, sea SiShui Town, TuMen Town, jing town, pei home town, haizi beach town, ning town, antelope sichuan town, pine yi town, yongfeng beach township, west township, chrysanthemum beach jing township township, civil rights, straight beach township, new BaoXiang, dry in the urban and rural township, beams, 18 BaoXiang, GuFeng township.

Gulang County is low in the north and high in the south, ranging from 1550 meters to 3469 meters above sea level, with an average elevation of 2,500 meters. The total area is 5,287 square kilometers, with mountains, rivers and sand accounting for one-third of each. The cultivated land area is 1.1 million mu. The normal annual planting area is about 800,000 mu, and the irrigation area is 420,000 mu. Gulang belongs to the alpine subarid zone of Qilian Mountains and the cold and warm zone of Hexi. Dream realization new village is the administrative village

under the jurisdiction of Xijing town, Gulang County, Wuwei City, Gansu Province, dream realization new village and weimin new village, sunshine new village, Limin new village, Thanksgiving new village, Huimin new village, Seven duntai village, Aimin new village, peak village, xingmin new village, pingyuan village, gu Shan village, Xijing village adjacent. Dream new village near the road beach desert ecological tourism area, the Red Army west road ancient wave campaign memorial hall, ancient wave Stone gate gorge, Changling Mountain scenic spot, Gulang County west Road Red Army martyrs cemetery and other tourist attractions, there are desert chicken, ancient wave zucchini, Wuwei cucumber, Wuwei ginseng fruit, ancient wave wolfberry and other specialties.

Xishanbao village is an administrative village under the jurisdiction of Gufeng Town, Gulang County, Wuwei City, Gansu Province. Xishanbao Village is adjacent to Binggou Dun Village, Gufeng Village, Liutiaohe Village, Leek Chong Village, Wangfu Village and Hutangwa village. In December 2021, The Patriotic Health Association of Gansu Province named Xishanbao Village as the health Village (community) of Gansu Province in 2021. Xishanbao village near the road beach desert ecological tourism area, the Red Army west army ancient wave campaign memorial hall, ancient wave Stone gate gorge, Changling Mountain scenic spot, Gulang County west Road Red Army martyrs cemetery and other tourist attractions, there are desert chicken, ancient wave zucchini, Wuwei cucumber, Wuwei ginseng fruit, ancient wave wolfberry and other specialties.

3. The Legend of Ganzhou Stone

Legend of this stone is Ganzhou (ancient Zhangye) stone, is a goddess patching the sky left, once blocked the flood of the Heihe river, saved ganzhou people, the original Changsong Hongchi Valley connected to Huangyang Chuan, Huangyang Chuan to shimen Gorge, autumn festival flood, causing disasters, spring and summer water shortage. People look forward to blocking shimen Gorge. Keep flood water, benefit mankind.

According to legend, Ganzhou stone was born in Ganzhou, is a "Big" stone when the Goddess Nuwa mend the sky abandoned unused. Thousands of years buried barren mountains, unavoidably deep with a sense of loss.

One day, Liu Zhong, the god of ancient wave Shimen Mountain, came to visit and invited Lingshi of Ganzhou to block the water of Shimen Gorge under his jurisdiction, so that a lake could be formed here for the benefit of the people.

"Good! Ganzhou Shi readily agreed, "but unfortunately I have no wings and little legs, it is difficult to walk and fly!"

Liu Zhong said: "Brother Shi don't worry about this, the small god has picked from the beacon tower when emperor Qin Shihuang was building the Great Wall used to drive stone whip, as long as this whip gently whips you, we can go smoothly."

In this way, Liu Zhong waved to drive stone whip, and Ganzhou lingshi, morning and night, day and night, all the way toward the ancient wave direction. They tried to keep out of sight of pedestrians.

Unexpectedly that dawn, just walked to iron ark foot, happened to encounter xiangling temple catch early water of a fire Taoist priest, he was zhangye people's family, a see Liu Zhong drive a piece of white stone from the front walk, not only lost voice called: "ah! Isn't that our stone from Ganzhou?"

As soon as this revelation was made, the spirit of the stone disappeared, and it froze on the bank, and did not move. Good-hearted mountain god Liu Zhong, heaving a deep sigh: "Alas! Gulang people are suffering!" He threw away his whip angrily, turned into a breeze, and went back to his Stone gate Hill.

