

Research on Artistic Aesthetic Differences Due to Chinese and Western Different Thinking Mode

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Abstract—Based on the theory of "man is an integral part of nature" in Chinese paintings and the "subject-object dichotomy" in western paintings, according to analyzing their subject and object, techniques, works and society, it is not difficult to see that there are many differences between Chinese paintings and western paintings both in external and internal. The reason for these differences lies in their different ways of thinking formed by different "cultural genes" in China and western countries.

Keywords—Chinese and western culture, Painting, Aesthetic, Thinking mode, The "subject-object dichotomy"

I. INTRODUCTION

Due to their different "cultural genes", Chinese and western people have their own specific thinking patterns, which make them different or even opposite in all fields. In terms of diplomacy, neutralism is advocated in Chinese culture, while western culture follows expansionism. In terms of governance of country, Chinese culture emphasizes the concept of "sentiment - principle - law", while western countries focus on the management mode of "law - principle - sentiment". In terms of philosophy, the Chinese emphasizes the unity of subject and object, while the west holds to the philosophy of dichotomy between subject and object.

Thinking set contains not only thinking pattern, but also the organic whole of thinking direction, thinking content and thinking process. As a social thinking pattern, one is people's habitual thinking, which is people's thinking habit in daily life; the other is a systematic mode which has been abstracted by philosophers and expressed by concepts. The former is associated with life experience in a secular form; The latter is related with cosmology and historical conception, which is a kind of theoretical form. Thinking is surreal. It can grasp the laws of things in reality through induction and generalization and can also establish new and nonexistence through imagination on basis of reality. The process of aesthetic appreciation is also a process of cognitive recreation, which is closely related with each other. [1]

Aesthetic ideal is a kind of concentrated expression of aesthetic pursuit produced by certain nation during a certain historical period, which is the most valuable outcome of material civilization and ideology in the field of aesthetic. There are differences between Chinese and western paintings not only in form, but also in aesthetic. It is more important to be different on aesthetic perspective. Because of their different origin, process and result of development of Chinese and western cultures, their perspectives are formed discrepantly.

It is contradictory between Chinese perceptual tradition and monism and western rationalist and dualism. Chinese monism holds that man and nature are united and man is a part of nature. Chinese people stress the theory of "man is an integral part of nature". "If Taoist is unchanged, Tao is also unchanged" is a reflection of such idea. Western rationalism and dualism originated from ancient Greece. Rationalism and humanism are the inspiration source of ancient Greek. And behind those is the dualism dichotomy of nature and man. The different inner nature of Chinese and western art is determined by different ways of thinking. Their different attitudes towards nature make distinctions between Chinese and western paintings greatly. Chinese painting is to express mountains and rivers, which could put people integrate into nature and give them a pleasant feeling. But we can seldom see the existence of human beings from western landscape paintings. What they want to express is a kind of independent nature. [2]

II. FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PAINTING SUBJECT

From the perspective of the painting subject, the view of " man is an integral part of nature " is a kind of freehand painting techniques; Otherwise, "dichotomy of subject and object" mainly shows realistic view. In western countries, painting has an egotistical origin, from existence to entity. But in China, on the other hand, it starts from zero to one. According to the western concept, you can't create something out of nothing. Chinese freehand paintings stress a kind of artistic conception often leaving a blank to audience. The feeling given to the audience is a illusory flower, a bird, a mountain and water but with infinite meanings. It is a soul consolation and subtle understanding to create a peaceful, quiet and harmonious relationship, which always follows the principle of " man is an integral part of nature ".

Western classical painting is such realistic. No matter on mural in famous church or on the vivid oil painting, the opposition has created the spirit of progress, struggle and pursuit, so as to depict the object vividly. It is showed in contemporary western modern paintings the spirit of confusion, disorder, disturbance and absurdity by unity of time and space with the principle of plane color, plane composition and plane modeling to express their feelings sincerely. Both the verisimilitude of object and reality of the subject's emotion representation are the single surface of its object or subject.

