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A Comparative Study on the Painting Forms of Western Oil Painting and Chinese Ink Painting

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ABSTRACT

Since modern international students introduced oil painting on a large scale to China, oil painting has been developing in China for over a hundred years. In citing the process of progress, learning, integration, and improvement, the change in titles from “Western painting” and “Western painting” to “oil painting” and then to “Chinese oil painting” indicates that oil painting, as an art form, has deeply embodied the characteristics and connotations of traditional Chinese culture. During this period, its development is closely related to the historical background of the entire China, reflecting the continuation and evolution of traditional Chinese freehand brushwork spirit in the complex and changing context of the times. This article compares oil paintings imported from abroad with domestic ink painting, taking the artistic realm of painting in both the East and the West as the starting point. The main axis that runs through them is Chinese ink painting and Western oil painting landscapes. Showcasing the similarities and differences between Chinese ink wash landscape painting and Western oil painting landscapes, Chinese landscape painting emphasizes the expression of emotions and a sense of awe and emotion towards nature, with the main idea of “learning from nature”; The Western oil painting landscape emphasizes the realism of the scenery, which is a re-creation of nature, allowing people to have a realistic feeling of being there when watching the painting. The main reason there are these differences between Chinese ink painting and Western oil painting landscapes is due to different social and cultural backgrounds and fields of consciousness.

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the 20th century, many international students with the ideal of revitalizing Chinese painting crossed the sea and went to Europe to study Western art. Chinese traditional culture suffered a fierce impact from Western culture. However, with the increasing strength of the Chinese economy and the growing confidence of Chinese people in local culture, the strength of Chinese culture is once again evident (San Shangbian, 2005). The source of art is life, which is a spiritual product produced by people in this social life, and art is one of them (Kou Yuanxun, 2006). In this process, oil painting, as the most important type of art in Western art, has gone through a process of dissemination in China from simple utilitarianism to gradual nationalization and localization. It has increasingly shown stronger national characteristics, which not only complement and promote modern Western oil painting, but also continuously enrich and develop its own painting language (Su Yi, 2014). This article compares Chinese freehand ink painting with Western oil painting, and identifies the most prominent contradiction faced by the two in the process of collision and fusion, as well as the preliminary results achieved in the process of resolution (Ma Yongjian, 2006).

There are significant cultural differences between China and the West, resulting in complex differences between traditional Chinese ink painting and Western traditional oil painting. The reason for this is due to different perspectives, degrees, and methods of understanding

culture, society, and nature (Zhang Xinyu, 2012) Chinese ink painting landscapes and Western oil painting landscapes are both expressive landscapes. They all use the nature we live in as a carrier to express our true emotions through mountains, trees, and rivers (Huo Jiujiang, 2011).

Compared to Western painting, it focuses on concreteness, values human centeredness, and has a documentary feeling towards nature. What is desired is the reproduction of specific characters and events (Chen Shuxia, 2008). In terms of painting techniques, there is a fundamental difference between Chinese ink landscape painting and Chinese ink landscape painting. Chinese ink landscape painting emphasizes leaving blank space, giving people infinite imagination. However, Western oil painting landscapes almost do not use the technique of leaving blank space, relying on the control of pigments. The color depth, thickness, and dryness of pigments are used to express things and emotions (Wang Xiao, 2001).

Chinese ink painting is an artistic expression system that differs from Western oil painting. It is a conscious culture under different aesthetic sensory forms. Studying the expression of ink painting artistic conception in Chinese modern and contemporary oil painting can stimulate the hidden creative talents of creators, broaden the thinking of artistic creation. The special presentation of ink painting artistic conception in Chinese oil painting landscapes allows oil paintings with Western civilization to be shrouded in Eastern charm (Yang Xiaolan, 2009).

