

A Study on the Differences and Exchange Status of Chinese and Arabic Calligraphy under Different Cultural Backgrounds

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Abstract. Since the introduction of Arabic calligraphy into China, the cultural exchanges between China and Arab countries have gradually become closer. Studying the differences between the two and the characteristics of integration and communication can have a certain impact on the innovation of calligraphy and the development of Sino-Arab relations. This paper takes the differences and communication characteristics of Chinese and Arabic calligraphy as the research object and uses the method of comparative analysis and literature reading to explore the different cultural backgrounds and calligraphy characteristics of the two. First of all, the different development backgrounds of Chinese and Arab calligraphy are the starting point, to understanding the mystery, and indirectly analyzing their closeness from the differences in several dimensions. Through the research results, it's find that the differences between Chinese and Arabic calligraphy are mainly reflected in the way of writing characters, writing tools, style differences, and service objects. From this, it can be seen that although they were born in different backgrounds, social functions, and expressive meanings are different, but art has no borders. The two can infiltrate and influence each other in modern times by the development of the times, creating new artistic crystallizations.

Keywords: Chinese calligraphy; Arabic calligraphy; Difference; Fusion; Culture.

1. Introduction

Characters were created by the ancients to write records. They are important tools for human production, life, study, and other labor practices. They play an important role in the inheritance, promotion, and development of traditional culture. Calligraphy is derived after the birth of characters. After a long period of development and evolution, it has gradually become an art, which includes Chinese calligraphy, Arabic calligraphy, English calligraphy, and so on. In the field of calligraphy, the East Asian cultural circle represented by China and the Arab cultural circle represented by Egypt are the two cultures that attach the most importance to calligraphy in the world. In recent years, with the continuous economic, cultural, and political exchanges between the two countries, many scholars have carried out extensive research on them, exploring their differences in social functions and historical backgrounds, and digging out the connotations behind them.

From the perspective of calligraphy application, the development of modern science and the popularization of computers make people seem to be getting farther and farther away from calligraphy. The carrier of information has become a computer, which makes people's work more convenient and efficient, but at the same time, it largely replaces the function of calligraphy, making it slowly alienated in society. People should not let it be neglected. Learning calligraphy and understanding calligraphy is of great significance in the past, present, and future. From the perspective of cultural heritage, the two major calligraphy have a remarkable place in the history of world calligraphy. Through the comparative study of the differences and fusion of the two, the content of calligraphy culture can be enriched, thereby helping people broaden the understanding of calligraphy art. This is of great significance for the better inheritance and development of calligraphy culture, the establishment of awareness of the protection and dissemination of traditional calligraphy culture, and the promotion of cultural exchanges among various ethnic groups. To compare and analyze the two major calligraphy in different eras and backgrounds to explore their differences and integration, it is necessary to inquire and explore a large amount of data to find out their commonalities and summarize them. Sorting out the development process between the two, can deepen the understanding of the

cultural context of calligraphy. Analyzing the aspects of the way of making characters, writing tools, service objects, and the integration and development of the two and spy on the personality, can explore the role in the case of different social backgrounds and different social functions, the content of communication and the artistic crystallization of creation, find out their commonalities and add a touch of important color to the enrichment of world culture. This paper divides the article into three chapters and studies the development process, differences, and integration status of the two respectively. The author hopes that this research can provide relevant contributions scholars who study this field in the future.

2. Characteristics and Development of Chinese and Arabic Calligraphy

2.1 The Development of Chinese Calligraphy

Calligraphy is an art of Chinese characters. After continuous evolution and development, Chinese calligraphy has played a role in inheriting and promoting traditional Chinese culture over its long history. According to historical records, Chinese characters originated from the "Yangshao Culture" in the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River 5,000 years ago. Later, in the Erligang Culture, symbols similar to oracle bone inscriptions were discovered, which are considered by scholars to be prehistoric calligraphy. The evolution process of Chinese calligraphy can be simply summarized as oracle bone script (Shang) -golden script (Zhou) small seal script (Qin)official script, cursive script, running script (Han) regular script (Wei Jin). The influence of the dynasties has been continuously integrated and changed. In the process of writing and applying Chinese characters, the art of calligraphy that can be independently classified in the languages of all ethnic groups in the world has gradually formed. However, with the progress of the times and the development of science and technology, the original traditional communication method of the Chinese people has changed. In terms of national management, law formulation, study,and work, calligraphy has become less important, and it can even be said that it has gradually been diluted. However, calligraphy has not completely disappeared because people feel the social progress and the pursuit of aesthetics. As one of the ancient Chinese art cultures, calligraphy is naturally appreciated as an aesthetic object, thus ushering in the field of "art creation". As the saying goes: when things are useful, they advance and develop; when they are different, they retreat and decline.

