

Comparative Perspective of Chinese and Western Art Epiphanic Expression and Intuitive Experience

Qinghua Wu^{1*}

¹ Design Institute, Inner Mongolia Normal University, Hohhot, China

Email Address

jkn051208@163.com (Qinghua Wu)

*Correspondence: jkn051208@163.com

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Abstract:

In the process of globalization, the communication and collision between Chinese and Western art are becoming more and more frequent. It is particularly important in the field of art research to deeply explore the characteristics of Chinese and Western art creation in Epiphanic expression and Intuitive experience, and to sort out the differences between the two. Different philosophical models and aesthetic thoughts in China and the West also have their own paths. These thoughts nourish the Epiphanic expression and Intuitive experience of different arts in the two places, and also make the gap between the creative direction and aesthetic orientation of Chinese and Western arts. However, these effects are not isolated and absolute, but intertwined and interact with each other. At the same time, Epiphanic expression and Intuitive experience are complex and diverse in specific artistic practice, and are also influenced by many factors such as the artist's personal experience, emotion and creativity.

Keywords:

Chinese and Western Comparison, Epiphanic Expression, Intuitive Experience, Art

1. Introduction

In the vast world of art, China has developed mature art models with different styles. Art carries the projection of human mind and accommodates the expression of human emotions. In the process of creation and appreciation, there are many inherent characteristics that are not easy to say. Epiphanic expression and Intuitive experience are the two core contents of this kind of internal characteristics. Chinese and Western art have developed along different contexts and gradually formed distinctive artistic styles and creative forms. Behind these differences, there are common artistic perception logic and creative operation logic. Epiphanic expression and Intuitive experience occupy different positions in the development of Chinese and Western art. Exploring these problems can help people accurately grasp the core connotation of Chinese and Western art. It can also promote the exchange and integration of different cultures in art and expand new thinking directions.

In recent years, the speed of globalization has accelerated, and the frequency of communication between different cultures has continued to increase. Chinese and Western art have begun to influence each other and absorb each other's creative experience. In the current environment, the comparative analysis of Epiphanic expression and Intuitive experience in Chinese and Western art has important theoretical value and practical significance.

2. Theoretical Basis of Chinese and Western Art Epiphanic Expression and Intuitive Experience

The Epiphanic expression and Intuitive experience of Chinese and Western art are rooted in the soil of philosophy and aesthetics, and build a unique and rich theoretical framework. In the mode of traditional Chinese philosophy, "Taoism follows nature" is one of the core concepts of Taoism. Tao follows the natural law and does not accept human intervention. In the Taoist point of view, people should abandon excessive human thinking and deliberate pursuit, and deal with the external world with a natural inaction mentality. "Epiphanic" is a very important theoretical proposition in Chinese traditional literary aesthetics. Yan Yu put forward the theory of "Epiphanic theory" in "Canglang Poetry Talks". "Epiphanic theory" has a profound impact on many aspects of art theory such as poetry, calligraphy and painting in later generations. This influence is not only manifested in the theoretical proposition, but also in the aesthetic pursuit of artistic works and artistic practice. In a word, it is the construction of aesthetic ideal. [1] Epiphanic mainly refers to "epiphany", China's epiphany, which is gradually developed and evolved by Buddhist Zen philosophy. Zen advocates relying on inner consciousness to complete the capture of truth. Zen practice is more integrated into daily situations. Practitioners break the solidified thinking mode by instant feeling, so that the mind can be freed and transcended. Insight focuses on the individual, requiring the individual to suddenly understand the core connotation of the universe and life at a specific node. This kind of understanding jumps out of the framework of verbal logical thinking and belongs to the awakening in the depths of the heart. According to Zen Buddhism, the world is Buddha, that is, I, and the state of "mind is Buddha" can be achieved by knowing the inner feelings of the people and understanding the essence of the heart.

