

From Japan's Ukiyo Paintings to China's Modern Lacquer Paintings

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Abstract

Although the development of Chinese lacquer painting is only a few decades old, lacquer ware can be traced back to more than 7,000 years ago. The traditional lacquer painting can also be regarded as a two-dimensional plane lacquer. Modern Chinese lacquer painting is inherited from this ancient and unique lacquer art. After decades of development, modern lacquer painting has achieved fruitful results. However, there is still much room for improvement. In the Edo period of Japan, --ukiyoe, an ancient and magnificent painting style, originated from Chinese Ming and Qing prints. After less than 300 years of development, it became world-famous in the 19th century and influenced many western painting styles dominated by postmodernism, pushing forward the development of western fine arts. Although ukiyoe comes from China and is limited to China in many painting techniques, its development is worth pondering. I think it is exactly what modern Chinese lacquer painting needs to push people and learn from each other.

Keywords

Chinese Lacquer Painting, Ukiyoe, Painting, Culture.

1. INTRODUCTION

All manuscripts must be in English, also the table and figure texts, otherwise we cannot publish yoWhen the early Chinese lacquer painting developed to the 1920s, many artists such as Li Zhiqing and others integrated lacquer painting with modern painting art after returning from overseas. In 1984, lacquer painting was included in the fine arts category by the school and participated in the 6th national fine arts exhibition. only then did the monument of modern Chinese lacquer painting officially stand up. At this time, we can generally understand lacquer painting as "painting creation with large lacquer as the main medium" [1], and achieve the artist's ideal artistic effect by means of stacking, carving, carving, painting and other performance techniques. One of the most commonly used methods is to use the physical characteristics of paint to make the picture produce strange and changeable effects by using techniques such as flowing, wrinkling and rendering. The painter will also use some auxiliary materials to make the texture more flexible. For example, gold foil, silver foil, gold and silver powder and other auxiliary materials are embedded in the picture, which can not only make the picture more magnificent, but also make the texture of lacquer painting more upright, helping artists to better interpret the desired artistic conception in their works. Since the 21st century,

the form of lacquer painting has gradually changed. From the beginning of painting only with lacquer, to now it has expanded into a multi-element and multi-directional art form, and the materials have become more flexible and changeable. Many of them began to use synthetic paints, such as cashew nut paint and polyurethane paint, which are superior to traditional paints in many aspects. The inlay is no longer limited to eggshell metal and other materials, and almost all materials that can be used for performance can be used, such as insects, plants and stones.

Then to ukiyoe, from the 17th century to the present, ukiyoe is a popular art form in Japan. Ukiyoe's painting contents can be roughly divided into two categories, i.e. world memory category and decoration category. Decorative categories mainly depict landscapes and flowers and birds, and one of the representatives of such ukiyoe is "THIRTY-SIX SCENES of FUYUE" [2] painted by the famous Japanese ukiyoe master Kitajai Katsura. Decorative ukiyoe focuses on color matching and line drawing. Through simplifying and refining nature, objects are presented on the screen through a sense of order. For this kind of ukiyoe painting, lines and composition are especially important. The beauty of the whole work is almost transmitted to the eyes of the viewer through linear depiction. Their lines often have a strong sense of rhythm. The thick, short, long and thin lines are evenly and regularly distributed in the picture, and at the same time there are certain arrangement changes, so that the decoration of the picture can be strengthened. In terms of color, ukiyoe of both human and scenic birds is mainly painted in pure primary colors and filled with bright and lively colors. The second kind of ukiyoe, which remembers the world, mainly uses narration as its painting content. For example, "ancient history" [3] depicts mostly the folk customs and human feelings of the Japanese people, the samurai war, the beauty of the spring palace, etc. At first glance, the viewer will be deceived by the beautiful women, burly warriors and noisy street scenes. When you carefully combine the historical background at that time to taste, you will realize the deeper emotion expressed in the works. The content and color depicted by ukiyoe are actually contrary to the emotion expressed in its depth. However, it is also for this reason that the viewer can realize the feelings the author hopes.

2. THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO WORKS

Generally speaking, we will find that early lacquer paintings in our country have very dense similarities and differences with ukiyoe in Japan. Both have the same complicated production process, and a ukiyoe requires painting, carving, rubbing and other processes. This also made ukiyoe difficult to get rid of the label of "handicraft" for a long time. It was not until the middle of the 20th century that people gradually got a more comprehensive understanding of it. The process of modern lacquer painting has to go through description, inlaying, carving, grinding, piling, etc. The complicated process has led our country's lacquer painting to move closer to the category of handicraft to a great extent like the former. The same point is also expressed in decoration. The artistic decoration of the two is very strong, but both belong to the category of easel painting, which is the combination of painting and handicraft. These reasons also make both of them face the same contradiction, that is, the contradiction between "painting" and "craft".

The difference between the two is more obvious. Chinese lacquer painting is a new artistic form developed on the basis of Chinese traditional lacquer art. Because of its special painting materials, it has different forms of expression and decorative language from other kinds of arts. From the perspective of material language, lacquer painting materials are completely different from ukiyoe. Lacquer painting uses metal foil powder, mother-of-pearl and eggshell as the main materials and lacquer drawing board as the base material. Moreover, after the paint dries, the color effect is deeper, and it is not easy to change color, and it is moisture-proof and corrosion-

proof. ukiyoe, which is also a wooden board painting, does not have these. Secondly, there is the difference in painting language. ukiyoe's painting language is mainly interpreted by its decoration, and its modeling sense is usually closer to western painting than lacquer painting. Drawing with line, color, composition and other fine arts techniques gives viewers a sense of substitution. The noumenon artistic language of lacquer painting is explained by teacher cheng Xiangjun's words: "the special visual aesthetic language represented by lacquer as the main medium". Therefore, the painting language feature of lacquer painting is the uncontrollable and random nature of "inevitably affected by lacquer", which finally makes the picture have a symbolic sense. Old Mr. Wang Chaowen once said in the preface of "Fujian and Jiangxi Painting Exhibition" that "the duality of painting factors and material characteristics determines the difference between lacquer painting and other painting types".

