

# Research on Application of Traditional Elements in Contemporary Oil Painting

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**Abstract:** Chinese traditional elements are the external manifestation of Chinese traditional culture. They are rooted in ancient history and people's daily life, and have nationality and inheritance. Traditional Chinese elements are used in contemporary oil paintings, such as traditional patterns, patterns, ethnic totems, and traditional art symbols. The use of oil painting to perform traditional art is extremely challenging and has great possibilities. Such an application is not only a rich form of art, but also a display of national self-confidence, reflecting the profoundness of Chinese culture. In the development of contemporary art, I hope to find an art model suitable for China's current situation and form the oil painting language of the nation. At the same time, we must establish correct aesthetic values of contemporary art, follow artistic rules and laws, draw nutrients from traditional culture, and transform oil paintings. Breaking through the minds and cultures of the West, the traditional cultural elements unique to the nation are used to show the charm of oil paintings and create better works of art with democratic characteristics.

## 1. Introduction

Oil painting originated in Europe, and gradually developed into an artistic form that enjoyed both refined and popular tastes from its initial service to religion to its later promotion by royalty and aristocrats[1]. Contemporary oil painting breaks the traditional and single realistic style of oil painting and has a state of free creation. Their ideas, styles, techniques and forms are diverse and diversified. Moreover, in the process of the evolution of contemporary Chinese oil painting, many sources of inspiration come from the form and content of national elements and foreign ideological trends[2]. At the same time, it is also greatly influenced by Chinese element decorative arts and opera arts. Color is an important symbol of oil painting[3]. The usage of many elements, such as modeling, lines, color composition and so on, unique to traditional Chinese art are the important constituent basis of modern painting elements[4]. At present, many artists in China have been pursuing performance techniques that are closely related to traditional Chinese art forms. The artist's technique of expression in the organization of artistic images is to make his works more vivid by means of expression and understanding.

Art is a carrier that integrates various civilizations and cultures. In the process of the fusion of Eastern and Western art, China's localization of Western art forms is a good paradigm, especially with oil painting art as a classic[5]. In the early 20th century, Chinese artists learned the characteristics and ways of thinking of Western oil painting[6]. Combine traditional opera elements with oil paintings for bold exploration. Through continuous experimentation and innovation, we have created a large number of outstanding works of art. With a strong national color Chinese elements, after thousands of years of generalization and refinement, the art language is integrated into the painting[7]. Presenting this special art piece of contemporary elements and traditional Chinese elements to everyone. The combination of the characteristics of Western oil paintings and traditional Chinese elements has made Chinese oil paintings more contemporary art, and it is a new form of artistic expression[8]. The creation breaks through the garden of Western thinking and culture, and uses the unique traditional Chinese cultural elements to show the charm of oil painting and perfect the expression of oil painting art.

## **2. The Connotation and Extension of Chinese Traditional Elements**

### **2.1 The connotation of Chinese traditional elements**

Traditional Chinese elements are an external manifestation of Chinese traditional culture, rooted in ancient history and people's daily lives. And have a more consistent sense of identity, expressed in a variety of signs, things or specific image. Some traditional cultural elements have even become the symbol and symbol of Chinese culture. Specifically, Chinese traditional elements are national and inherited. The traditional Chinese elements are unique to the ancient Chinese nation. They collectively represent the aesthetics of the Chinese nation and reflect the level of material and cultural development in a certain period. Moreover, Chinese traditional elements have a tenacious life. Can go through 5,000 years of ups and downs and live forever. Secondly, Chinese traditional elements are also extensive and diverse. Chinese traditional culture is rich and colorful, which also fundamentally determines the diversity of Chinese traditional elements. Taking calligraphy as an example, it has a variety of forms and manifestations, reflecting the extensive and profound Chinese culture.

