

The basic features and changes of Chinese contemporary figurative oil painting in the development of urban context in the past decade

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Abstract- Urbanization originated in Europe and has developed for more than two hundred years. The social changes during this period have a great impact on our life. Various forms of artistic works constantly impact and change people's aesthetic cognition. With the long social change, contemporary oil painting has changed in materials, technique, aesthetic and value orientation. This study first analyzes the current stage of urban development and urban social form of China, as well as the development process of contemporary Chinese urban figurative oil painting. Then I find the behavior characteristics of the Chinese urban crowd from my oil painting practice, from which I can analyze the basic features of Chinese contemporary urban figurative oil painting in the past decade, including aesthetic aspects, value characteristics and times characteristics, analyze the changes of visual and aesthetics in the urban context, and finally find the crux of urban oil painting and the future development trend.

Keywords- Urban context, Chinese contemporary painting, urban society, oil painting creation, Chinese oil painting, Aesthetic changes

I. INTRODUCTION

The urban refers to a regional social community with a relatively large area and a relatively high population density. The non-agricultural industry and the non-agricultural population are the main settlements. It is gradually evolved from the countryside. As a political, economic and cultural center, the urban has the functions of market regulation and the social contract. Urban society has four main characteristics. First, the human population in the urban has a fairly high population density. Second, residents of different occupations and different backgrounds in the urban are anonymized. Third, people's activities in urban society tend to be more specialized, and the level of knowledge is generally higher than that of rural residents. Fourth, the urban lifestyle is diversified, the pace of life is fast, and competition is fierce.

When the social economy develops to a certain stage, the urban will develop with the accompanying state. The earliest cities in the world appeared in the lower reaches of the two rivers, the Nile, the Indus and the Yellow River. During the feudal society, social productivity was further developed and the scale of the urban expanded. For example, the population of the capital of the Northern Song Dynasty (now Kaifeng, Henan Province) reached 1.5 million; the population of Paris and Cairo in the 15th century reached 275,000 and 450,000 respectively. During the industrial revolution, the capitalist production relations developed, and the modern mechanized production of urban industries rose rapidly, and the number of emerging cities increased sharply. At the beginning of the 20th century, the number of residents in London grew to 4.536 million, making it the largest city in the world at the time. In modern society, the modern urban is a representative city with political, economic and cultural integration and greater competitive advantage in the urban system. The modern metropolises that are currently recognized around the world include New York, London, Shanghai, and Tokyo.

As a field of urban oil painting development, China's contemporary urban society is in a period of no unified social form. At present, China's contemporary society is in the development stage of the impact of traditional and modern social value systems. The patriarchal society based on Confucianism for thousands of years and its blood-based ancestral society is deeply rooted in social development. At the same time, commodity exchanges, laws and regulations in modern industrial society are strongly involved in the development of contemporary society in China. Therefore, China's contemporary urban social form is in a transitional stage, and cultural development is at a stage of diversified development.

The oil paintings of Chinese contemporary urban themes began to appear in the late 1980s, and a group of painters with the characteristics of the times entered people's sights: Zeng Fanzhi, Zhang Xiaogang, Yue Minjun, Fang Lijun and Wang Guangyi and others have placed their concerns on the different emotional changes of people in urban life. Zhang Xiaogang focuses on the fate of the individual in history, and Fang Lijun pays more attention to the emotional expression of the character. Artists of this period are more inclined to bring their own emotions into the works, and to express their feelings of life in life with a brush. Entering the 1990s, the first year of China's consumption era, Yin Chaoyang focused on the changes in people's daily lives in the new era. The works of this period often focus on the two themes of thinking about social issues and the resistance encountered in real life. Along with the arrival of the new century is the flourishing development of video art, performance art and installation art. These emerging art forms have impacted people's traditional aesthetic concepts. Contemporary oil painting creation has also entered a new stage. After a series of changes, the emotions conveyed by the works are more delicate. During this period, the artist established his own unique artistic language in various ways, and even represented the influence of the urban environment on people through decomposition and reorganization.

II. METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this study is to summarize the basic characteristics of the development of Chinese urban figurative oil painting in the context of the urban in the past decade, find the aesthetic changes, and then provide the theoretical basis for artists' creation. As a combination of theory and practice, this study uses the research method of art sociology in theoretical analysis and focuses on oil painting practice in practice.

Throughout the world, urban life has become one of the main lifestyles of contemporary people, and there are more and more researches in the urban context. Therefore, in the art discipline, the figurative oil painting in the urban context is an important topic in the creation of contemporary oil painting, and in the process of urbanization in the past decade, the new changes brought about by social changes have changed the basic characteristics and aesthetic methods of contemporary Chinese figurative oil painting. This topic mainly studies the new characteristics of Chinese contemporary figurative oil painting in the context of the city in the past decade, as well as the changes in the new aesthetic way in the past decade.

2.1 Interdisciplinary research

Each research area has its own views and solutions. If we put the research problem in a broader field, we can get a view that the original research field cannot get, and the research results will be more widely recognized.

Nowadays, with the continuous development of science and technology, social phenomena and social problems are becoming more and more complex. Any discipline can not only rely on the discipline itself to solve problems, so interdisciplinary research is very necessary. The expression of the urban crowd's emotional psychology in Chinese figure oil painting is not only a study within the art discipline but also a comprehensive study integrating sociology and aesthetics. The mood of the Chinese urban crowd and the character oil painting of the Chinese contemporary urban context are both produced and developed in the context of contemporary Chinese urban life, so the background of sociology is very important for this study.

2.2 Library research

The theory of art sociology has developed for more than 200 years. Hippolyte Adolphe Taine (1828-1893), a French artist, put forward the theory that the development of art is subject to three elements of race, milieu and moment, which is the theoretical basis of art sociology. Arnold Hauser (1892-1978) believes that the analysis of works of art must rely on sociology. In his theory, he analyzes the laziness of art in the social environment. Hauser explained the popularity of art. He stated that "the popularity is never directly determined by the public, but often determined by the representatives of the public in their social stratum". Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) analyzed the relationship between relational thinking and social-spatial structure, and put forward the view of "field". "Only in a highly independent literary and art field, people who want to be different from ordinary people in the art world are determined to show their relative external, political or economic independence of power".¹ All of these theoretical studies provide the relevant research background and theoretical basis for my research.

2.3 Practice-based research

As a part of my research, urban figurative oil painting, through the observation of urban figurative in life and the experience of the surrounding urban environment. In my works, I have been thinking and

¹ BOURDIEU Pierre. 2001(03). The Rule of Art. Beijing: Central Compilation & Translation Press, PP: 76.

practicing again and again, exploring the expression techniques in contemporary urban oil painting, and finding the behavior characteristics of contemporary urban people in China from the repeated creation. First of all, busy is the most obvious behavior characteristic of the contemporary urban population in China. In the past 20 years, behind the rapid development of China's economy, every builder has made unremitting efforts. Therefore, working constantly has become a common living condition of urban people in China. "Landscape" (Figure 2.1) depicts people on vacation in the city. Even when they are on vacation, they still can't put down their work. Even if the beautiful landscape is in front of them, they just enjoy the landscape in their hands. The two paintings depict the morning and the evening respectively. Although the time is changing, the state of the characters does not change. "Driving" (Figure 2.2) depicts

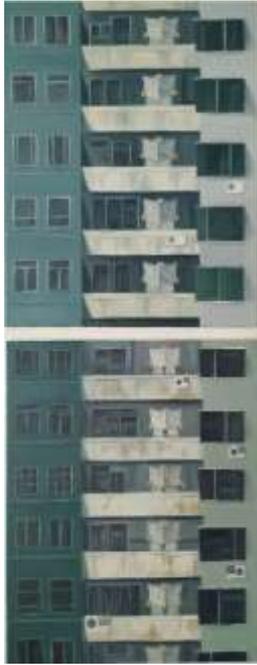


Figure 2.1 Landscape, 2019,
oil on canvas, 35×90 cm



Figure 2.2 Driving, 2019, oil on canvas, 50×60 cm



Figure 2.3 Subway, 2019, oil on canvas, 61×72cm



Figure 2.4 Doll machine, 2019, oil on canvas, 60×60 cm

a person who is driving. From the rear-view mirror, we can see that even when driving, the driver does not put down his work, focuses on doing his own things and ignores safety. What I want to express is that busyness exists all the time in life.