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LITERATURE REVIEW

The Similarities between Chinese Ink Painting Landscapes and Western Oil Painting Landscapes

Chinese ink painting landscapes and Western oil painting landscapes are based on humans' living environment and nature, and painters use empathy techniques to express their emotions. Integrating ideas and souls into nature, expressing one's inner world through mountains, rivers, and trees. This can be described as "flowers splashing tears at the moment and birds scaring the heart with regret". Wang Guowei once said, "All language of scenery is language of emotions." This is a motto suitable for creating ink and oil painting landscapes. Camille

Pizarro uses a technique of alternating density to depict the mournful Paris, and his works depict a cold and desolate scene, with a tragic and sorrowful atmosphere reminiscent of Eastern poetry; Cezanne's landscape knife chops and chisels, using colors to express solid images with a resounding sound; the earth and mountains shook Van Gogh's scenery, and his strong emotions shook the world. In "Starry Night" (Figure 1), he conveyed his thoughts on human nature, the world, the universe, and eternity through the real vibration and flicker of colors. He also used artistic language to narrate the unknown and inner emotional world. This can be said to be the essential similarity between.



Figure 1: Van Gogh Countryside Scenery



Figure 2: Chinese Ink Painting

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Differences between Chinese Ink Painting and Western Oil Painting Scenery

The differences between Chinese ink painting and Western oil painting landscapes are mainly reflected in the objects of expression, methods of expression, aesthetic principles, and composition.

Different Objects of Performance

The objects of expression in Western oil painting

landscapes are very diverse, mainly focusing on people and scenery, rather than simply expressing “pure” natural scenery. Although Chinese ink wash landscape is mainly based on natural scenery, it mainly portrays “pure” natural scenery, followed by the boundary painting between people and their living environment. Therefore, Chinese landscapes tend to express an appreciation of the beauty of nature, while Western oil landscapes pay more attention to the relationship between humans and nature.



Figure 3: Examples of Expressive Forms of Western Oil Painting

Differences in Expressive Techniques

In terms of expressive techniques, Chinese landscape painting does not excessively depict the details of objects. Instead, it takes the author’s subjective ideas as the starting point, lines as the main expressive technique, and uses formulaic language to express objects. Through the use of brush and ink techniques, various standardized texturing and coating techniques have been formed. Western oil painting landscapes, on the other hand, depict objects based on objective objects, emphasizing both overall grasp and realistic details, paying special attention to the perspective ratio and specific temporal and spatial relationships of the objects. In the early days, the expressive techniques were mainly realistic, with accurate forms and harmonious colors. Since the mid to late 18th century, they have gradually developed towards distinct and personalized strokes, textures, and color and strengthened the author’s personal subjective emotional expression.

Differences in Aesthetic Principles

Chinese ink mountain paintings focus more on creating

a beautiful artistic conception that blends emotions and scenery. Therefore, when creating Chinese ink and wash paintings, landscape painters should “learn from the outside and gain the source of their hearts” by integrating their appreciation, understanding, and feelings of nature with their experiences of social life. This reflects the Chinese philosophical idea of “harmony between heaven and man”. Chinese landscape painting emphasizes the integration of personal subjective emotions and visual images of creators, reflecting a humanistic ideal. The creative principle of Western oil painting landscapes is to create realistic and realistic landscapes, allowing viewers to experience a certain spiritual content or emotional ideal through an immersive aesthetic experience. They mostly use realistic techniques as the basic means of creation, which fully conforms to the aesthetic concept of visual reality. Therefore, Western oil painting landscapes place greater emphasis on the image representation of natural landscapes: Chinese art is the art of being human, with gentle breezes, muddy rice fields, quiet moonlight, and rivers, these are the “divine songs” in the eyes of Chinese painters.



Figure 4: Examples of expressive forms in Chinese ink painting

Different Forms of Composition

In composition and spatial modeling, Western oil painting landscape mainly focuses on focal perspective, pursuing a realistic and realistic representation of the landscape, emphasizing viewpoints, space, perspective, as well as the sense of light and color in the environment, giving people a direct, simple, rational, and pragmatic feeling. use scattered composition as their main form of composition, emphasizing the importance of “observing the big from the small”. They cleverly organize the relationships between high and low, flat, broad, and profound from a moving perspective. Starting from subjective and objective, ideal and reality, emotion and wisdom, time and space, they integrate and sort out the imagery and emotions in their hearts, thus forming a balanced, harmonious, and orderly unity in the painting.

