

The Challenges and Development Strategies of Contemporary Chinese Painting

-- Centered on Art Creation and Education

Baopen Jin, Yakup Mohd Rafee

Faculty of Art, Computing and Creative Industries, Sultan Idris Education University, Tanjung Malim 35900, Malaysia

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to discuss the dilemmas and challenges of contemporary Chinese calligraphy painting in art creation and its development strategies. As an important part of traditional Chinese culture, Chinese painting has been widely recognized and praised by the world for its unique artistic style and cultural connotation. However, with the change of the times and the development of the society, Chinese calligraphy painting also faces many problems and challenges, such as the contradiction between tradition and innovation, the lack of calligraphy and painting techniques, and the pressure of marketization and commercialization. Taking the lack of brush and ink as the entry point, this paper conducts an in-depth study of the artistic creation dilemma of contemporary Chinese calligraphy and painting, explores the reasons and influences behind it, and proposes corresponding development strategies, including strengthening art education and training, improving government support and supervision, and encouraging artistic innovation and experimentation. Among them, strengthening art education and training is the key to improving the level of creative writing and enriching the cultural connotation of painting. Government support and supervision can regulate the market order and protect the rights and interests of artists. Encouraging artistic innovation and experimentation can promote the artistic development of Chinese calligraphy painting and explore new ways of expression.

Keywords: Creation and Education; Painting with a Sense of Meaning; Lack of Brushwork and Ink; Innovation.

1. Introduction

Chinese calligraphy painting is an important part of traditional Chinese culture, and its unique artistic style and cultural connotations have been widely recognized and praised internationally. However, in contemporary society, Chinese painting is also facing many dilemmas and challenges, such as the influence of Western art, commercialization and marketization, lack of innovation and creativity, and the decline of traditional culture and values (Fan, 2018). Therefore, exploring the dilemmas of artistic creation and development strategies of contemporary Chinese painting and calligraphy is of great practical significance and value in advancing the development of Chinese painting (Weng, 2019).

Chinese painting has a long history and is full of spiritual connotations and cultural heritage. Modern calligraphy painting is characterized by an emphasis on innovation and experimentation, while preserving and passing on traditional culture. Numerous contemporary painters combine elements of traditional and modern art in their works, while also experimenting and innovating with painting materials and techniques, thus presenting a more colorful form of artistic expression.

2. Background and Significance of the Study

This section introduces and understands the history of the origin of traditional Chinese painting, the formation of unique artistic characteristics, and the significance of the study to find theoretical support for the research questions.

2.1. History of the Development of Ancient Chinese Painting

First, ancient Yi Yi painting is one of the most important genres of Chinese painting, and its origins can be traced back to the Tang Dynasty (Weng, 1992). Due to the influence of Buddhism, a freer and more diverse form of expression emerged in Tang Dynasty painting, laying the foundation for what came to be known as Yi Yi Jing painting. Over time, Yi Yi painting developed into one of the most prominent styles in Chinese painting, with a wide range of expressions, including landscapes, birds and flowers, and figures, showing rich cultural connotations and artistic values (Barnhart, 1997). During the Song Dynasty, Yi Yi painting reached the pinnacle of its development. Song painters made full use of the expressive potential of brush, ink and color to develop a more natural expression (Chahill, 1982). The paintings of the Four Great Masters of the Southern Song Dynasty (Wen Zhengming, Mi Fu, Guo Xi, and Dong Yuan) became classics of Chinese painting and had an important influence on the later development of Yi Yi painting (Kao, 1990).

Secondly, with the advent of the Ming Dynasty, calligraphic painting gradually tended to become more refined and focused on formal beauty. However, at the end of the Ming Dynasty, the emergence of literati painting led to the return of a natural, direct form of expression (Sullivan, 1984). During the Qing Dynasty, the development of Yi Yi painting took a new direction, with more emphasis on the expression of brush and ink and the creation of mood. The works of Qing Dynasty painters such as Lang Shining and Shi Tao achieved great success not only in the expression of brush and ink, but also in the depiction of mood, evoking the viewer's sense of deep, calm beauty (Sullivan, 2006).