Secondly, the behavior characteristic of contemporary urban population in China is rarely face-to-face social interaction. With the emergence and wide application of high-tech products such as the Internet in urban society, which brings great convenience to people's work and life, it also greatly reduces the opportunities of face-to-face communication between people, making more and more young people in contemporary cities increasingly afraid of social contact. "Subway"(Figure 2.3) depicts that in the subway at night, all the passengers around left the subway one after another, leaving only one passenger who could not find the way. He didn't ask the people around him, until all the people around left, leaving only his figure in the subway window. "Doll machine"(Figure 2.4) depicts the common doll machine, changing the dolls in the doll machine into people who focus on themselves. These people are just like toys. Even if they are face-to-face, they will not communicate with others, and the external performance of the characters will not change. What I want to show is the fear of people communicating with each other.

Finally, the behavior characteristic of contemporary urban population in China is to ignore the people around. With the popularization of education, people in contemporary urban society in China show a strong sense of self-awareness, and a high degree of self-concern makes people begin to reduce the attention to people around them. "Cinema" (Figure 2.5) depicts an old cinema in which some people focus on doing their own things when the movie is showing, so that they don't find out at the end of the movie and are still doing their own things.



Figure2.5 Cinema, 2019, oil on canvas, 61×72 cm

In my oil painting practice, I mainly choose the gray tone. In the current urban society of China, the color in the city is richer and richer, but the inner world of the urban population has formed a huge contrast with it. The greater the contrast, the lower the happiness index of the current urban population in China. Urban life brings great satisfaction to people's material life, but it can't bring satisfaction to people's spiritual life, even can't get any emotional release. These problems in urban life still need to be discussed.

III.BASIC FEATURES

Through my creative practice, I can make a preliminary analysis and summary of the basic feature of Chinese contemporary urban figurative oil painting in the past decade.

3.1 Aesthetic aspects

Due to the diversity of urban culture and the complexity of the audience's life background, the creation of contemporary figurative oil paintings in the urban context is very diverse in terms of expression techniques. In terms of form and content, it breaks through the inherent forms of traditional painting, including color and composition, which has broken the fixed thinking. Different artists have different ways of expression, thus forming a unique aesthetic style.

3.2 Value characteristics

Contemporary figurative oil paintings display unique value characteristics in the urban context. The diversity of urban culture makes the value characteristics of oil paintings different from those of traditional culture. The contemporary figurative oil painting has broken through its own limitations and has shown unprecedented unique value in the urban context.

The first is the documentary. The documentary is the most basic value feature of visual art. As the process of urbanization continues to deepen, the artists, as witnesses, often record the changes around them with the brush in their hands. In China, rapid urbanization has led to a growing gap between urban and rural areas, which has created a series of problems that are also one of the focuses of the artist. This kind of documentary is different from the documentary in realism, but it absorbs the expressiveness of modernism on the basis of realism. The documentary in realism is to arrange scenes and characters in the traditional aesthetic order. In the urban context, artists often inject their feelings and emotions into the picture, no longer simply depicting, from the color, composition. And then to the expression can feel their attention to the work and the surrounding environment.

The second is daily. Nowadays, influenced by popular culture and market culture, many painters put their concerns around them, including their daily lives, their loved ones or unfamiliar strangers. These themes and contents that were not recognized by traditional paintings have gradually become the main force of artistic expression. They have drawn oil paintings from the impression that the masses are difficult to understand and too far from the reality of life, and have returned to the general public and joined the new concept. The daily life of contemporary art is influenced by the deepening of consumer culture and mass media. Under the influence of consumption, people's attention is increasingly concentrated on daily consumer goods and daily life, coupled with the continuous development of new media such as the Internet. Lifestyle and lifestyle attitudes are rapidly spreading. These works break through the traditional forms of artistic expression, do not choose grand scenes and stories, and use the attention of the present life and the experience of their own inner world to use small scenes, small stories or small characters in life. The way it is portrayed, the expression is strengthened, and often appears in fragments, giving up the way to tell the complete story. This way, we no longer only pay attention to the superficial image, but also pay more attention to the communication of internal concepts.