The Zen concept of "sudden enlightenment" denotes a holistic intuitive cognition that requires no external seeking, relies not on written texts, and can only be grasped intuitively, not conveyed through words. Epiphanic refers to that transcendent insight within artistic intuition, where one enters a state of inspiration through the mystical union of self and object. Epiphanic theory emphasises the individuality, personalisation, and serendipity of inspiration. [2] The "epiphany" thought of Zen has built a profound philosophical foundation for Epiphanic expression. The story of "Golden Scales Piercing the Net" in Zen classics conveys the Epiphanic thinking of Zen in terms of Zen. It values the power of instant enlightenment, which can be separated from the entanglement of the world and reach the deep core of things. Zen's concept of "not writing, pointing to the heart" also reflects the emphasis on Epiphanic expression, that is, not relying on words, but experiencing and expressing through inner consciousness. The "insight" in art is very similar to the "insight" of Zen. First, art appreciation is also based on its own experience, and its subjective arbitrariness is very strong. Secondly, it is very intuitive. It needs to grasp a complex and subtle artistic feeling, rather than just stay on the surface meaning of language and image color. Therefore, it also needs this kind of "insight" that "bursts" into the deep layer of

consciousness. [3] From our perspective today, the “epiphany” in artistic activities and aesthetic activities is an artistic intuition formed by the integration of many aesthetic psychological factors such as feeling, perception, association, imagination, emotion and understanding. [4] Epiphanic emphasizes breaking away from the thinking mode of daily operation, breaking away from the shackles of the inherent logical framework, and relying on the sudden and direct path to grasp the essence and core of things. This understanding is not obtained through gradual reasoning and accumulation of knowledge, but in a moment of spiritual awakening. The traditional Chinese aesthetic concept always revolves around life, attaches importance to individual sensory and spiritual experience, and affirms that the harmonious unity between man and nature is the source of beauty and the basis of beauty. The “savvy” in the Chinese aesthetic model is the primitive attribute of life itself and the internal force that promotes the development of Epiphanic activities. Aesthetic Epiphanic is realized in the recovery of savvy.

In Western philosophy, intuition is closely associated with irrationalist philosophical currents. These currents reflect upon and critique traditional rationalism. While traditional rationalism emphasises that humans can comprehend the world through logical reasoning and analysis, irrationalism posits that the scope of human cognition is not confined by rational thought. Non-rational elements such as intuition may also participate in the cognitive process, playing their own role. Within the Western context, intuition is frequently associated with individual subconsciousness, emotions, and instincts. In artistic creation and aesthetic activities, intuition is regarded as a capacity to directly access the essence of things, existing independently of the framework of rational analysis and judgement.

Plato believes that the real world is an imitation of the idea world, and the artist’s intuition can reach the prototype of the idea. Plato divides the world into two parts, namely the “perceptual world” and the “conceptual world”. Specific individual things form the “perceptual world”, and the ideas behind individual things together form the “conceptual world”. The idea is a kind of concept abstracted from all kinds of concrete things, which is an eternal real entity. The concrete things are always in change, which can only be regarded as the “copy” of the idea. Plato’s theory of ideas acts on intuitive enlightenment. The core point is that it points out that grasping the world of ideas depends on intuition. Human beings can not only rely on sensory experience to understand the world, but also use intuition to understand those ideas beyond the scope of specific things. This intuition does not belong to unfounded speculation. It jumps away from rational analysis and belongs to a direct cognitive ability, which can help people contact the essence of things and universal truth.

Within the currents of modern Western aesthetic thought, Croce established “intuition” as the cornerstone of his philosophy of the spirit and aesthetic theory. Croce maintained that intuition is expression: “Every true intuition or representation is simultaneously an act of expression. That which is not objectified in expression is not intuition or representation, but remains mere sensation and natural fact. The mind can only intuit through the processes of creation, shaping, and expression.” [5] He also believes that intuition is a kind of knowledge with uniqueness. From the perspective of intuition, it comes from imagination ; from the perspective of content, it is about the individual, rather than the abstraction of the individual (commonality, universality); from the object point of view, for individual things, do not pay attention to the relationship between individual things; from the results, what is produced is a visualized image, not a concept. Croce once remarked: “Poets are born” should be

amended to “Man is born a poet”; some are born great poets, others minor poets. People forget that genius does not fall from the heavens, but is inherent in human nature itself.’ [6] He also pointed out that intuition is an active shaping activity in which the mind endows disorganized and formless materials with forms. The formless material below the intuitive boundary does not exist in itself, and only exists when the mind gives its form (intuition), which is actually the product of spiritual activity, so only the spirit exists. Croce emphasizes that intuition is expression, and any intuition is intuition only when it appears in the form of expression. That is to say, what is not objectified in the performance is not intuition, and the mind can only be intuitive through creation and performance. Bergson believes that intuition belongs to dreamy consciousness, or an unconscious flow, which is a way to grasp the impulse of life and touch the continuous characteristics. Croce’s intuition theory focuses on the analysis of the relationship between intuition and performance from the perspective of spiritual activities, and the core points to the creativity and independence of intuition. Bergson puts the direction on the concepts of time and life, and relies on intuition to grasp the flow and change of life. Susan Langer’s definition of intuition is biased towards insight or insight. This kind of cognition appears at the beginning and end of the logical process, covering the insight and understanding of various forms.