2.2 The Development of Arabic Calligraphy

The formation of Arabic calligraphy has gone through a long historical period, and it is a unique art of calligraphy formed with the gradual standardization and unification of Arabic characters. Arabic originally originated from the manuscript, Koran. In ancient times, there were many tribes in Arabia, and they did not communicate with each other. Until the 4th century AD, with the communication of various tribes, the languages gradually merged to form the Nabataean script, and then in the middle of the 7th century AD, with the Islamic expansion, arabic calligraphy developed rapidly, occupying the dominant system of languages in West Asia. According to historical records, to write the Qur'an with beautiful calligraphic records, Muhammad encouraged the improvement of calligraphy and beautified the font. In this social atmosphere, Arabic calligraphy developed rapidly, and different fonts such as Kufi, Naskh, Ruqa, and Tugra were formed, among which Kufi was used for important events. Recorded and organized, it is considered to be the authentic font of Arabic calligraphy [1]. The development of Arabic calligraphy from its original state has gone through a long historical process. Whether in Egypt, Syria, Iraq,and other countries, some people specialize in copying the "Koran". The social and political status of calligraphers at that time was very high. In addition, Arab artists applied calligraphy to plastic arts such as architecture, painting, and sculpture, and also integrated Chinese arts such as flowers and vines to form various variants [2]. For example, the original "Kufa style" calligraphy has been changed into "flower style Kufa style", "climbing leaf style Kufa style", etc., so that the original relatively monotonous and rigid "Kufa style" has become

flexible and vivid. It can be seen that Arabic calligraphy was also related to Chinese art in the early days [3].

3. Differences Between Chinese and Arab Calligraphy

3.1 The Method of Making Characters

Arabic characters are phonetic characters, and the basic unit is letters. When writing, each letter and each word are different according to their different positions in the sentence, that is, the beginning of the word, the middle of the word, the end of the word, the beginning of the sentence, the middle of the sentence, and the end of the sentence. Writing, the form is easy to produce a sense of rhythm [4]. The Chinese characters are very unique in shape. The square-shaped structure used in Chinese characters is first seen in the Six Books "Zhou Li". After the Qing Dynasty, it generally refers to pictographic, Zhuanzhu, knowing, phonogram, referring to things, and borrowing. The methods are grouped into six categories, collectively referred to as six books. Liushu plays an important guiding role in the change and development of Chinese characters. It is precise because of the existence of Liushu that today's writing is possible. The composition of Liushu, it is not entirely pictographic but also has many abstract symbols. Each character is different, but there are similarities between the radicals. From the aesthetic point of view of Chinese calligraphy, the pursuit of "change" is a very important point.

3.2 Writing Instruments

3.2.1 Pen

There are two types of Arabic pens: reed pens and fine art pens. The reed pen is mainly made of hollow reeds in the Middle East. It is an ancient writing tool for calligraphy in the West. It is a simple reed pen formed by cutting a reed tube diagonally into a pen tip. It can be written after the ink is soaked. It is the later writing brush and fountain pen. The predecessor of the fine art pen, is a special pen that uses the inclined angle of the pen tip to create thick and thin lines. It is widely used in art drawing, hard pen calligraphy, and other fields. It can write words and numbers like ordinary pens. If people use it to design artworks, need to use the pen tip upright, and the lines drawn are thin and dense; if use the pen tip down, the lines drawn are wide and solid. Compared with this, the writing tool of Chinese calligraphy is relatively simple, usually a brush, but the brush will make a variety of differences according to the material of the hair, the material of the pen, and the length of the stroke. The material of the brush can be divided into wolf centimeters, concurrent centimeters, and sheep centimeters; and the material is also divided into metal, bamboo, animal, porcelain, and wood. The fragrance is called the first-class pen.

Their writing methods are very numerous, such as grabbing the pen, stopping the pen, setbacks the pen, squatting the pen, folding the pen, turning the pen, turning the pen, running the pen, standing the pen, etc.

