

The Impact of Oriental Elements in Western Painting in period from 19th Century to mid-20th Century

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Abstract

In the mid-19th century, the influence of Japanese "Ukiyoe painting" on Impressionist painters made them break new ground that is different from traditional painting, which played an important role in the formation and development of Western modern art. Western art wanted to enter modernism, but it found its direction in Oriental painting. Impressionist period is the watershed between Western modernist painting and traditional classical painting. European realistic painting began to transit to abstract painting. From Impressionism, western artists' attention and research on Oriental art has gone in-depth. In this period, the use of Oriental elements by Western painters reached its peak, which also directly promoted the revolution of western traditional painting. Oriental Art conquered western artists with its unique aesthetic and rich connotation. It is inevitable for Western painting to absorb oriental culture. Therefore, the application of Oriental elements in Western modernist painting makes us further understand the historical process and development direction of Western modernist painting and the blending of Eastern and Western cultures.

Key Words: Oriental elements, Impressionist, Color, Decoration

After Renaissance, with people's in-depth study and application of anatomy, perspective science and other scientific knowledge, in art, the exploration of classical painting in color, light and shadow, composition and other forms of language has reached extreme. Facing the nearly perfect skills of classicism, how to make a breakthrough and development in the development of art is what every new generation of artists are trying to find out. At the end of 19th century, the industrial revolution prompted the west to enter the door of modernization. The society in Europe has undergone earth-shaking changes. The political, economic and cultural movements have spread to the whole world, the increasingly mature social form has led to significant changes in people's concepts, in the meantime, affected the art world significantly. Artists in the pursuit of individual liberation and freedom, wanted to get rid of the shackles given by traditional painting, so that brought survival crisis on traditional painting. Artists were eager to seek new breakthroughs, and that pushed the beginning of modernism art. In the 19th century, China took the initiative to accept western modern trend of thought, taking the enlightenment thought of the 18th century as the blueprint, and taking "science" and "democracy" as the main theme, to construct the modern civilization of new culture. While Chinese art has entered the door of modernization relying on scientific realism, the West has found the inspiration of modernism in Oriental freehand brushwork. The introduction of Oriental Art greatly stimulated the development of Western art. European artists have been trying to find a wider range of creative themes. They have long been free from the shackles of religious aristocracy. Various modernist painting schools produced in the late 19th century are rebellious against traditional painting. They refuse to reproduce the same images, but focus more on self-expression.

1. The Impact of Chinese Porcelain

Throughout the history of the development of Western art, most of its changes came from the far East. The artists' initial attempt is reflected in the selection of materials. They directly add the patterns or images of Oriental elements on their creations. In the 16th century, China's porcelain has become luxuries in Europe. With the advent of the great maritime trade, China's porcelain, which only appeared in the European Court, is no longer as scarce as before. According to the files of the Dutch East India Company, only in the early 17th century, the order quantity of porcelain from China reached 3 million pieces. The Chinese porcelain which was popular in Europe had a wide influence on the aesthetic taste and daily life of western countries, making China's porcelain and tea set no longer a precious luxury but a kind of taste in life. Three blue and white porcelain appeared in < The Banquet of Gods > created by Giovanni Bellini from Venetian school in 1514, as the "artifact" of gods' feast in the picture, they also reflects the value of Chinese porcelain in people's eyes at that time. In the period of modernist painting, after the artists' summary and precipitation of previous experience, the exploration of Oriental civilization has reached a deeper level, which is also the fundamental reason for the development and prosperity of modernist painting.

When the exploration of western traditional painting language reached the extreme, the influence of Oriental Culture on the development of Western art also showed its crucial side. Western traditional painting art has clear political intention, emphasizes rationalism, ignores the development of personality, and seldom conveys the artist's subjective emotion from the painting. The formal beauty in Oriental painting is more

about the expression of the inner world, from the representation of the objective world to the expression of the subjective world. What it pursues is not the reappearance of the real image, but the display of the inner spirit. It has its unique metaphor and deeper aesthetic characteristics, which is undoubtedly a huge treasure for western artists.

2. The Elements of Japanese Ukiyo

Impressionism is the earliest modernist painting school in the West. It challenges traditional painting and it is the watershed between the western modern art and the traditional art. Also, it showcased the aesthetic modernity in western modernism. As we all know, what influences impressionist painting most is Japanese "ukiyo", which plays an important role in the formation and development of Impressionism. The deep research and study of "ukiyo" by modernist painting school and the application of a large number of Oriental elements in creation directly lead to the transformation of western traditional painting. In the 19th century, ukiyo paintings were used as packing materials for porcelain, and they were transported to the west, which shocked the western art circles. Different from the three-dimensional space formed by scattered perspective in the west, the planarity of the two-dimensional space of Oriental painting is its feature. With the flat color, this simple visual impact gives people different feelings and inspire them to think differently. From Impressionism, artists began to pursue outdoor light and shadow changes and color richness, weakening the three-dimensional space, and the planarization of the picture began to emerge gradually. The image of Manet's work <The Boy Playing the Piccolo> has no deep background, only a subtle gray background. Although the picture is relatively simple, there is no clear three-dimensional space, there is no lack of visual beauty. His portrait paintings often have such background, similar to <The Boy with the Sword> and <The Dead Bullfighter>, which are obviously in the "ukiyo" painting, the outline of objects and the tight space affected Manet's grasp of composition in his creation.