3. The “Context” of Epiphanic Expression in Chinese Art

In traditional Chinese painting, “Spirit Consonance” is regarded as the highest aesthetic pursuit. Painters rely on their own keen intuition to capture the charm and vividness of all things in nature. This intuition is not a single visual perception, but an instant understanding of the inner vitality and spiritual characteristics of things. In the creation of landscape painting, the painter will not limit the creation boundary to the faithful reproduction of the mountain and river form, but will rely on the intuition to feel the momentum rhythm and flowing beauty of the landscape, and rely on the pen and ink to convey the spirit of the landscape itself. In the creation of figure painting, the painter relies on intuition to grasp the demeanor of the characters, so that the characters formed by the pen are full and full of charm. This kind of pursuit of intuition makes the painting work transcend the shape similarity and reach the realm of spirit similarity. The Intuitive experience in the process of Epiphanic is a common but special psychological phenomenon in artistic creation. It is both super-rational and super-perceptual. It can be said that the artist’s perception, emotion and imagination are driven by aesthetic pursuit. [7] In the art of calligraphy, the epiphanic union of mind and hand constitutes its core manifestation. When the calligrapher wields the brush, beyond the mechanical motion of the hand lies the perfect fusion of mental activity with the flow of ink and brush. Through prolonged practice and refinement, the moment the calligrapher lifts the brush to apply ink, they may rely upon this epiphanic state to achieve a harmonious correspondence between mind and hand. Each stroke, each dot and press, carries the calligrapher’s inner emotions, personal cultivation, and unique understanding of the art. Wang Xizhi’s Preface to the Orchid Pavilion, with its fluid, expansive brushwork and graceful, spirited lines, exemplifies this union of mind and hand – Epiphanic in its natural harmony. This exquisite expression permeates the entire creative process, endowing calligraphic works with distinctive artistic charm and spiritual depth.

Chinese traditional poetry focuses on the intuitive artistic conception of “meaning beyond words”. The poet uses simple and implicit language to create a rich and far-reaching artistic conception through intuitive perception of the content. In the poems,

how to select the image, how to arrange, how to adjust the rhythm, each place carries the poet's intuition and the expression of Epiphanic. Wang Wei's creation of "desert solitary smoke straight, long river sunset yen" outlines the open scenery of the frontier fortress with simple words. Readers can directly capture the beauty of the artistic conception carried by the poem through the words. Li Qingzhao wrote "searching, cold and clear, miserable and miserable", directly laying out his inner feelings in an intuitive way, and the whole space was shrouded in an atmosphere of sadness. This intuitive way of creating artistic conception allows poetry to retain enough space for extension, generate long lasting charm, and have the power to impress readers. In the process of reading, readers can obtain a complete aesthetic experience.

Chinese culture has always respected the beauty of implicitness, as well as the emotional expression of intuitive Epiphanic. Chinese people do not tend to vent their emotions directly and enthusiastically, and are accustomed to passing on their inner feelings through euphemistic and tortuous paths. This kind of implicit Epiphanic emotional expression frequently appears in art forms such as poetry, painting and music. The author's poems can hide his deep emotion behind the concise and charming words with the help of symbols, metaphors, lyrical scenes and other techniques, and leave it to the reader to rely on intuition to understand and taste. In painting, painters can use techniques such as blank space and light ink to establish an implicit and hazy atmosphere, triggering the viewer's association and Epiphanic.