Ganzhou stone is also called the "stone baby", legend has it that the place of women's sterility, sparsely populated, then people particularly superstitious, so pray to Buddha for help moved around the heavenly queen, she threw his silver hair clasp on the doo down into stone, she appeared to every women who have children to touch all stone, some people want to give it a try, indeed as expected a touch, then became pregnant, So changsong people all came to touch the stone, resulting in the stone left an eternal scar.

It is also called "birth stone", legend has it that liangzhou has a peasant girl long very beautiful was caught by the county magistrate to the blind emperor, the emperor only love for a night, there are treacherous officials secret way: "Liangzhou female infertility." And left him in the cold. Miss living parents with their own jewelry to buy eunuchs, ready to escape back to hometown, line to Hongchi Valley, abdominal pain difficult line, childbirth period, pain for a few days failed to give birth to their baby. She thought that since others can be pregnant, I can birth, as expected a touch gave birth to their own baby, so people also called it "birth stone".

Also in gulang Gorge, under Tietangshan Mountain and on the east side of the road, a white stone "towered up like the Great House of Chongtai" is called Changsongrui Stone, also known as Ganzhou Stone, Gantarite and Zhishan Stone. In the Annals of Taizong in the New Book of Tang Dynasty, in November 643, Tang Zhenguan, Li Liyu, a magistrate of Liangzhou, wrote a letter on which a stone was dropped from heaven in Hongchi Valley (now Gulang Gorge) of Changsong County. There were 88 characters on it, such as "Taiping Emperor's Son Li Shimin and Qianshi Prince Li Zhi". At that time, the court and the opposition caused a sensation, Tang Taizong thought that the fate of the emperor, appointed jin King Li Zhi as the crown prince, pardon Liangzhou. This stone folk legend for "Ganzhou stone", to block the water shimen gorge, fly to gulang gorge was seen through, then fell to the ground not; Also known as "birth stone", infertile dystocia, can touch the stone for pregnancy birth; Also known as "wine stone", that the stone "sweet and warm, stone debris, into the wine, both become good wine; Also known as the "branch stone", iron cabinet mountain hidden gold and silver, supported by the branch stone, catch mountain birds catch, desirable under the mountain treasure.

This section of ganzhou stone legend is very meaningful, it borrowed the stone implied meaning, reflecting the ancient wave people have been plagued by drought for generations, to build a reservoir in shimen gorge good wishes.

4. The Circulation Characteristics of Lingshi Legend

For a long time, the form of the legend of the lingshi in Gulang county relies on word of mouth, and it is different from the legend of the "lingshi" in other areas, but also related. In a broad sense, the legend of lingshi is a part of the myth of sacred stone in China. In a narrow sense, the legend of Ganzhou Stone and the myth of Sacred stone in China have relatively independent connotations. The spread of ganzhou stone legend in Gulang County pays more attention to the reality in the folk. It not only naturally integrates the local folk customs but also skillfully grafts the plot content of local customs, forming a unique Hexi stone legend.

The spread of ganzhou stone legend to continue and flow into two major features. The continuity of ganzhou stone legend is mainly characterized by the long multi-integrated culture in hexi Corridor area. The rheology of ganzhou stone legend highlights the unique cultural characteristics of Hexi area, that is, the legends spread not only have the characteristics of farming culture, but also have the characteristics of nomadic culture; Among them, one of the most prominent reasons is that Gulang County has long been in a dry climate, plants and crops are not easy to survive, and people's spontaneous custom of praying for rain, interlacing and mutual influence.

(1) pay more attention to the shaping of stone noumenon image

Whether it is the stone image spread in Zhangye, the origin of the stone spread in Jiuquan Guazhou, or the stone story in the Hexi Treasure Scroll, the stone of Ganzhou written by folk culture lovers, etc., all focus on shaping a fresh, lifelike stone image. For example: Ganzhou stone, gantarshi, zhi shan stone.