### **2.2 Extension of Chinese Traditional Elements**

The extension of traditional Chinese elements cannot be defined by only one concept, but has an empirical scope. Because of different personal experiences, the standard of defining traditional elements is different. Such as dragon and phoenix patterns, Chinese knots and red lanterns are recognized traditional elements. Besides these concrete things, the symbolic expressions of calligraphy, the Great Wall and the Forbidden City also belong to traditional Chinese elements. In addition, the unique cultural values, aesthetic standards and cultural spirit of the Chinese nation also belong to these systems. Therefore, from this perspective, all the most essential and positive factors in Chinese traditional culture can be called Chinese traditional cultural elements. It can be either a thing, a symbol, or a spirit. Since the introduction of oil paintings into China, the process of collision and integration with Chinese culture began. It is also in this process that it has been continuously developed and improved. The creators have taken nutrients from traditional culture and transformed oil paintings. The methods and methods are also varied.

## **3. Reflections on Chinese Elements in Chinese Contemporary Oil Paintings**

### **3.1 Characteristics of Chinese elements in contemporary oil painting**

China is an ancient civilization. The Chinese elements are derived from the unique cultural and historical background of China. After all, the formation of Chinese elements has a lot to do with traditional cultural spirit, social function, aesthetic requirements and formal beauty. They have an intrinsic interaction and mutual support, based on the maternal form formed by cultural traditions. It has its own traditional moral concepts, religious culture, aesthetic tastes, and artistic patterns. First of all, we must recognize some of the unsatisfactory conditions of Chinese oil paintings. The mainstream western postmodernism invaded by commercialization has led some Chinese artists to lose their way. Contemporary oil paintings with traditional content as the theme instead of Chinese style are everywhere, and some of their artistic works are separated from the masses. Secondly, to observe the current situation of Chinese contemporary oil painting from the height of the development of world oil painting art is basically an imitation of western oil painting from traditional to modern artistic style. Facing these current situations, Chinese artists must think about how Chinese oil painting should determine its position.

### **3.2 Creation of Artistic Symbolic Language of Chinese Elements in Contemporary Oil Painting Creation**

When using traditional cultural symbols, Chinese contemporary art creation needs to understand the unique connotation of the national culture by using or borrowing the external form of “national characteristics” or other elements of the national traditional culture. In artistic expression, we can

use some concrete traditional symbols. We can also express the Chinese character from the aspects of color tone, charm and other cultural elements to reflect the Chinese national oil painting style. Our country has rich and varied folk culture. We can explore elements that can be borrowed from traditional culture and make use of the characteristics of traditional culture to create. The traditional Chinese cultural symbols are given a contemporary atmosphere, transforming the traditional Chinese cultural “year-old symbols” into contemporary applications, so that Chinese contemporary art can find the most abundant elements from its own national traditions, maintain its own unique charm, and maintain itself. Eternal vitality. Create more cultural symbols that can represent contemporary China, find the form and pattern that best suits China's situation, and create the contemporary art symbolic language in contemporary oil painting creation.

#### 4. How Chinese Traditional Elements Are Used in Oil Painting Creation

##### 4.1 Direct application of traditional Chinese elements

The traditional Chinese elements are directly applied in the creation of contemporary oil paintings, such as traditional ornamentation, patterns, ethnic totems, and traditional art symbols. Such an application is not only a rich form of art, but also a display of national self-confidence. For example, oil painter Gu Liming used the traditional Chinese elements in oil painting to give a typical Chinese artistic conception to oil paintings. At the same time, he also directly used the painting techniques in ink painting in painting techniques to make the color performance of oil paint more diverse. Another example is Mr Lin Fengmian, who is good at combining traditional Chinese art forms with western oil paintings. Not only the common painting content in Chinese painting is transplanted into oil painting, but also the focus perspective method, three-dimensional modeling method and other western painting elements in oil painting are completely changed. Taking Chinese traditional elements as the painting content and applying Chinese traditional painting techniques have sublimated the value of Chinese traditional elements. The application of Chinese traditional elements is the most common form of application, but it must follow the artistic rules and regulations and conform to the aesthetic form of oil painting.