4. The "Image" of Intuitive Experience in Western Art

In artistic creation, Western artists pay attention to the exploration and innovation of art forms, and Intuitive experience can help creators better grasp the form. Impressionism emerged in France at the end of the 19th century. It was an influential painting school at that time. Its core feature was the intuitive capture of the instantaneous state of light and color. Impressionist painters abandon traditional painting ideas, no longer enter the studio carefully conceived, carefully polished process, but out of the studio, direct observation of various scenes in nature and life. They emphasize the combination of light and color in a short period of time, and want to retain the fleeting momentary impression on the canvas. When Monet created "Saint Lazare Railway Station", the steam emitted by the train in the picture, the light and shadow of the sun falling through the glass ceiling, and the dynamics of the crowd were all recorded in clever strokes and bright colors. The capture of this moment is not the original copy of the objective reality, but the painter's unique perception and intuitive response to the elements of light, color and shape in a specific moment. In Renoir's "pancake mill dance," the scene of the crowd dancing happily in the outdoor sun is full of vitality. The painter relies on his own intuitive grasp of light and color to establish a happy and relaxed atmosphere, so that the audience can feel the pleasure of that moment personally.

Expressionism emerged in Germany and Austria at the beginning of the 20th century. Unlike impressionism, impressionism focuses on capturing the instantaneous changes of the outside world, and expressionism focuses on directly presenting the inner world of the creator. Expressionism often uses exaggeration, deformation and even absurdity to present its own emotional and mental state. The "self-portrait" of Austrian painter Schiller, with twisted lines and sharp strokes, paints his painful and struggling mental state. He did not focus on the real appearance of the characters, and followed the intuition to release the fear, loneliness and anxiety hidden in the heart directly onto the canvas. The German painter Kirchner's "Five Women on the Street"

uses thick lines with strong color contrast to present people's confusion and anxiety in modern urban life. The characters in the picture are elongated and deformed, and the background of the city streets also reveals a chaotic and depressing atmosphere. These processing methods are the creator's intuition along the heart, the intuitive feelings in the face of modern society directly presented. Impressionism captures instant intuition and presents changes in the outside world. Expressionism relies on intuition to express the inner world and uncovers the deep emotions and mental states of human beings. The two together constitute an important aspect of intuitive Epiphanic in Western art.

The exploration of Intuitive experience and Epiphanic expression in Western art often brings direct and strong visual impact to the audience. This feature echoes the core of Western culture, which focuses on empirical evidence and gives priority to intuitive feelings. When the artist Pollock creates "drip painting" works, he abandons the tools and creative methods used in traditional painting, and chooses the unique drip technique to complete the works. He laid the canvas flat on the ground, held the paint pot, and let the paint fall onto the surface of the canvas by dripping, sprinkling and splashing. "Drip painting" has a strong visual impact. Different colors overlap and flow on the canvas, and finally merge together to form a complex dynamic pattern. The lines and colors are intertwined, and no clear outline and boundary can be found in the picture, which conveys the visual feeling of infinite extension and continuous flow to the viewer. This unique visual effect can make the audience feel as if they are in a constantly changing and vibrant art space. Pollock's "drip painting" is also a complete process of recording his exploration of the inner world and subconscious. In his creation, he was completely immersed in his own emotions and intuition, and let the body movements and pigment flow become the carrier of inner feelings. This way of creation breaks the deliberate shaping of the theme and image of traditional painting, and shifts the focus of creation to the process of artistic activities and the inner feelings of the creator. This creative path reflects his intuitive exploration of painting materials and creative process, and also shows that he outputs his inner subconscious emotions directly to the outside. Each piece of work is a visual expression of his own Intuitive experience at a specific time. This pursuit of direct, strong visual impact characteristics, making Western art can quickly attract the attention of the audience, and in the moment to convey a strong emotion and information, to stimulate the audience's intuitive response and deep thinking. As Croce said: "Intuition and art are equal to 'lyrical art'..." People can neither leave intuition nor leave artistic activities. [8] In the context of Western culture, Intuitive experience and Epiphanic expression show unique artistic charm and cultural connotation by highlighting individual consciousness, subjective emotion and direct and strong visual impact.

5. Comparative Thinking of Chinese and Western Art "Epiphanic" and "Intuition"

The aesthetic experience of Chinese art is often expressed as "the view of serenity". When appreciating works of art, people are more willing to feel the works and understand the connotation of the works with a quiet, calm and restrained mentality. When appreciating Chinese classical landscape painting, the viewer will invest in a quiet atmosphere, slowly taste the distant and profound feeling carried by the picture, and slowly return to peace and fullness in the heart. This aesthetic experience values the cultivation and precipitation of the individual's heart. The aesthetic experience of western art is mostly presented as "passion enlightenment". Western art often arouses

the viewer's emotional response by means of strong emotional impact and direct sensory stimulation. When appreciating such art forms as western music, dance and drama, the audience will be infected by warm emotions, unrestrained movements and exciting rhythms, and will have strong emotions of excitement and excitement in their hearts, so as to gain profound insights. In Chinese art, "virtual and real" is a common and important formal language. "Voidness" is not equal to emptiness, but the creator leaves room for imagination by means of implicit hints. "Reality" is a concrete and clear image or scene. In the creation of Chinese painting, painters often use blank space to express "voidness", and the finely drawn landscape characters in the picture are "reality". The combination of virtual and real processing methods allows the picture to have a specific description, but also leaves enough imagination space for the viewer to create a subtle and far-reaching artistic effect.

