

On the Image of the People in the Thematic Painting

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Abstract:

Thematic painting is an important carrier to commemorate the heroes and historical events, and it is also a painting theme form popular with people. The creation and presentation of thematic painting reflects the thought of “people” of socialist literature and art in the guidance of the thoughts, policies and principles of the Communist Party of China. Based on the Marxist theory of literature and art, this paper analyzes the characters of modern, modern and modern thematic paintings, and reflects the “people-centered” development thought of China.

Keywords:

Marxist Literature and Art Theory, Thematic Painting, Image

1. Introduction of Thematic Painting

The thematic painting with historical culture as the background basis tends to achieve the purpose of emotional cohesion from the perspective of people’s image narrative through certain historical situations. At the same time, the development of thematic painting in modern times cannot be separated from the support and guidance of Marxist literature and art theory, especially the embodiment of the people’s thought on socialist literature and art in the painting images and the soul of socialist literature and art upholding the patriotic spirit. The development of China cannot be separated from the efforts of the people, and the depiction and depiction of the characters in the modern subject painting is the artistic embodiment of the “people-centered” development thought in China.

2. Image: the Image of a Person as a Form of Social Consciousness

There is a historical theme with a long history, whether the western war theme or the Chinese theme, this kind of painting works often like a recorder, accompanied by a specific period of the country and constantly record the bit of things. In China, especially when a period of the war was gradually recorded, its artistic creation naturally gradually entered the writing of art history. Especially in the early period of the founding of the People’s Republic of China, as an important part of socialist construction, culture and art exist in the form of ideology, and in the process of its construction, we must implement and lead the ideological concept. Culture and art

play an important role in the study and dissemination of Marxist science, morality and culture. [1]

The people is a collective term, with the people as the object of the creation of the thematic painting, its character image is symbolic and representative. In many cases, the characters in the thematic paintings exist as a representation of the form of social consciousness. Whether it is Luo Gongliu's Tunnel War or Zhan Jianjun's Five Strong Men of Langya Mountain, the images of soldiers, workers, peasants and soldiers often appear in the works, praising the achievements of heroes and the hard-won victory of their ancestors, which is often the perspective of thematic literary and artistic creation. Classic thematic paintings bring about visual shock and respect and respect from the heart. Looking at and describing history from the perspective of the masses is a new trend reflected in the continuous development of thematic themes. Especially after the thought of "people-centered development" at the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee in 2015, the people's nature of literary and artistic creation was further reflected. The philosophy of people-centered development takes improving people's well-being and promoting all-round human development as the starting point and goal of development. People is not only reflected in what to do for the people, but also for artistic creation, it is more reflected in looking back at history and feeling history from the perspective of the people. We will only be further and farther away from history, which is determined by objective factors, but history itself must not be forgotten.



Figure 1. Luo Gongliu, Tunnel War (Internet picture).

From the perspective of the people is not from the beginning, the source of artistic creation often changes with the development of society. In the revolutionary period, works of art praised heroes and praises of workers, peasants and soldiers, and artistic creation often needed to play a propaganda role, especially for the social period at that time, when most of the people were illiterate, the image expression of artistic works was often the most direct and vivid. Therefore, in the creation of that period, there are often more creations about heroes, workers, peasants and soldiers as the protagonists, and the narrative about heroes runs through the development of the red theme. Just as the say is, "A hopeful nation cannot be without heroes, and a promising country cannot be without pioneers. All national heroes, including the heroes of the Anti-Japanese War, are the backbone of the Chinese nation. Their deeds and spirit are all powerful forces that inspire us to move forward." The noble qualities and the unswerving revolutionary spirit of the heroes spread through the paintings, and although decades later, we can still feel the strong spiritual power when looking back at the paintings at that time. After experiencing the hero narrative, the theme painting is further developed, and the creation object is transformed from the hero to the people.

In terms of the experience of creative groups, contemporary art creators often understand history from historical materials and those who have witnessed it, in other words, they learn and experience from an objective perspective. Many creators of the last century are themselves witnesses, their artistic creation from life, from experience, they emotionally and spiritually from beginning to end. After the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War, the famous woodcut artist then joined the anti-enemy propaganda activities and participated in specific revolutionary practice, which made his first contact with oil painting and created two works, *Tunnel Warfare* and *Rectification Report*, which had a far-reaching impact on the development of modern Chinese oil painting. If the painter's own experience is different, then their starting point of creation is also different, especially in the function of modern thematic painting, from the past history of the modern view, reflecting the characteristics of a strong country, national unity and people's happy life. Therefore, in the perspective of creation, the thematic art creation reflects the creative characteristics of the perspective of the masses.