##### 4.2 Use of Chinese Traditional Elements for Reference

When it comes to drawing lessons from traditional elements, it is natural to draw lessons from Chinese painting. First of all, it is a reference to the color of Chinese painting. The color of Chinese painting is quite different from that of oil painting. Chinese painting can basically be divided into two main lines: ink and green. Which color is given priority to depends on the specific creative needs. Traditional Chinese painting emphasizes freehand brushwork. Since the pursuit of artistic conception is its main purpose, it is free to express its colors. Secondly, it is a reference to the composition of Chinese paintings. Composition refers to the creator's layout of various things and images in the picture, which is of great significance to the work. It is called the 'business position' in Chinese painting. Throughout the ages, many painters have elaborated the composition, and the composition has been becoming a more complete and independent theoretical system. Finally, it is a reference to the spirit of Chinese painting. The core values of Chinese culture are the unity of nature and man, that is, heaven, earth and people are harmonious and unified, reflected in the painting is the creator and The unity of the objects of expression finally reaches a state in which the situation blends and the object and the object are forgotten.

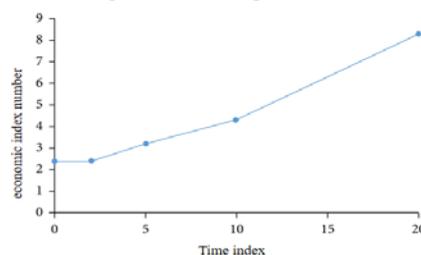


Fig.1. The development trend of contemporary oil painting in China

## **5. The application of many traditional elements in contemporary oil painting**

### **5.1 The Application of Color Elements in Folk Art of Northern Shaanxi in Oil Painting Creation**

First, choose the color that is closest to nature. Nature and purity are also the most precious spiritual wealth in my folk culture. Folk art works in northern Shaanxi, China, have a persistent pursuit of pure natural colors. For example, the color of the body of Fengxiang clay in northern Shaanxi is very particular. Although the color of the tea is not uniform because of the variety and timing of the picking, it still has its representative color. In art, there is a green color called “tea green”, which symbolizes vitality and hope. Therefore, some “tea green” colors or other natural colors can be used in the creation of oil paintings on tea themes, which will give people a feeling of being shined by sunlight and have great aesthetic feeling. Secondly, pay attention to the effect of color matching. Folk art works in northern Shaanxi are generally mixed with various colors, which is a major feature of folk art in northern Shaanxi. Brightness and exaggeration are the most typical features of northern Shaanxi folk art, just like the atmosphere of the new year. It is these bold and pure color combinations that form the color language rich in Chinese national flavor and become a symbol of China in the world.

Color is the most important symbol of oil painting. Because the painting material is a quick-drying vegetable oil, the physical properties of the oil and the fusion of the pigment make the blended color become more transparent and bright in the original color, thus giving a more full visual impact on the emotional expression. The use of levels can add color connotations. There are many types of levels, and they are also reflected in many aspects. The basic expression effects produced by levels include “going deep into the shallow”, “going from far to near”, “halo fading” and so on. The level is a sublimation of the work, which not only makes it easy to create realistic feeling visually, but also can tune touching sensitive nerves to the maximum extent. It causes the resonance of psychological color and oil painting color, thus achieving a strong emotional transmission effect. Tea-themed oil paintings can skillfully use the combination of colors to create a hierarchical effect, thus making tea-themed oil paintings show a simple but not monotonous, aesthetic but not artificial aesthetic feeling.

### **5.2 Application of Chinese Traditional Opera in Oil Painting Creation**

As a traditional form of Chinese drama, traditional opera has strong typicality and embodies the spiritual essence of traditional culture. Artists, with respect for traditional opera art, adopt the expression of painting and blend in their emotions. The elements in the opera are shown on the screen as the source of creation, giving new life to the opera. The Chinese oil painting art wants to be free from the restriction of western cultural styles and not let western culture lead it. The establishment of Chinese oil paintings with Chinese styles and evaluation criteria, drawing lessons from opera art and discussing the performance elements of opera art, will give energy to the creation of Chinese oil paintings. Preventing the continuous loss of Chinese opera elements is something that should be taken seriously and seriously studied. In the traditional Chinese art, “Zang Jing”, “Yu Wei”, “Freehand”, these elements are the precipitation of the five thousand years of Chinese art, and it is necessary to have considerable practice to learn, and it is difficult to achieve quick success. The study of these “artistics” can promote a “new China trend of thought” and inject a shot of heart for China's current weak artistic environment.