In the formal language of Western art, "realism" and "abstraction" are two core components. "Realistic" pursues the realistic reproduction of objective things, paying attention to the accurate presentation of details, proportions, and light and shadow. From the sculptures of ancient Greece and Rome to the paintings of the Renaissance, it shows superb realistic skills. "Abstract" is that the creator will refine and deform the real image, rely on the form of simplified processing or geometric processing, and output his own internal emotions and ideas. Like the abstract painting of modernism, it is completely free from the constraints of realistic images and builds a complete picture only by pure color and shape. Chinese artistic creation often conveys deep connotation by means of "metaphorical symbol". Classical poetry will select specific images to carry emotions, or express philosophical thinking. For example, plum blossom corresponds to tough character, and bamboo corresponds to noble integrity. In painting, some specific themes or elements also have a fixed meaning. This kind of creative technique is implicit, and the viewer needs to combine the cultural background and personal perception to understand the deep meaning of the work. In most cases, western art will directly throw out the content that you want to express. The character image event scene in the painting, the plot and emotional expression in the literary works are all displayed in front of the audience in a more intuitive way. In realistic literary works, the creators rely on detailed description to promote the plot and directly reveal the social phenomenon and the fate of the characters.

From the perspective of the thought process, sudden enlightenment essentially constitutes a connection process that omits certain intermediate links. "Enlightenment" as a concrete form of thought contains experiential content regulated by reason, representing the sedimentation of rationality into sensibility. Therefore, the essence of "enlightenment" is not obscure to the point of incomprehensibility, but rather subtle to the point of being difficult to articulate. Setting aside that Yan Yu's theory of 'epiphanic insight' inherently incorporates rational elements such as 'extensive reading' and 'thorough investigation of principles,' even Wang Shiqi's concept of "shenyun" and Wang Guowei's notion of 'jingjie' are not entirely divorced from reason. This differs from the Western emphasis on pure intuition. Western intuition pays more attention to stimulating personal transcendental ability and self-organization of perceptual experience. Therefore, Western art has always attached importance to the primary position of innate ability in the process of perception, such as genius, inspiration and id. This leads people to regard intuition as an inherent mysterious ability, which cannot be expressed, explained and transmitted in language. [9] The intuitive perception of "Epiphanic" does not completely exclude rational factors, it is a kind of "wisdom intuition". [10]

6. Conclusions

To study the differences between Epiphanic and intuition in the field of Chinese and Western art, the core content is to sort out how the cultural background affects the formation path of the two. In traditional Chinese culture and philosophy, the unique Epiphanic style of Chinese art is shaped by the combination of Taoism's "inaction" and Confucianism's "doctrine of the mean." The combination of Western philosophical tradition, religious belief and scientific spirit has shaped the unique intuitive characteristics of Western art. When Chinese and Western art communicate and integrate, new creative possibilities can be collided. The blending of different styles of Epiphanic and intuitive contact can inject new inspiration into artistic creation, clarify the new development direction, and open up a broader artistic space.

Fusion innovation is the inevitable trend of Chinese and Western art exchanges, and it is also the core support for creating a new path of art development. It integrates various elements, creative ideas and performance techniques of Chinese and Western art in an orderly manner to create artistic forms and creative styles that have never appeared before. In addition, the integration of Chinese and Western art in creative ideas can also arouse new creative inspiration. Chinese traditional culture always pursues harmony and nature. Western creative traditions tend to emphasize individual freedom and innovation. After the combination of the two concepts, artistic works covering different ideological dimensions can be generated, opening up new growth space for artistic development. In the future, the exchange and mutual learning of Chinese and Western art should pay attention to the absorption of each other's strengths and explore new creative directions in the integration, so as to promote the continuous development of art and bring more wonderful and possible spiritual and cultural life to human beings

Conflicts of Interest

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

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