Overall, meaningful primitive painting is an integral part of the evolution of Chinese painting, with a rich history of origin

and development that reflects the unique allure and artistic value of traditional Chinese culture.

2.2. The Artistic Characteristics of Contemporary Chinese Painting

First, Contemporary painting emphasizes the painter's emotional expression rather than brush and ink expression and emotion. Painters are freer to use brush and ink and color to express themselves.

Secondly, Style-driven modern painting is more experimental. Modern painting has adopted the expressions and concepts of Western art and experimented with techniques and materials, pushing boundaries and showing a more diverse creative identity.

Third, Contemporary expressionist art also emphasizes social reality. Painters reflected and criticized social issues and contradictions in their works. The paintings of contemporary Chinese Western and Chinese painter Xu Li express social inconsistencies and challenges through the spirit of brush and ink and color. Contemporary painting is an important part of the development of Chinese painting, demonstrating a more personal, diverse and experimental artistic style, as well as the unique charm and style of modern Chinese art, which has absorbed Western artistic expressions and ideas while preserving traditional Chinese culture (Liu, 1998).

2.3. Research Significance

Contemporary Chinese painting focuses more on conveying aesthetic meaning. As an art form, painting is not only a reflection of the artist's personality and emotion. But also, the aesthetic and cultural significance of the work. Contemporary painting emphasizes more on the aesthetic and cultural connotation of works while expressing individuality and innovation, thus conveying a richer and deeper aesthetic meaning (Wu, 2014).

3. Research Questions

a. What are the dilemmas and challenges faced by contemporary Chinese painting in artistic creation?

b. What are the strategies and measures that can promote the development of Chinese painting?

4. Research Objectives

I. Chinese painting is missing in its essence, mainly the neglect of brush and ink effects and the spirit of writing. Under the global and larger impact of the popularity of Western art, it is crucial for Chinese painting to reflect its own characteristics.

II. First, by strengthening the personal quality and comprehensive ability of art creators is primary. Second, the exchange of Eastern and Western art exhibitions and academic forums is important, with the aim of expanding the creative thinking of artists. Furthermore, it is important to activate the commercial market to embrace and accept high-end artworks.

In conclusion, the main reasons limiting the development of contemporary Chinese painting are the serious lack of ancient culture and traditional techniques in the general social environment, and the fact that high technology and developed materials have overshadowed people's need for high aesthetics and spirituality.

5. Research Scope

This section focuses on the research objectives and content of the study, with an explanation and analysis of the difficulties and influencing factors facing the development of contemporary Chinese painting. What are the strategies to solve the new challenges of the future are elaborated.

5.1. The Lack of Contemporary Chinese Painting Brushwork and Calligraphy Techniques

First, people esteem the unique artistic value and cultural connotation of traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy as an integral part of Chinese culture. However, with the development of the times and the progress of society, the lack of painting and calligraphy techniques has become more and more prominent (Yuang, 2014). The lack of painting and calligraphy techniques manifests itself in several ways, including the replacement of traditional painting and calligraphy techniques and materials with machine-made aids and artificial materials, the destruction of the traditional teacher-apprentice transmission mechanism, and the absence of traditional painting techniques in modern education.

Second, numerous factors have contributed to the lack of Chinese painting techniques. One of the main reasons is the destruction of the traditional master-apprentice transmission system. Due to the technological advancement and lifestyle changes in modern society, the transmission link of the master-apprentice transmission mechanism has been severely impacted (Chen, 2012). There is also the lack of cultural confidence which is also an important factor in the lack of Chinese painting and calligraphy skills. In the context of globalization, more and more people are pursuing Western culture and art forms and neglecting the significance of traditional Chinese culture and art (Wang, 2012).