3.2.2 Paper

In China, there have been differences in the material of paper due to historical changes. The original oracle bone inscriptions were written on tortoise shells and animal bones. The bamboo slips of the Han Dynasty were written on wooden and bamboo slips, and the silk script was written on silk. Using paper as the medium of writing, there is also stone calligraphy engraved on stone tablets. The Arabs originally used papyrus to write Arabic calligraphy, which is the earliest and longest-used paper material in known human history. It records the rich and precious history of the Arab Empire, ancient Egypt, ancient Rome, and ancient Greece. However, papyrus has many shortcomings and deficiencies. The paper quality of papyrus is relatively thin, brittle, and brittle, and it is not easy to retain. Until the early Middle Ages, they mainly wrote on parchment, bark, and other media, and also showed on architecture and stone sculptures. The parchment is not only durable, but also strong and tough, not easy to tear, and stronger than papyrus. However, parchment paper also has its disadvantage in that

it is more expensive. With the introduction of the later paper, they mainly use smooth and water-resistant Dowling paper and watercolor paper [5]. At that time, the Arabs could already copy the Quran in large quantities, and no longer had to pass it on by word of mouth.

3.2.3 Ink

China has a history of making ink for more than 2,000 years. The earliest application was pine smoke ink. In the later dynasties, as the ink was widely used for writing, artificial ink and oil smoke ink appeared. Even because of the famous ink love has formed a category of arts and crafts, and ornamental ink and gift ink have appeared. Chinese ink is very particular about being divided into five colors: "dense, heavy, light, clear, and coke", emphasizing that changes in the use of ink not only affect the artistic effect of the overall whitening of the work but also affect the author's expression of emotion and artistic conception, just like the Ming Dynasty calligrapher Dong Qichang said in "Essays on Painting the Zen Room", "the ingeniousness of words lies in the use of pen, especially in the use of ink". The ink used in Arabic calligraphy also has a long history. Its ingredients and production processes are various, mainly including Arabic smoke ink, Kufa ink, mulberry ink, and Persian Merdon. Their writing is mainly to decorate and copy the "Koran". The ink color is relatively simple and clear and does not pursue the common ink color contrast in Chinese calligraphy, but there will be color differences, such as dark brown, gold, red, blue, etc. [6].

3.3 Style Differences

There are also differences in the writing order of Chinese and Arabic calligraphy. Chinese calligraphy is generally written from top to bottom, and then from right to left. Due to the mission of Arabic calligraphy, the selection of content is very different from that of Chinese calligraphy. It is written horizontally, left to right, then top to bottom. Chinese calligraphy has multiple genres and styles, which is one of the characteristics of Chinese calligraphy art, and it is also the fundamental reason why some people believe that it has flourished and developed for a long time. In terms of character, it can be divided into rude, bold, etc., and in terms of character, it can be divided into solemn and elegant, but in general, the style can be divided into two categories: masculine and feminine. Beautiful calligraphy gives people a pleasing and feminine beauty. The magnificent calligraphy is full of the masculine beauty of strength and rhythm. Whether it is in drama dance or calligraphy and painting, there are artistic figures of these two styles. The two need to be combined. It cannot give people a sense of beauty; while Apollo's calligraphy is mainly based on copying the "Koran" and famous sayings and proverbs, and there is little content to convey the author's emotions.

3.4 Service Objects

The service objects of Chinese and Arab calligraphy are also quite different. It is precise because Chinese calligraphy has produced many styles, so it is suitable for people of all walks of life, such as commoners, emperors, gods, heaven and earth, etc., and the painting content is also very extensive; Arabic calligraphy has strict regulations, they only serve theocratic and imperial power, so that its style development is relatively limited, but it is also this limitation so that their decorative skills continue to develop exquisitely [7]. The binding of the "Koran" is the best example of the Arabs' binding and decoration, and it is more than the Islamic architectural decoration, which is admired by the world. In the Islamic world, decorative art is mostly undertaken by beautiful calligraphy, without decoration, it cannot be called perfect calligraphy art, which is particularly prominent in the architecture of mosques. The decorative patterns of the Arabs are mainly planting and flowers, which are closely related to Islam's opposition to idolatry. For thousands of years, the decorative arts of the Arabs have been in a leading position in the world. The creation, beautification, and application of modern Arabic calligraphy art are inseparable from decoration [8].

The main reason for the difference between Chinese calligraphy is that the two are located in different geographical locations, social cultures, and religious conditions. After a long historical evolution, they have formed unique calligraphy and have their unique artistic charm. Chinese

calligraphy attaches great importance to the use of brushes. The most important feature is that it is completely separate from the art of painting, and requires systematic study to appreciate its inner beauty. The lines of Arabic calligraphy are complex but fully integrated with the art of painting, forming a unique decorative art of calligraphy. They all shine in their respective fields, and there are many differences. Whether they can integrate and develop with each other and promote the development of calligraphy history together deserves in-depth study.