III. FROM THE POINT OF PAINTING WORKS ITSELF

From the point of painting works itself, the concept of subject and object is transformed into the relationship between "verve" and "form". Chinese aesthetics believes that the figurativeness of art should have its realistic image, while the "form" in Chinese aesthetics is more related with "verve". "Form" and "verve" are a pair of categories. "Form" is the means and "verve" is the purpose. Therefore, Chinese art reflects the object of "verve" rather than "form". In accordance with the requirement of vivid portrayal, Chinese artists try to convey the essence of rhyme and verve with limited ink. For example, plum, orchid, bamboo and chrysanthemum are mostly existed in ancient Chinese paintings. What these paintings' pursuit is not only to imitate their similar figures, but also the pursuit of their verve. As for the object of reflection of art, the theory of "imitating nature" is widely popular in the west. Although the meaning of "nature" is different among aestheticians, it is consistent in the point of imitating nature and drawing nature. Aristotle is the representative of the theory of "imitation". He associated imitation with knowledge and believed that imitation was naturally a kind of learning activity. For purpose of seeking knowledge, people imitate nature and create art. Obviously, art takes the real world as its model, and its purpose is to imitate vividly and successfully. In early Greece, bottle painting started with Oriental decoration pattern, such as Sphinx, animal, plant pattern. In the middle and late periods, it gradually got rid of the influence of the Orient and produced story scene on basis of daily life scenes and myth episodic. Rich performance means can put structure, scale and color in harmony with complex story scene. Western aesthetics attaches great importance to rationality, but does not ignore the spiritual and emotional world. Due to its attention to rationality, it is not difficult to see that science has influenced western art. From the perspective principle and the influence of deconstruction on painting in Renaissance to the application of pope and psychoanalysis principle in modern western painting, it is not difficult to see that rational science has been playing an important role in the historical process of western painting.[3]

IV. FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF AUDIENCE'S AESTHETICS TO PAINTING WORKS

From the perspective of audience's aesthetics to painting works, the ancient Chinese and western people all regard "harmony" as the highest ideal of beauty. Westerners mainly focus on the external form of aesthetic objects, while Chinese mainly stress on the psychological experience of mysterious subjects. Chinese thinkers focus on discovering the empirical function of the aesthetic object, and often associate this function with the ethics of human ethics. Meanwhile, western thinkers stress on discovering the character of the aesthetic object and often connect it with the religious "God". It is opposite between westerners and nature, Otherwise, Chinese culture embodies the harmony between man and nature and emphasizes the organic whole of nature. Strictly speaking, the western art is in direct harmony with real nature image, while the unknown part is in conflict with nature, and China is in harmony with the whole universe. Two categories of Chinese art are poetry in Han Dynasty and poetry in Song and Yuan Dynasty famous with landscape painting of flowers and birds, which reflect China's spirit of "image absence". The Chinese found infinity from a illusory flower, a bird, a mountain and water and performed them. Therefore, Chinese attitude is gentle, distant and self-satisfied. He is detached and yet not transcendent. His paintings are ethereal, but not extremely realistic. By understanding the fundamental differences between Chinese and western cultures, we can better understand their different aesthetics on series of issues, such as theoretical system, specific category, mode of expression and internal implication.

In the relationship between painting and society, Chinese traditional painting creators always own the idea of "the spiritual self". Chinese painters usually regard paintings as a medium to exchange thoughts or emotions, so they should not ignore the audience of the works, their feelings and aesthetic ability in the process of creation. The creators of Chinese paintings attach great importance to the acceptance of thoughts by social groups. However, western painting is independent of all other art concepts. Under the influence of Renaissance humanism, the art of painting emphasizes individuality in pursuit of individual liberation. Whether from absolute figurative to complete abstraction, or from "sketching first" to "color first", this kind of concept, from one extreme to another, all reflects the ego and personality stressed by western paintings.

V. SUMMARY

To sum up, based on the theory of "man is an integral part of nature" in Chinese paintings and the "subject-object dichotomy" in western paintings, according to analyzing the aspects of subject and object, techniques, works and society, it is not difficult to see that there are many differences between Chinese paintings and western paintings both in external and internal. The reason for these differences lies in their different ways of thinking formed by different "cultural genes" in China and western countries.

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