Third, the main reason for the lack of technique in Chinese calligraphic painting is still the deviation from the direction of understanding and practice of Chinese painting. In the past, the ancients studied Chinese painting with calligraphy into the painting, learning three years of calligraphy and literary foundations, and the main factor affecting the decline of contemporary Chinese calligraphic painting is the loss of Chinese calligraphy. To highlight the spirit of Chinese calligraphic painting, one must practice good calligraphy and use calligraphic strokes and ink in painting. The importance of calligraphy is the equivalent of sketching in Western oil painting.

5.2. Problems of the Art Education System and the Quality of Artists

First, the issue of art education is one of the greatest obstacles to the development of contemporary Chinese art. The traditional Chinese art education system overemphasizes the transmission of skills and neglects the intellectual quality and self-expression of artists, and lacks innovative and contemporary educational concepts. In order to improve the professional quality and originality of artists, the art education system must undergo continuous reform and development [Liu, 2011].

Second, the issue of the quality of the artist is an extension of the issue of the art education system. In order to create works that are contemporary and culturally relevant, artists must have a deeper understanding and awareness of the diversity and changes in contemporary society and culture. In

order to adapt to the diversity and evolution of contemporary art, the artist must also be creative and practical [Dewey, 2005].

Furthermore, in order to solve the problems in the art education system and the quality of artists, multifaceted measures should be taken. For example, we should strengthen the reform and innovation of art education and promote the modernization and individualization of the art education system; we should pay attention to the cultivation of artists' ideological quality and self-expression; we should strengthen artists' sense of social responsibility and public welfare, and enhance their social role awareness and self-consciousness [Goldsmith, 2006].

In conclusion, the issue of the art education system and the quality of artists is one of the biggest obstacles hindering the development of contemporary art in China. We can only promote the development and progress of contemporary art by strengthening the reform and innovation of art education, focusing on the cultivation of artists' thinking and practical skills, and enhancing artists' sense of social responsibility and awareness of public welfare.

5.3. The Impact of Commercial Marketization on Artwork

The commercialization of trade is one of the defining characteristics of modern society. Under this trend, commercial interests will inevitably affect art. The impact of commercialization on art is multifaceted and extensive, with both positive and negative aspects [Goldsmith, 1996].

First, the commercialization of the market has promoted the diversification and development of art. Under the influence of commercial marketization, artists and art institutions must pay more attention to audience requirements and market changes, and strive to create and promote artworks with commercial potential [Velthuis, 2005]. This market-oriented competition mechanism is conducive to promoting the diversification and growth of the art market, as well as its prosperity and stability.

Second, the commercialization of the market has accelerated the commercialization and circulation of artworks. In the context of commercialization, the value of artwork no longer includes only its artistic connotation, but also its market value and collection value [Thornton, 2009]. In this case, the commercialization and circulation of artworks accelerates the exchange and dissemination of artworks, enabling more people to appreciate the beauty and charm of art [Dissanayake, 1985].

In short, the impact of commercial marketing on Chinese contemporary art is complex and significant. Commercialization has facilitated the diversification and growth of art, thus accelerating the commercialization and circulation of artworks. In order to find a healthier and more sustainable path for the development of the art market, we must pay more attention to the impact of commercial marketization on art.

5.4. The Influence of Western Culture on Traditional Chinese Culture

First, Chinese traditional culture is a priceless treasure of the Chinese nation, but its inheritance and development have encountered many obstacles due to the influence of foreign cultures. The influence of Western culture on traditional Chinese culture has accelerated the transformation and renewal of traditional Chinese culture. Due to the influence of

Western culture, traditional Chinese culture must face the challenges of modernization and internationalization and undergo transformation and renewal [Ma, 2019]. This transformation and renewal is not only the inheritance and evolution of traditional culture, but also the result of keeping up with the times. For example, classical texts, historical stories, and art forms from traditional Chinese culture are often applied to various aspects of contemporary society, thus greatly contributing to social development.