3. The Image of the People in Other Thematic Arts

The transformation of narrative perspective is not only present in the art of painting, but also in other categories. Theme films, such as *Wolf Warrior* and *Operation Red Sea*, usually feature in the characters of ordinary soldiers. When the protagonist is also ordinary people, rather than specific to individual heroes, their words and deeds reflect the human side, and the overall plot is more active. Compared with the heroic "human" narrative, contemporary red themes are more likely to depict the events themselves and resonate them from the perspective of the general public.

When the perspective of creation changes from heroic narrative to group narrative, the eyes turn to the people. The obvious change is that the creation of group painting is relatively more obvious. The development of group portrait painting not only absorbs the nutrients of the local cultural background, but also is nourished by the content and skills of the foreign cultural works. The most direct embodiment of "people's nature" in the painting is that their image is moved into the picture as the protagonist.

Based on the needs of communication and publicity, in the thematic paintings after the founding of the People's Republic of China, the group painting creation is often expressed in the form and plot of the masses around the hero. Historically, the masses of workers and peasants belonged to the exploited and oppressed for a long time in the past, but in this period after the founding of the People's Republic of China, their emotions were greatly released, and their artistic creation became the export of emotional expression. As the art audience, on the other hand, the masses of workers and peasants are limited by the social environment at that time, its education degree and aesthetic ability has relative limitations, therefore, compared to the pursuit of "artistic conception", "artistically" of Chinese painting, realistic western painting can bring a certain degree of convenience and directness.

In the second half of the 20th century to the present, the image of the people as the leading role is reflected in the picture, and the "people's nature" has been further revealed. Painters Wang Shikuo in the 1950s created "*Blood Clothes*" is known as "irreplaceable classics in the history of Chinese art", by depicting the peasants in the congress expose the landlord crime situation, express the thoughts of oppressed peasants stand up, on the one hand, people sigh in suffering peasants accused difficult,

on the other hand and inspired by the overthrow of the landlord class. Compared with knowing who the specific masses in this painting are and where they come from, the atmosphere and scene shown in the picture make the viewer feel the power of the peasant class, and the people of socialism is vividly reflected. *The Nanjing Massacre*, created by the painter Li Zijian, which has aroused strong response in recent years, truly reproduces the tragic scenes of Nanjing in 1937 through highly realistic painting techniques. The picture consists of three combinations of “Massacre”, “live”, “and Buddha”. Although their respective narrative subjects are different, there is the same character group - in the three pictures, that is, the people. The proud Japanese officers, crying babies and silent monks all filled the emotions of the victims in the background. The strong visual impact of the mountain and staggered victims fell deeply in the hearts of every viewer like the history of the war. People are a collective, and we may not know who the people in the painting are, but at the moment we watch the picture, our emotions arouse a resonance beyond time and space. (Figure 2)



Figure 2. Wang Shikuo, *Blood Clothes*(Internet picture).

If Chinese thematic painting is like an exciting symphony, then the group portrait painting is the strongest voice in this symphony. The scene of the excited crowd gathering together to celebrate the common value ideal creates a blueprint for the pursuit of collectivism. [2] Obviously, Chinese group painting creation, compared with other countries reflect the stronger proletarian narrative, as the says, “workers, peasants and soldiers is the proletariat, is the main force of the revolution”, “literature and art should serve the people, the first is to serve the workers, peasants and soldiers”, Chinese group painting is based on the background of Chinese society development and reflects the painting form with Chinese characteristics. With the founding of New China, the proletariat stood on the stage of history. The modern mass painting recorded the development and construction achievements of new China from different angles. It also made the mass expression techniques and the widespread art propaganda laid a broad mass foundation.

The people are the main force in China’s socialist cause construction. And people’s understanding of “people” largely depends on the influence of external information. In the category of external information, it is indispensable to read and understand the painting images.