Reasons for Differences

The main reasons for the differences between Chinese ink painting and Western oil painting are as follows:

Differences in Materials and Techniques

Traditional materials such as rice paper, brushes, and ink are commonly used in Chinese ink painting, emphasizing the expression of lines and ink colors and pursuing an artistic conception that combines form and spirit. Western oil painting, on the other hand, uses tools such as canvases, oil paints, and brushes to more accurately depict the layering of details and colors, pursuing realistic and precise images.

Differences in Perspective Methods

Chinese ink painting adopts a scattered perspective method, emphasizing the overall and vivid atmosphere of the picture and pursuing the realism and three-dimensional sense of the picture.

Different Forms of Expression

Chinese ink painting places more emphasis on freehand

brushwork, emphasizing the painter’s inner feelings and emotional expression, and pursuing the free expression of brushwork and poetic imagination. Western oil painting, on the other hand, places greater emphasis on realism, emphasizing the true representation of the objective world, and pursuing realistic and meticulous depictions.

Differences in Color Application

Chinese ink painting is mainly based on ink, with relatively simple colors, mainly pursuing changes in the depth of ink and the effect of combining reality and illusion. Western oil painting, on the other hand, places more emphasis on the use of colors, expressing the texture and light and shadow effects of objects through color contrast and matching, pursuing the richness and fullness of colors.

Differences in Cultural Connotations

Chinese ink painting is an important component of traditional Chinese culture, reflecting the aesthetic pursuit and philosophical thinking of ancient Chinese literati. Western oil painting, on the other hand, embodies the aesthetic concepts and artistic traditions of Western culture, emphasizing scientific spirit and rational thinking. In summary, the reasons for the differences between Chinese ink painting and Western oil painting are multifaceted, including the combined effects of materials and techniques, perspective methods, expressive forms, color application, and cultural connotations. These differences make the two painting art styles unique and charming.

The reason for this difference is due to differences in cultural backgrounds, fields of consciousness, etc. between the East and the West. In medieval European culture, Christianity had a dominant influence, determining the way of life and ideology of society at that time, and art inevitably had a strong religious color. Since the 17th century, classicism and romanticism have mainly manifested national and political themes, as well as idealistic aspirations. Chinese art, on the other hand,

emphasizes the integration of human and scenery, and the unity of heaven and humanity is reflected in every field of Chinese art. Chinese people pay attention to music, chess, calligraphy, and painting, using art as a means to cultivate character: self-improvement, and more emphasis on a kind of taste and atmosphere. What they want to create is an artistic conception, which is to wander through nature, cultivate character and spirit, and then use nature to smooth my mind and reach my meaning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A Comparison between Chinese Ink Painting Landscape and Western Oil Painting Landscape:

Comparison of Eras

Oil painting landscapes depict scenes in nature and are painted using oil painting materials, hence they are called oil painting landscapes. In early works of art, oil painting was not a standalone art form, but appeared as accompaniment. It was not until the 16th century that Western oil painting landscapes were gradually recognized by the public as an independent art form and received strong praise. Resdar Vermeer Hoberma was a Dutch painter who made significant contributions to the oil painting industry during the 17th century. In the 18th century, a famous British painter named Constable brought oil painting landscapes to a climax. In the 19th century, Western oil painting landscapes underwent changes in color and light through the efforts of painters, and only then did they truly become a branch of painting. Chinese ink painting landscape uses ink painting as a carrier to express one's emotions through mountains, rivers, and mountains, and to place one's true emotions in nature. The origin of Chinese ink wash landscape painting can be traced back to over 2000 years ago. However, due to various uncontrollable factors such as natural disasters, man-made disasters, or wars, many classic ink wash paintings have disappeared into the long river of history. The Chinese ink and wash landscape painting that we now understand is only a few things that we have a glimpse of from historical records. The earliest recorded Qin and Han dynasties already had landscape painting, such as the "Female Historian's Proverbs" and "Luoshen Fu", which were works of Gu Kaizhi during