Second, the influence of Western culture on traditional Chinese culture has also had a negative impact. For example, in the context of globalization and informatization, the influence of Western culture is increasing, while some traditional cultures are marginalized and neglected. In addition, due to the fast-paced and stressful modern society, some young people's interest in and understanding of traditional culture has decreased, and this situation has also led to the decline of traditional Chinese culture [Iwabuchi, 2010].

Third, traditional culture may be distorted and misinterpreted due to the influence of Western culture. Due to the influence of Western culture, the value and meaning of some traditional cultures have been misunderstood and misinterpreted. For example, Chinese Zen and Taoist cultures have been widely spread abroad, but some people do not fully understand them, and even have prejudices and misunderstandings, a situation that may negatively affect the transmission and development of traditional culture.

6. Literature Review

Both modern calligraphy and Chinese painting are a type of traditional Chinese painting, which has contributed to the transformation of Chinese painting since the early 20th century. Modern painting has built on traditional painting and absorbed expressions and concepts from Western art, making it more diverse (Wu, 1999). This paper examines the history and qualities of modern painting. Modern painting emphasizes individuality and expression. For example, the Chinese painter Wu Guanzhong used brush and ink to express his deep concern for humanity through the reconstruction and expression of the figure. Furthermore, Xu Beihong blended traditional painting with Western modern art to form a unique style [Chang, 2008].

This section focuses on a review of the development strategies of contemporary Chinese calligraphy painting and the styles and philosophical class concepts of the artists involved, through the artistic characteristics and aesthetic concepts of modern artists who combine East and West. The literature shows that from scholars (Shi Wenya. *The Journal of Fine Arts*, 2014 (02)), it is mentioned that Chinese painting styles and genres, its definition and division are differently stated. Generally, they are divided into workmanship, calligraphy, painting with ink and wash, heavy color and light violet, literati painting, writer painting, connoisseur painting, and social enthusiast painting. The latter is the most common. The concept of painting in the style of painting is explained. The so-called Yi Yi painting can be traced back to Mi Youren's theory that painting is said to be the same as painting from the heart in the Song Dynasty. Art practitioners can trace it back to Su Shi's time in the Northern Song Dynasty: the history of Yi Yi painting has been around for a thousand years from the Northern Song Dynasty to today. We have learned from scholars (Fu Xiaoqing. First, traditional Chinese painting is characterized by the pursuit of "imagery" of the subject and

object experience, the external expression of the painter's inner aesthetic standards, the pursuit of simplicity, simplicity, and simplicity, The pursuit of simplicity, simplicity, and simplicity is the main characteristic of Chinese painting with a high degree of refinement and simplification of the creative object. Secondly, Chinese painting has free combinations and differences. From the scholars (Qiu Ping, "Prosperity or Crisis - A Brief Discussion of the Prosperity of Work Brush Painting and the Invisible Phenomenon of Calligraphic Painting in Contemporary Painting" Art World, 2020 (01) article, it is said that work brush painting has a history of 40 years from the end of the 20th century in China to now. Both the number of works and painters, and the various media reports on exhibitions, have reached an unprecedented prosperity, and several powerful painters have emerged, with artists whose personalities and levels have attracted attention. But if there is a flood of painters, it will destroy the way out.

In summary, through a conceptual discussion of Chinese calligraphy painting, an elaboration of the history of the development of traditional Chinese painting and an explanation of the factors of the dilemma facing Chinese calligraphy painting. The reasons for the constraining influences on the future development of contemporary Chinese calligraphy painting are argued.

7. Research Methodology

This paper uses mainly qualitative research methods. First, a comprehensive analysis of domestic and international literature on contemporary Chinese painting art is conducted to explore in depth the dilemmas and challenges faced by Chinese painting art in terms of artistic creation. Second, an in-depth analysis is conducted to explore the development strategies and measures for contemporary Chinese painting.