For the people, the directness is reflected in the visual effect brought by the realistic paintings. Painting can naturally express the meaning of “people’s nature” more intuitively and artistically, especially in the art works under the specific content background of the theme theme, which can make the people connect with the real social life and deepen the understanding of the party of “serving the people”. On this level, the function of art is shown and continued. The directness of reading is reflected in the art works in the early days of the founding of the People’s Republic of China, especially the says, “Speech at the Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art” in May 1942,

which pointed out the direction for the development of literature and art in the base areas, and affirmed that the literary and art work has direct significance for uniting the people and propagating the mainstream ideas. [3] At the beginning of the founding of the People's Republic of China, there were about 550 million people in China, but the illiteracy rate was over 80%, so the promotion of pictures or posters is far more effective than the promotion of text. In other words, the thematic paintings enable the people to directly read the connotation expressed by the creators through the images, and enhance the people's ideological understanding of the author in the most direct and concise way. Even now, major museums and exhibition halls will still display a considerable number of red theme paintings, whether with painting as the main body, or to give historical characters as an auxiliary role, the function of painting is still important from the past to the present.

On the other hand, in the development of Marxist literary and art theory and the theoretical construction of socialist literary and art view with Chinese characteristics, the indirect nature is reflected in the function of red theme painting to the society. Modern Chinese thematic paintings play an auxiliary and promoting role in the interpretation of Marxist literary and artistic views and the construction and promotion of the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

4. Typical Image and Environment

In the early 1930s, as Marxist literary theory was translated into China, a series of articles on typical theories were also translated. On the basis of studying translated works, Chinese literary theorists have also made various studies on typical theories. From the theories of Marxist, we can know that characters and environment are organically unified and cannot exist absolutely independently. [4] In addition, the environment provides an opportunity for the character, in the premise of a typical environment, the image of the character can be more full and full. It is true that the theory of typicality was originally used in the research and interpretation of literature and art. With the development and progress of various arts, the construction of cross-class typical images also makes the characters experience various forms of expression, which undoubtedly makes their typicality more rich and artistic than the expression of a single work. Text gives readers infinite imagination through description, while painting is to satisfy the audience with intuitive and strong pictures. They construct images from different media.

The typical image that we agree with at present is basically not completed at one time, but constructed by a variety of factors. [5] Combined with China's development situation and the development of thematic painting, we is not hard to find, thematic painting of contemporary and modern Chinese painting is embarks from the typical image of the first, and then gradually developed into the typical characters behind the expression of typical environment, so as to achieve complementary relationship typical image and environment, in the context of China's typical image, with authenticity as the base. Creators, especially in the art of painting, often create art based on real people. Hero worship is a common cultural and psychological consciousness of all nations, and the hero images produced by this universal psychological consciousness have remarkable characteristics of times and nations. [6] In the early days of the founding of the People's Liberation Of China, many paintings were related to the names of heroes or great men, showing the naming pattern of "someone has completed something", such as Liu Hulan's Death created by Feng Fasi in 1957, and Xian Xinghai in Northern Shaanxi by Yu Changgong. If specific figures

are not directly reflected in the naming, specific historical figures will also be depicted in the picture, such as Nanchang Uprising created by Li Binghong in 1957. In other words, the content of the art works of this period strives to be highly consistent with historical time. Of course, the concept of typical image cannot be completely equated with specific heroes, but what can be seen from these works is that many heroes show the heroic spirit of Communists in the face of revolution and the feat of achieving national greatness at the sacrifice of their own ego.

It is not difficult to understand that due to the particularity of The Times and the functionality of art, red paintings in the second half of the 20th century tend to focus more on the growth stories of characters or important events surrounding heroes. Just as the most core and key figures in historical events would constitute the center of the event, and then through the artistic treatment of many painters, the figures would become symbolic symbols in the picture, and with the depiction and expression of different painters, the typical images in artistic creation would be gradually shaped. Figures in history are naturally more powerful, but after artistic treatment, the typical images in literary and artistic creation are undoubtedly more iconic in artistic expression, and through the shaping and processing of typical images in literary and artistic creation, historical figures have been famous for thousands of years.

5. Conclusions

The development of Marxist literary and art theory needs reference practice, and Chinese thematic painting is the practice embodiment of socialist literary and art view with Chinese characteristics.

In the 21st century, it has entered an era of accelerated development, which also means that the development of art has put forward higher requirements, and art must shoulder greater responsibility to jointly build a beautiful China.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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