the Eastern Jin Dynasty. The background of these two paintings can be used to understand the painting style and ink and wash atmosphere of that time. These two works by Gu Kaizhi mainly depict the portrayal of characters. The painting "The Women's Historian's Proverbs" depicts the ceremonial behavior of women in ancient palaces; The painting "Luoshen Fu Tu" depicts the scene of historical figure Cao Zhi and the goddess reluctant to part ways. Landscape is actually only used as a background to better portray the characteristics of the characters, which is fully reflected in the "Luoshen Fu Tu". In this work, large landscapes, birds and animals, and jungles are depicted. Many small nodes begin by depicting landscapes, using them to highlight the characters' personality traits. Mountains and rocks can rely on lines to express changes in brightness, express their stacked undulations through different levels, and even offer a panoramic view of the scenery below the mountain. All of the techniques mentioned earlier were commonly used later, but to some extent, our techniques were still somewhat clumsy, such as the weak lines of trees, unclear color transformations, and insufficient contrast. However, they laid an indestructible foundation for the development of Chinese landscape painting in the future. So, Gu Kaizhi not only existed in the historical records of painting, but also made great contributions to Chinese ink landscape painting. With the departure of Gu Kaizhi and the arrival of the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties period, landscape painting flourished and became popular among a large number of landscape painters. More importantly, for the first time in history, there were specialized papers on landscape painting. For example, the works of Gu Kaizhi in "The Record of Painting Yuntai Mountain", as well as the works of Su Bing in "The Preface to Painting Landscape" and Xiao Yi in "The Songshi Ke of Landscape". Afterwards, Chinese ink and wash landscape painting entered the historical painting scene with a relatively complete system. It is not difficult to see that Chinese ink wash landscape painting dates back 1300 to 1400 years compared to Western oil painting landscapes, and Chinese ink wash landscape painting can be said to have a long history.



Figure 5: Comparison of 4-11 Years - Gu Kaizhi

Comparison of Cultural Background

The core of culture is philosophical thought. During the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, society was turbulent and the people were struggling to make a living. People lived in a hot and humid environment, which forced them to yearn for spiritual freedom. As a result, the “Wei Jin Xuanxue” emerged, which was a comprehensive study of Taoist and Confucian thought. It advocated that “inaction” was “nature”, which resonated widely at that time and became the main ideology in society at that time. Metaphysics, although emphasizing “non action” and “nature” in content, is fundamentally the purpose of Taoism. The famous Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove pursue a peaceful life of seclusion, advocate for non action in nature, integrate with nature, and pursue the enjoyment of the spiritual world. The main change in this process is that people detest society and then hide their ambitions, sending this emotion to the mountains and rivers, believing that humans and nature can understand each other, expressing their emotions and ambitions is difficult to achieve, and later becoming obsessed with mountains and rivers, endorsing them, and becoming a spiritual object. For example, the works of Gu Kaizhi in “Wei Jin Sheng Liu Hua Zan”, Wang Hui in “Continuation of Painting”, and Su Bing in “Preface to Painting Landscape”. The discovery of Western art did not develop as early as China, it originated from ancient Greece. People in ancient Greece used artistic techniques to express profound philosophical ideas. Ancient Greece is a geographical term that refers to regions such as the Greek Peninsula, the Black Sea coast, the Aegean Islands, the western coast of Asia Minor, southern Italy, and Sicily. The unique status and position have created a unique humanistic spirit in ancient Greece. In ancient Greece, people often viewed things with a skeptical eye, and then thought rationally to explore and discover the mysteries behind them. This spirit of exploration is unmatched by later generations and is worth learning from. The Greek people believe that the universe is a unified whole, and we humans survive in this world, which is also a part of this

whole. We cannot be treated differently; should respect nature and live in harmony with nature and all things in the world.