The third is critical. With the continuous development of science and technology, the advent of the Internet era, the social and cultural environment has gradually become more relaxed. In the field of visual art, there have been a number of works that criticize the problems that arise in the process of social phenomena and urbanization. These works start from the aspects of public psychology, social issues and the culture of the times. The artists express their feelings in a humorous or metaphorical way, which evokes more people's thinking. Artists place their opinions and attitudes in their works. This indirect expression is more likely to impress the audience than the spread of words. This kind of critical expression increases the artist's creative power. It not only expresses his own emotions, but also wants to cause the audience to think, and thus reach the role of warnings and appeals. The deeper level is to promote the development of society towards a good momentum.

3.3 Times characteristics

The development of the times has also enhanced the public's aesthetic ability, so artists are required to constantly absorb the new elements brought about by the new era. In the urban context, the advanced art trends of the West are constantly introduced, focusing on social reality and individual emotions. The artist's own artistic quality is also constantly improving. First of all, the continuous popularization of high-tech products, the way artists create is also changing. The injection of printing and collage has made contemporary oil paintings more vibrant than ever. Secondly, the continuous improvement of the art market mechanism has promoted the artist to perfect his artistic language, hoping that his works can be favored by the market and enhance the enthusiasm of the artist.

IV. VISUAL AND AESTHETIC CHANGES

In the past decade, great changes have taken place in China's urban life, which has brought changes to the basic characteristics of contemporary Chinese character oil painting in the urban context. Meanwhile, visual and aesthetic are also changing.

4.1 Visual change

The development of visual ideology in China has also gone through several different periods. The social ideology of the Cultural Revolution required artworks to promote the revolutionary spirit, and the visual form showed the revolutionary image symbols. Since the 1990s, globalization and the further development of all walks of life, the visual form of pop symbols, regional symbols, folk symbols, genre symbols, and other visual forms. Visual symbols continue to evolve and even exaggerate over time, bringing new visual impacts to people. These new changes come from the transformation of people's ideology and the characteristics of urban culture.

4.2 Causes of visual changes

In China, rapid urbanization has led to the migration of the population. The flow of population has not only caused people to give up their original living environment but also changed their cultural thinking in the original living environment. Under this circumstance, traditional painting thoughts were impacted by urban culture, replaced by elements such as absurdity and abstraction in urban culture. The humorous and satirical forms of popular culture also officially embarked on the stage of history. Therefore, the visual ideology of contemporary Chinese oil paintings changes with the transformation of social ideology. In essence, it also changes with the changes in social development in the current political environment.

4.3 Aesthetic change

The social order of contemporary China affects the artistic expression of artistic works. As part of social ideology, artistic works are unified within the framework of the overall form of society. Similarly, works of art reflect real life, the face of the entire society, that is, the spirit of artworks. In the different periods of our visual ideology experience described above, the artistic aesthetic performance will also change. During the Cultural Revolution, the aesthetic expression of art was controlled by the unified rational norms of society, and the performance was relatively simple. After the reform and opening up, the social norms of social unification were broken by multiculturalism, and the aesthetics of art was more colorful.

4.4 Aesthetic Features of Contemporary Oil Painting

The diverse context of culture allows contemporary oil paintings to exhibit diverse aesthetic characteristics. The early urban oil painting was to achieve the purpose of art's generalization of consciousness, so the aesthetic characteristics showed simplification and had a strong theoretical. Under the influence of this aesthetic characteristic, the oil painting works from the topic selection, the intention to the composition, the color matching, etc., all show similar appearance. Entering the medium-term urban oil painting, while retaining the purpose of early political education with the help of art, it also incorporates the real-life of various colors. The aesthetic characteristics show multi-dimensionality and return to the true feelings of the masses, thus fully reflects the complexity of contemporary urban oil painting aesthetics.