The legend of "Lingshi" attaches great importance to the description of dialogue and interaction between the stone and the characters when shaping the image of Ganzhou stone. Liu Zhong's journey of "stone" experience, stone and the character of the gods give people a sense of multifaceted and complex, especially Liu Zhong's determination to help rain moisten the earth well integrated hexi cultural characteristics. The considerate and restored image features of the stone in "Baby stone" also show the style of the ancient ronin to reproduce children and pray for more children and good fortune, showing the unique characteristics of combining the local natural environment and folk customs in shaping the characters in the legend of "Lingshi" in Hexi. Some plots in hexi "Lingshi" legend are also related to the belief of local nature worship. Legend in the role of content although some mountains, trees, stones, animal, fruit, sand, etc., however the legend basically adopts the personification of technique, will these QingjieHua as characters, gives the characters personality and characteristics of flesh and blood, plays the hexi different characters on the earth, and create a variety, different styles of artistic image. Such as "Ganzhou stone" stay in Wuwei, diversion of water to cure drought, benefit the local; Infertile women touch "sacred stone"; Difficult labor women to birth stone everywhere "harmony" is the combination of folklore and customs seamless.

(2) The structure and plot of the content are relatively simple

The structure and plot of lingshi legend in Hexi area are simple. Legend of characters, legends of place names and legends of scenery generally focus on one person or one thing. Unlike myth, it has a complex narrative structure and involves many characters and plots. For example: birth stone, although the length is longer, but only about women childbirth baby blocked, forced to touch the stone things, as for not easy to pregnant women want to give birth and have "baby stone" legend plot.....

Wuwei "lingshi" in the legend of events at a faster pace. For example: the stone water plot. People look forward to blocking shimen Gorge. Keep flood water, benefit mankind. Compared with the complex plot in other areas of the legend, the content process ignored more, focus on the characteristics of Ganzhou stone water storage, so that we can deeply feel the spread of the image is not the same.

Wuwei area "lingshi" spread of the content of the clue is relatively simple, usually spread by a main line and a protagonist extended and open, clear context, logical smooth, close to the reality. For example, "Birth stone" takes pregnant women in difficult labor as a clue, and unfolds the prevailing social background of worshipping Buddha in Wuwei area. The clue of the plot of these legends is simple and clear, and the ending of character development comes naturally.

Wuwei area "lingshi" legend type is rich, content is complete. Legend content has end, end echo. Legend plot is simple but complete structure, the length is not long but concise and comprehensive, content ups and downs, exciting. On the whole, the legend of "Lingshi" in Hexi area has vivid plots and strong folk literature, which well reflects the style and cultural characteristics of Hexi area.

(3) magical exaggeration and contrast

In the legend of "sacred Stone" in Wuwei area, exaggerated artistic techniques are used to narrate legends such as characters, place names and scenery. These narration includes not only the language characteristics, appearance characteristics and body movements of the characters, but also the natural environment and local customs of the characters, and a large number of exaggerations are used. Exaggeration in all aspects of the use of incisively and vividly, in the character is full of strong saturated color; In place names with supernatural nature, endless

changes, such as "pregnant women in difficult labor touch ganzhou stone can successfully deliver a baby"; "Ganzhou stone" became the reason for the custom of praying for rain, and so on. These legendary texts use a lot of exaggeration and personification techniques to create a systematic and complete "Ganzhou Stone" content, greatly enhancing the expression of "Ganzhou Stone" and the sense of mystery in Hexi area.

Contrast is a technique of expression often used in literary creation. By contrast, you can see mountains, but also plain. When "Journey to the West" in Hexi region is passed on by mouth, almost all of them use the method of comparison. Such as: The origin of "ganzhou stone", people will unconsciously when its tale mentioned in the story of journey to the west, Monkey King is collapsed from the certainly, such a narrative form bright contrast, before and after reveals female worm to fill the rest of the day the last of the connection between a rock and ganzhou stone, more reasonably circulating stone in hexi area is to pray for rain, Water storage.

The method of comparison shows the thought and personality of the legend of lingshi in Hexi area, and also profoundly reflects the local folk customs. During the interview, when the public narrates the legend of "Ganzhou Stone", they will also pay attention to the comparison with other legends of sacred stone. Some of them have similarities, but most of them are different. The people "consciously" distinguish the content of the legend from that of the stone in the sky, vividly expressing the different cultural characteristics of the legend of "lingshi" in Hexi and the custom of praying for rain, thus enhancing the artistic charm of the legend of "Lingshi" in Hexi.

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