Chinese traditional art has the aesthetic and traditional characteristics of the Chinese nation, which shows the people's preferences and pursuit. As a distinctive art form in traditional Chinese art, opera art is deeply loved by the public. Artists have made great use of opera art to create a lot of works of art with unique Chinese cultural characteristics. Oil painting, as an expression form of foreign painting, is quite different from traditional Chinese culture in material techniques and content forms. Using oil painting to perform traditional art is extremely challenging and also has great possibility. In the early works of artists Lin Fengmian and Guan Liang's paintings, they show the perfect combination of opera art forms and oil paintings. At the same time, they contain many traditional Chinese folk art forms, showing their own wide hobbies and their love for traditional art

forms. In the face of a test of internationalization, we need to establish a correct world outlook, values, understand the aesthetic tastes of traditional Chinese art, and revive traditional Chinese art.

### **5.3 The Application of the Symbols of the New Year Picture in the Qing Dynasty**

As a product of history and culture, the iconic symbol of the New Year paintings in the Qing Dynasty corresponds to the times. Graphic symbols record the progress of human civilization, reflecting the reflection of the long river of history. The evolution of culture also fulfills its normative and restrictive role on the spiritual and material aspects of society at the same time. The graphic symbols of the New Year paintings in the Qing Dynasty reflected the social culture of the time. For example, “Hundred Children”, the psychological intuition of the people seeking “blessing” is fully on the paper, and the scenes of a group of playful children are like the reunion and perfection of the Chinese nation. Taiji patterns and double happiness images represent one aspect of social culture and its extension. It can be seen that the graphic image is the symbolic expression of social culture, and its meaning is spread in the progress of social activities. At the same time, graphical symbols have a powerful functional meaning. The birth of a certain pattern and image symbol is like a history book. The Abstraction visualizes the process of material and spiritual civilization and becomes a visual milestone of the cultural revolution.

The use of the image of the Qing Dynasty New Year painting to create oil painting is the protection and inheritance of the national traditional culture. Today, with economic globalization, China is faced with how to deal with the impact of Western culture. Traditional culture is the spiritual pillar of a nation. It is the crystallization of the working people of generations. The inheritance and accumulation of the millennium is different from the internal factors of his country and nation. It has been constantly changing and updating with the development of history and society, and it has always maintained the inherent cultural connotation of the nation. Today, with the diversification of culture towards a harmonious and unified development, we must cherish our own national culture and traditions. Since the 1980s, due to the influence of Western modern art on us, the development of China's market economy, an unprecedented new landscape between art creation and the art market, the artist's creative mentality has also undergone subtle changes. We cannot let the folk culture of our nation disappear into the history and the impact of Western culture. It is also a realistic creative path to use folk culture in contemporary oil painting creation and strengthen the protection and inheritance of national traditional culture. It can form an oil painting language with Chinese characteristics.

## **6. Conclusion**

In the global context of China's contemporary culture and economy, the impact of western culture and lifestyle has brought new folk customs into the daily life of Chinese people. At the same time, Chinese culture has also received new challenges. We should pay attention to Chinese traditional culture and art, further strengthen the recognition of self-identity and draw lessons from it. In the development of contemporary art, I hope that I can find an artistic model suitable for the current situation in China and form the national oil painting language. At the same time, we need to establish correct aesthetic values of contemporary art. The quality and vitality of artistic works depend on the creator's spiritual connotation and technical content. Artistic creation is the product of the combination of spirit and material. The “contemporaneity” of real painting art is a more inclusive concept. From the classic Chinese painting art, it is not difficult to see that Chinese artists have keen insight and strong creativity. It is only a matter of time before they discover the core values of the new era and summarize them in the pictures.

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