V. RESULT

The continuous development of figurative oil painting in urban context has an important positive impact on the development of contemporary oil painting in China. First, the creation of contemporary figurative oil painting in urban context enriches the content and form of contemporary oil painting in China, reflects the current cultural connotation, and promotes the Chinese oil painting art. Second, the creation of contemporary figurative oil painting in urban context reflects the unique spiritual connotation of our time, which is reflected in the concern for human nature and the perception of life, reflects the strong sense of social responsibility of oil painters, improves the creativity of oil painting art, and adds impetus to the development of art.

VI. DISCUSSION

Nowadays, the creation of contemporary figurative oil painting in the urban context is in a stage of constant exploration and continuous advancement. The continuous development of urban social culture provides a lot of materials for oil painting created in the urban context, but artists should also avoid the shortcomings brought by the rapid development of information. Urban society, as the universal social form of today's Chinese and Western society, is also worth exploring.

First of all, creative thinking reflects the current urban culture. Chinese urban art has been influenced by Western modern urban culture. After the collision between traditional art and Western art, a new situation has emerged. This situation is different from any period in history, and it is expressed in the attention of the times. Therefore, the artist must retain his ideology and his own independent thinking. Taking the social malpractices in the urban process and people's happy or sad life as the target of expression, we must dare to reveal the dark side of people and things.

Secondly, contemporary urban oil painting should touch the heart of the viewer and produce resonance. Artists in the creation, the choice of the content of creation are extremely important, those in-depth real lives, return to the local culture, and into a strong emotional urban oil painting can move the audience, and is a powerful and substantial work. In terms of the value of art, works that touch the heart are also works that reflect the spirit of the times. It is worth thinking and putting into practice for contemporary artists to engrave our current life and spirit of the times in art history.

Finally, works of art should fully show the characteristics of contemporary visual images. The characteristics of contemporary visual images are mainly reflected in breaking through the traditional realistic techniques, the disappearance of beautiful and noble aesthetic feelings and the diversification of artistic expression techniques. In the choice of theme, they often pay attention to the life around them and choose fragment style in a narrative way. Influenced by urban social culture, anxiety and depression

often appear in urban works. The artificial beauty produced by industrialization and mass production is also one of the important features of contemporary art. Although the emotion conveyed by the picture may not be beautiful, it will bring a strong aesthetic identity.

To sum up, the contemporary oil painting in the urban context, although formed in the contemporary urban society under construction, has its own language style, and has formed a unique artistic landscape after integrating into the contemporary politics and economy. However, oil painting in an urban context has to face the relationship between cultural globalization and localization. As a new art language, it still needs a longer time to fill the theoretical gap, which also doomed to its development will be more diversified.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

With the continuous promotion of urbanization in our country, urban culture also appears and develops with it. As a new subject, the research of figurative oil painting in an urban context has formed the visual art and cultural symbols with Chinese local characteristics in the past decade, which has special significance in the development history of Chinese oil painting. At the same time, the process of urbanization continues to deepen, and the development trend of urban oil painting in visual language and performance techniques will continue to be our topic.

Urban oil painting, as a product of urban development in modern society, injects new vitality into contemporary Chinese oil painting and has a powerful new force. It not only breaks the single artistic concept but also enriches the contemporary visual art, which is a milestone in the development history of Chinese oil painting. The contemporary visual and aesthetic changes brought by urban culture have brought oil painting into a new situation. At the same time, the rapid development of urban society, the orientation of people's material and spiritual world, brought a huge crisis, so that contemporary art has a new mission. So, the artist's inner expression and in-depth analysis of social life are also a responsibility for the development of social culture.

Therefore, when designing and creating works of art, artists should master the positive connotation of contemporary figurative oil painting in the urban context, form their own language style in practice, and accumulate more experience for the development of contemporary Chinese visual art.

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