• Research tools

This case was implemented using the research tool of character interviews. Interviews were conducted mainly with college Chinese painting students, and data were collected through transcription and video means. The paper was then written by analyzing, summarizing, and concluding, and was completed within 24 weeks.

• Sampling method

This study is a comparative case study, and I used the "simple random sampling method". In terms of sampling validity and reliability, for the sake of data accuracy, the author chose students who had graduated from the exhibition of Chinese painting in colleges and universities to conduct the survey during the personal interview.

• Data collection methods

The location and time of data collection was chosen in a second-tier city in China, based on the current graduation exhibitions of colleges and universities specializing in Chinese painting. This paper can be implemented according to data screening, data editing, and data publishing.

• Data analysis methods

Through teaching and analysis of the artist's Chinese painting works, interviews with characters from two different groups of people are used to explain, summarize and conclude the comparative commentary on contemporary Chinese written painting works in terms of artistic characteristics and aesthetic ideas (see Figure 1 - Figure 2).

From the above two Chinese paintings, we can see that the author of this paper's work has richer brush and ink effects, tense lines, vivid colors, and is able to calligraphy into the painting together, and the whole picture is vivid and

interesting, highlighting the characteristics of Chinese flower and bird painting. On the contrary, the Chinese paintings of the college graduates are obviously not strong enough in brushwork and ink, and the ink color changes are duller and the brushwork is disorganized. But the advantage is that they can better express the spirit of writing and the relationship between brush and ink, and the aesthetic thought can still conform to the philosophical characteristics of Chinese painting.



Figure 1. From the author's Chinese painting creation 2021



Figure 2. Exhibition of Chinese painting by a university graduate 2023

8. Results and Findings

8.1. Overview of Contemporary Chinese Painting

Yi Yi painting is a type of painting with unique aesthetic and artistic creation techniques in traditional Chinese art. Its emergence and development are closely related to ancient literature and poetry, and it has a close connection with the development of humanities and history.

Yi Yi painting is a representative of Chinese painting at a certain stage of development. With thousands of years of Chinese cultural heritage, it is the most prominent item in the expression of traditional Chinese art and one of the important symbols that distinguish the different aesthetic standards of Eastern and Western painting. However, it is slowly fading from the view of art creators, and if we ignore it and adopt a default attitude, then in the future it will disappear, representing the most quintessential part of Chinese painting [wang and wang, 2022].

8.2. Challenges to Contemporary Chinese Painting

From the perspective of traditional cultural inheritance, our

contemporary Chinese art education and art creation orientation, it is worthwhile to stop and reflect and compare where the problems arise and how to reform them as a matter of urgency.

On the one hand, Chinese art education has to face the influence of Western culture and keep pace with the development of the times. Let Eastern art reveal its unique charm. Then the correct orientation of art education is the key to training the next generation. On the other hand, the creators of Chinese painting art must inherit the traditional points, such as the spirit of brush and ink, the elements of subject matter, calligraphy into painting and aesthetic characteristics. On the basis of tradition, they should strive for innovation and absorb some Western culture [Wang, 2012].

8.3. Strategies for the Development of Contemporary Chinese Painting

a. Encourage artists to innovate and experiment

First, encouraging artistic innovation and experimentation is crucial to the development of contemporary art. Through innovation and experimentation, artists can challenge traditional artistic concepts and forms, expand the boundaries of art, and produce a wider range of artworks. Through innovation and experimentation, artists can create more diverse and unique artworks by developing new art forms and expressions [Wang, 2019]. This not only satisfies the aesthetic requirements of different audiences, but also promotes the overall development of the art field.

Second, in the process of artistic innovation and experimentation, artists will encounter various new artistic problems and challenges, prompting them to research and think about new artistic theories and methods. At the same time, artistic innovation and experimentation will arouse the interest and research of academicians and critics, thus promoting the development of art theory and research as a whole [Alpers, 1992].

b. Establishing a diversified platform for cultural exchange and cooperation

For one, the establishment of a diverse cultural exchange and cooperation platform can promote the exchange and integration of different cultures. There are rich differences between the cultures of different countries and regions. By establishing a diversified cultural exchange and cooperation platform, it can promote exchanges and interactions among different cultures, deepen mutual understanding and mutual respect, and thus promote cultural integration and development.