Western traditionalist painting emphasizes the realism of color, which is indispensable to the use of solid color, light source color and environmental color in the process of creation. If the use of color in Western painting had not influenced by Japanese painting, it will not abandon the its way of using color in western traditional painting. As an oriental art, Japanese painting has been influenced by Chinese painting since ancient times. Chinese painting emphasizes "painting colors according to categories" in color setting. It pays more attention to the subjective feelings of painters when they are creating, and the use of color changes according to the subject matter and the content of painting, so as to achieve the unity and harmony of the picture and the heart in the artistic conception. The subjectivity and harmony of color in painting creation inspired Western painters. This extraordinary visual impact also led to the liberation of color in the creation of Western modernist painting. The brilliant and bright colors in "ukiyo painting" are highly praised by Van Gogh. Through the imitation and exploration of "ukiyo painting", Van Gogh's paintings gradually become bright. Oriental Art inspired him to use more abundant colors in his artworks. Van Gogh mainly researched the works of Gezhou Beizhai and Gechuan Guangzhong. These two masters are also the most popular Masters of "ukiyo painting". For example, Van Gogh once facismiled the two works of Gogawa Guangzhong in the form of oil painting: <Blooming Plum Trees> and <Bridge In the Rain>. Van Gogh's use

of color from "ukiyo painting" makes his painting style distinctive. He created 11 <Sunflowers> in his life. In France, sunflower is the symbol of light and hope, which also means "the sun on the ground" in French. Because of its gorgeous color, the creative passion of sunflower can be fully released. Like other Impressionist painters, Monet loved and collected a large number of "ukiyo" prints. Undoubtedly, Monet's love for oriental art was shown in his paintings. <Kamei In Japanese Kimono> is one of his few paintings with the theme of people. The characters in painting wear kimonos and take the gestures in traditional Japanese drama as posture, which increases the dynamics of the picture. The background is a gray wall covered with round fans, which are mostly painted with "ukiyo" prints. Different from Monet's previous works, this painting depicts the details of the picture very carefully, ranging from the pattern on the carpet to the contents in the fan on the background wall. The whole painting highlighted his obsession for oriental culture. His most famous painting <Water Lily> series is originated from his own Japanese style garden, which shows clearly his love for oriental culture.

3. From Realism to Symbolism

Decoration is the direct result of Western modernist painting learning from oriental culture. Klimt, a painting master of the "Vienna separatist school", is famous for painting with strong national style. He not only preserves the traditional Western painting style, but also absorbs nutrients from the arts of different times, countries and schools, and integrates oriental elements to form his distinctive artistic style. His symbolic patterns, novel composition, plane colors and exquisite decoration is his unique artistic symbol. The decorative features of his paintings are closely related to his research on Oriental culture. The composition, color and thematic application of Oriental paintings have a great influence on him. Like many western artists, Klimt is fond of collecting Oriental works of art, such as Chinese painting, calligraphy, porcelain, "ukiyo" and Japanese decorative art. His paintings show the characteristics of Oriental elements, and also reflect the spirit of Oriental aesthetics in varying degrees.

Klimt's work grew from traditional realism to decorative symbolism, this is what Vienna separation school different from traditional art, and it is his love and praise for Oriental Art. The decorative nature of Klimt's paintings is based on the form and language of painting, which shows a sense of plane in composition and shape, and the expression method pursues simplicity and diversity, emphasize on exaggeration of modeling and bright colors. <The Kiss> and <The Portrait of Mrs. Adler Bloch Bauer> use geometric patterns such as square, circle, triangle and spiral in the picture. These symbols are arranged and combined in order to give people a complicated and gorgeous view, while the main body of the picture is made of triangle, which makes people feel stable and balanced in overall vision. The background is flat with single or similar tone, which weakens the sense of space. The work of <Freidika Maria Bill> is full of Chinese folk art characters. The armed generals has the decorative interest of Chinese folk art which are all different and colorful in order to contrast with the Western women in the centre of the painting. The colors commonly used in Chinese folk arts such as group green, rose red and rattan often appear, which makes us feel the taste of Chinese New Year pictures. This strong decorative style shows a different aesthetic feeling in the East. In his work <Girlfriend>, in the bottom left of the picture, a phoenix appears, whose prototype is the pattern on

Chinese traditional embroidery. Phoenix is one of the representative symbols of Oriental civilization, which is often found in the decorative patterns of ancient China. Phoenix symbolizes noble women, meaning holy gods and auspicious, which also caters to the strange and loving of the mysterious exotic customs of Western audiences. The background of the work of <Woman With Fans> is composed of Phoenix, crane and lotus, which is full of Oriental sentiment and strong decorative feeling. Eastern elements appear constantly in their works, which brings new sensory stimulation to the western audience.