3. THE CONNECTION AND COMPARISON BETWEEN CONTEMPORARY LACQUER PAINTING AND UKIYOE PAINTING

In terms of painting, modern lacquer painting seems to have a close relationship with ukiyoe. For example, the irregular composition of the two makes the works have a unique beauty of space art. For example, Japan's xido is painted by Gormo's "first painting" and China's painter Wu Guanzhong's "houses with corner composition". The pictures of these works are often asymmetrical left and right, or the main body of the picture is shifted left and right. These processes are not simply to create nature, but to pursue a higher level of unity of the picture. In addition, the bright tile color is also one of the important links between the two. Ukiyoe has rich and colorful colors, and a large number of red, black, green and other basic colors are used for thick coating [4]. The color beauty of ukiyoe is undoubtedly amazing, and the "brocade painting" created by painters after decades gives a strong visual stimulation. In the aspect of lacquer painting, traditional lacquer painting advocates the beauty of red and black. Today's color is mainly composed of color paint, metal platinum powder, resin, eggshell and other auxiliary materials. With colorful colors, the author's ideas are directly expressed, which gives people a double shock of vision and mind. As the two major painting types of decoration Department, the connection between them is the main feature of decorative painting, i.e. graphic processing. Both of them do not deliberately pursue realistic picture effect in painting, get rid of most of the constraints of perspective, and collocate with simple and generalized characters or scenes, so that the picture is more free and random. In many lacquer paintings and ukiyoe works, we can often see the same decorations, such as various decorative props of plants, animals and collections.

The two also have very obvious characteristics in the style of painting, and the development direction of modern lacquer painting seems to gradually move closer to "technicality". This makes the painting of modern lacquer painting always reveal a strong artistic style. Of course, it can also become a unique painting feature of modern lacquer painting. However, it will also make modern lacquer painting have certain painterly limitations. The development of painting materials and skills will certainly make modern lacquer painting more prosperous to a certain extent. However, looking at the development of lacquer painting in China over the years and the state of works exhibited by many artists, it is not difficult to feel some things that are lacking in domestic lacquer painting at present. Some of these things are related to the theme and content of lacquer paintings, while others are related to the paintability of lacquer paintings. To sum up in four words, that is, to emphasize "lacquer" but to neglect "painting". These can be understood as the characteristics and shortcomings of modern lacquer painting.

Although it is easy for beginners of modern lacquer painting to have the opposite phenomenon to the above situation, that is, attaching importance to "painting" and ignoring "lacquer", this is actually very common and need not discuss it in great detail. Because this is

only because the painter is not familiar with the materials or has not mastered the art of lacquer painting, it is normal to simply apply the patterns to the paintings and traditional Chinese paintings he has learned. However, it is much more serious to emphasize "paint" rather than "painting". It is often the "veteran" who has been engaged in lacquer painting for many years that will cause such situations. Lacquer is the skeleton of painting, and painting is the soul of painting. A good lacquer painting usually combines lacquer and painting closely and assists each other. The lacquer painting templates used by teachers in class, even if they are painted with exquisite skills and coated with more expensive materials, cannot become artworks. This is an example that we lacquer painting learners can most directly associate with. As Cheng Xiangjun, a master painter of lacquer painting, said: "The painter has placed too much emphasis on his superb lacquer skills and artistry. However, lacquer painting is not a handicraft after all. For painting art, the high unity of skills and creative ideas is still the first, whether it is abstract, expressive or realistic." [5]

However, ukiyoe's painterly features are shown in the perfect integration of his works with the background of the times and cultural background. Buddhism flourished in the Edo period of Japan, and "ukiyo" means "world" with pessimistic meaning in Japanese Buddhist language, which includes both negative world weariness and optimistic attitude of "having fun in time". Seemingly contradictory, in fact, this split sentiment was in good agreement with the social impact caused by Japan's turbulent Edo period background. Life is suffering, but it has to be lived. The worldly feeling and sadness brought by this thought fill almost every work. I think it is the essence of ukiyoe culture in Japan. Ukiyoe's tone does not take the objective object as the reference like the western oil painting sketch, the modelling only plays a very small role in the work, the picture subjective processing trace is very strong. Watching ukiyoe, one can see the various situations of Japanese Edo people in war and life.

This is also the ukiyoe characteristic that I think modern lacquer painting in our country should learn. Ukiyoe has demonstrated the "social culture" and "national age" of his works everywhere since the rise of Edo period, which has undoubtedly become a chip of ukiyoe's popularity in the world. "From the anthropological point of view, art should become more meaningful, because art is not only appreciated according to its style and skills, but also according to its social and cultural background." [6] when we appreciate a piece of ukiyoe, we absorb the beauty of the thoughts and images that the author outputs to us, and at the same time, there will be an extra strong "emotion" poured into our mind, which is the sensory stimulation brought to us by the national culture of the work.

"The more national, the more world," this sentence I think is also very appropriate to describe works of art. French philosopher Dana said: "The creation of works depends on the spirit of the times and the customs around them" [7]. We should integrate the charm of Chinese local culture into lacquer painting creation more, so that the works reveal a faint "Chinese style", which is also more conducive to making Chinese traditional lacquer painting go to the world.

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