Comparison of Color Consciousness in Painting

Chinese landscape painting, influenced by the thoughts of the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, and Taoism, advocates the composition of black and white colors and does not promote the grandeur of large strokes, thus downplaying other color choices. The two colors of black and white express infinite imagination and depth, achieving profound effects. The development of ink and wash landscape painting was attributed to Wang Wei of the Tang Dynasty and had a period of development. It was not until the Song Dynasty that it was included as a representative of orthodoxy. Throughout the history of Chinese landscape painting, there have been many masters of painting. For example, in the painting “Kuanglu” by Jing Hao, there are large blank images left under the mountains, depicting the dividing line between the back mountain and the front mountain. Leave blank space. A blank easel does not mean there is no structure, nor does it mean there is no content. It mainly creates an artistic conception, a profound sense of scenery, and leaves infinite imagination for people. The Western oil painting landscape has a strong contrast with Chinese ink wash landscape painting in this regard. It mainly uses colors to showcase its own characteristics, creating a great contrast with the large amount of white space in Chinese landscape painting and the strong contrast between black and white. Painters use their scientific painting theories to cleverly match colors, emphasizing the influence between objects and the relationship between objects and the overall environment, in order to scientifically match colors. Western painters generally create outdoors, devoting all their passion to their artwork, and some even become obsessed with it. The strong individualistic color and a microcosm of the entire society of this period are all depicted in the painting. Van Gogh is a typical representative figure who is obsessed with painting.



Figure 6: Comparison of Color Awareness - Van Gogh

Comparison of Painting Materials

Whether in the past or present, human emotions need to be expressed, and expression requires a certain carrier. Painting is a product of conveying our own emotions. If we want to paint, the first prerequisite is the painting tool, which is a prerequisite for conveying our emotions and expressions. The difference in painting tools directly affects the expression of emotions, resulting in two completely different spirits. The main tool for Chinese ink landscape painting is a brush, followed by water as a modifier. Brushes are generally round headed, with a rounded texture, and water is also flowing, with spirituality. The combination of the two represents smoothness and naturalness. When creating on soft rice paper, it also has a sense of rhythm, making it easier to express the author's true emotions. The main pigment in Western oil painting is oil, and it is painted on relatively rough linen cloth. Compared to Chinese landscape painting, it lacks the smoothness and agility, and is relatively rigid and rigid. The focus of Chinese ink and wash landscape painting lies in the brushstrokes, and the amount of ink on the brush head directly affects the overall feeling of the work. Western oil painting focuses more on the brushstrokes and texture, and the brushstrokes directly affect the overall feeling of the painting, whether it is grand or elegant.

CONCLUSION

With the economy's development and society's progress, our spiritual level requirements are also increasing. Painting, as an important aspect of enriching our spiritual world, is worth exploring to a certain extent. For Chinese ink landscape painting and Western oil painting landscapes, each has its own unique features and strengths. We cannot view the two with a unified perspective but rather examine them separately to identify similarities and differences.

Chinese ink painting has been born in China for more than 1600 years, while Western oil painting has been born for more than 500 years. According to time division, Chinese ink painting has existed for a longer time, while Western oil painting has existed for a shorter time. In this long historical development process, Chinese ink painting and Western oil painting have sorted out information related to the comparison between Chinese ink painting and Western oil painting, analyzed the expression methods, artistic characteristics, and spiritual orientation of Chinese ink painting and Western oil painting handwriting language,

explored the philosophical ideas, artistic concepts, and historical factors of their language development, and analyzed Chinese ink painting and Western oil painting, and attempted to provide constructive suggestions for solving problems. Therefore, the comparative study of Chinese ink painting and Western oil painting forms is the focus and innovation of this article, which also makes this paper have certain academic value and practical significance. Any painting style is based on handwriting as a carrier, and uses different forms of expression to transform objects and transmit spirit. When Chinese ink painting and Western oil painting meet in brushstrokes, ink painting brushstrokes, as an important means and medium for emotional output and artistic expression of Chinese oil painters, present not only subtle imprints of the painter's main soul, but also the collective interest of an ancient national cultural spirit, and the grandeur of a country moving towards prosperity and prosperity. It is in this sense that the strokes and heart prints, as well as the artistic conception and national spirit, complement each other, jointly pointing to the present and future of Chinese ink painting.

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