4. Cultural Diversity in the Period of Modernism

In the early 20th century, art began to advance from material to spiritual level. After Impressionism, a series of modernist painting schools such as cubism, abstractionism and fauvism appeared one after another. The inspiration of Picasso's Cubism came from Egyptian art, African art and Oriental Art, and the appearance of his <Avignon Girl> is a symbol of the birth of cubism. The unified perspective is the perspective rule of Western painters' cognition of three-dimensional space since Renaissance. Picasso changed this way of observing the world. Cubism painting shows a new creative style and has a diversified perspective. It breaks through the shackles of traditional painting and completes the visual revolution of modernist painting in space and structure. Scattered perspective is the most typical observation and expression method of Chinese painting since ancient times. We can find that this multi perspective of Cubism painting is similar to Chinese painting. The formation of Cubism cannot be separated from Picasso's love and study of Oriental Art. "Everything in the East attracts me. If the East is a piece of fine bread, then the whole west and its civilization can only be regarded as crumbs. "This is the expression of his infinite love and worship for Oriental Art. Oriental painting pays attention to "image". When creating, it not only emphasizes the description of the external characteristics of things, but also the expression of the inner spirit of observing things and the painter's subjective emotions. Matisse draw important inspiration from Chinese painting in terms of specific skills. Matisse's painting is different from the western realistic painting. His works are focus more on expressing his emotions. In order to get rid of the shackles of previous people's concepts and skills, Matisse wanted to find a breakthrough through other civilizations. Therefore, he has a special love for oriental civilization. He once said that his inspiration often comes from the East. "Line" plays an important role in Chinese painting. The use of lines in Matisse's works is similar to that of Chinese painting. The lines in Chinese painting are not only the formation of shapes, but also have independent and abstract formal beauty. Matisse combines the unique charm of the abstract lines with western paintings, making his paintings full of Oriental mystery. Just like his work <dance>, the figure's body is twisted and deformed into a circle, and the whole shape shows the beauty of strength. It is this kind of rough lines on the shape of the characters, as well as the filling of bright colors in the picture shows his enthusiasm and unrestrained praise of life.

In the middle of the 20th century, the abstract expressionism movement, which rose in the United States, began to prevail. It marked the arrival of a new era in the art world. The most direct consequence was that the world art center was transferred from Paris to New York. The United States is the center of the development of modern and contemporary art. Abstract expressionism leads the trend of contemporary art.

Abstract school thinks that art is impromptu, and it is a kind of unconscious and random behavior in the process of creation, which has something in common with the abstract beauty of oriental calligraphy art in the creation process. As a representative of "action painting school", Pollock completely subverted the traditional painting method of easel painting in his creation. In order to facilitate his creation, he nailed the canvas to the ground, and the paint was dripping and sprinkling on the canvas in the way of catharsis. The trajectory of the pigment seems to have a trace of Chinese calligraphy "wild grass"'s free and easy. In the meantime, Mark Tobe, the pioneer of American Abstract Expressionism's works are closely related to the oriental calligraphy art also. In his early years, he traveled to China and Japan and other places to study. He was deeply influenced by oriental culture and inspired by Zen thought, which brought him a strong interest in Chinese and Japanese calligraphy art and that inspired his later stage of creation. Mark Tobe facsimiled Ouyang Xun's calligraphy work <Yu Gong Gong Stele> in his early days, and he has been trying to consciously integrate calligraphy into Western painting. In his creation, he tried to express the content of painting directly in the form of words, and when using brush in the creation process, he consciously used the skills of starting and ending of the brush in calligraphy. The purpose is to have a visual effect similar to calligraphy in the static picture, that is, to give the viewer the impression of rhythm.

Throughout the history of Western painting art, due to its own ideological crisis, western artists carried on traditional art revolution in order to break through their own limitations. Western modernist painting takes manifestation as their aesthetic purpose, by taking the impact of foreign culture from the East, they surpassed their own reference system. Oriental painting has conquered the western artists with its unique aesthetic spirit and artistic charm. Their crazy pursuit for the Oriental elements has never subsided. The fact that Western modernist painting took inspiration from Oriental elements makes itself flow with the blood from the East, and also shows an alternative oriental charm.

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