4. The Current Situation of Chinese and Arab Calligraphy Reference and Integration

4.1 The Exchange of Chinese and Arab Calligraphy in Modern Times

The combination of Chinese and Arab calligraphy has slowly infiltrated since ancient times. Because culture has no borders, ethnic groups are open and inclusive. From the Arabs patrolling the Silk Road with the Koran in one hand and jewelry and spices in the other, they spread Islamic culture to China through trade with China. The relationship between Arabia and China has become inseparable and complements each other. Arabs place great emphasis on the decoration of calligraphy. Inside and outside the halls of Islamic buildings, there are carved or posted Arabic calligraphy on the walls or arches, which looks very solemn. In China, some Muslims will also hang excellent Arabic calligraphy on the walls of their homes for decoration, and some Muslims will hang Arabic calligraphy in restaurants for decoration and to ward off evil spirits, showing distinctive national characteristics. It is only reflected in the building, and on the product packaging, there are also exquisite, beautiful Arabic calligraphy and Chinese calligraphy, as well as many exquisite handicrafts, such as gold and silver, jewelry, ivory, shells, etc.[9]. At first, they used hard pens, but with the continuous cultural exchange between them, they also began to write with soft pens such as brushes. In addition, many Egyptians believe in Islam, and Arabic is their official language. At the same time, Arabic calligraphy is also international art. On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Egypt, in response to the "New Silk Road" proposed by President Xi Jinping to promote the cultural exchanges between the two countries, China and Egypt jointly held the "2016 China-Egypt Cultural Year"[10]. It provides a good platform to experience the charm of Arab Islamic culture and art at close range, promotes the cultural exchanges between the two sides, and injects new vitality into the two countries that pay attention to learning each other's language. Calligraphy competitions and encourage people to participate in international calligraphy competitions. The display of Chinese Muslims in the international calligraphy competition has brought the cultural exchanges between China and Arab countries to a higher level and better reflects the artistic beauty of Chinese-style Arabic calligraphy, which is the crystallization of the flower of friendship between China and Arab countries.

4.2 The Birth of Chinese Calligraphy in Arabic Calligraphy

The natural law of human history development is that with the development of the times, different cultures spread and merge through continuous collision. China is one of the earliest countries where Islam was introduced. After thousands of years of evolution, tempering, and sublimation, Arabic calligraphy has taken root and sprouted in the land of china, and has yielded fruitful results the Chinese style of Arabic calligraphy, which is also called by the Arabs "Chinese style of Arabic calligraphy". "Han Tusunni", which is a precious crystallization of the fusion of Islamic art and Chinese culture [11]. The Chinese style of Arabic calligraphy is that Chinese Muslims have integrated Chinese pen, ink, paper, stamping, signatures, and even layout and mounting art into traditional Arabic calligraphy, and combined with the traditional culture of the Chinese nation so that Arabic calligraphy retains its inherent characteristics. The essence is not lost without losing the essence. Instead of the hard pen commonly used in Arabic calligraphy, the traditional Chinese soft brush is used to write on paper and rice paper, which combines the feeling of flying white, thick and light

brush and ink, and virtual and real in Chinese calligraphy [12]. In terms of layout and shape, it also reflects the style and charm of Chinese calligraphy. Arabic also fully combines traditional Chinese mounting techniques in the mounting of calligraphy. These have never been seen in the history of Arabic calligraphy. They not only maintain the inherent characteristics of traditional Arabic calligraphy but also add a lot of new connotations to it. With the spread and development of Islam in China, although Arabic calligraphy is a powerful tool for Muslims to spread Islam, it has also been loved by the majority of Chinese Muslims [13]. This is a remarkable success story and a great leap in the history of world culture and art.

5. Conclusion

Arabic calligraphy and Chinese calligraphy are two splendid pearls in the history of world culture. This is an unrepeatable spiritual force. They have experienced thousands of years of tempering and inheritance. They are not only closely integrated with their own culture, but also with each other. In the process of constant friction and collision, a new "spark" - Arabic calligraphy Chinese style is formed. This opens up a new beginning for the future exchange of calligraphy between China and Arab countries, which is conducive to the inheritance and development of each other's cultures. However, in today's era of rapid technological development, they have all encountered a common problem, that is, their writing ability has weakened. Although the emergence of technology improves the efficiency of people's study and work, the profound cultural and historical heritage behind these two languages is the root of people's culture's inheritance and development. The cultural characteristics of Chinese calligraphy, the status, and significance of its calligraphy will be lost in the national forest, and the international influence of the culture will also be lost. This is what is lacking in the research process of this article, and it fails to play an innovative guiding role in modern calligraphy. It is hoped that scholars who study this field in the future can pay attention to these research contents, and the author hope that in the future, people can work hand in hand to compose a new chapter of calligraphy culture.

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