Second, as an economic activity, cultural industries can create employment and wealth, as well as promote innovation and development of cultural products. By establishing diverse cultural exchange and cooperation platforms, the internationalization and globalization of cultural products and industries can be accelerated, and the development and growth of cultural industries can be promoted [Bürger, 1984]. Establishing diverse cultural exchange and cooperation platforms can enhance people's understanding of and respect for different cultures.

C. Increase government and community support and investment in the arts

First, the importance of government funding and investment in the arts is widely recognized. For example, Alesina and Wacziarg (1998) argue that the level of government intervention is positively correlated with the level of development of the cultural sector [Alesina, 1998].

Government support and investment can promote the development of cultural industries, increase innovation in cultural products, and create jobs. Similarly, social support and financial investment in the arts should also receive attention. Increased social support for the arts can promote the development of social culture and improve the cultural literacy and aesthetic ability of the public (Zukin, 1995).

Second, the ways and means of government support and investment are also an important factor in the development of the arts. The government can promote the arts by introducing culture-related policies, providing economic support and tax incentives, and organizing cultural events (Throsby, 2010). By purchasing artworks and participating in art events, society can support the development of the arts, thus completing the continued growth of the cultural industry [Bao, 2019].

8.4. Strengthen Art Education and Training

First of all, it is crucial for modern society to improve art education and training. Students' aesthetic abilities and creativity may be developed through arts education and training, which may also improve their cultural literacy and overall quality. Students who receive arts education and instruction may be exposed to a variety of artistic media, which may inspire them to create and develop their innovative and creative thinking [Barone and Eisner, 2008].

Secondly, since art is a form of culture, students can learn about and appreciate various cultural traditions and forms and improve their cultural literacy through art education and training. In addition, because art is a reflection and critique of social reality, children who receive art education and training will better understand it, enjoy it, and develop as individuals.

Therefore, arts education and training can increase the number of cultural consumers and improve people's understanding and enthusiasm for the arts. Enhancing arts education and training is crucial to modern society because it fosters creativity and invention in students, improves their cultural literacy, and supports the development of cultural enterprises [Liu, 2017].

9. Discussion and Analysis

9.1. The Contradiction between Cultural Innovation and Traditional Culture

Cultural creativity is a necessary by-product of contemporary civilization and a key driver of social progress and growth. Due to modernization and globalization, traditional cultures are experiencing significant challenges and must be preserved and passed on. However, the use of cultural innovation to preserve and pass on traditional culture contradicts the fact that cultural innovation often impacts and influences traditional culture - sometimes even modifying and innovating it [Cheng, 2018].

For one, new cultural values that depart from and conflict with those of traditional cultures are often the result of cultural innovation. For example, family, respect for the elderly, and love for children, but many young people desire more modern lifestyles and values in their daily lives.

Second, there will always be conflicts between cultural innovation and traditional culture, but such conflicts need to be balanced and resolved by taking appropriate measures. For example, strengthening traditional culture education and propaganda can increase the society's awareness and respect for traditional culture.

9.2. Analysis of Survey Results

Contemporary art has become more individual and expressive. The diversity and individuality of society is fully reflected in the creation of contemporary painting. The greater freedom of painters in the use of brushstrokes and colors shows a more distinct personality (Fan, 2014). Some painters have borrowed from the expressions of Western modern art, skillfully combining elements of traditional and modern art to create a more unique artistic style.

Contemporary calligraphy painting is an important part of the future development of Chinese painting. It shows more personalized, diversified and experimental artistic characteristics and styles, while inheriting and carrying forward traditional Chinese culture and absorbing Western artistic expressions and concepts to show the unique charm and style of modern Chinese art.

10. Limitations

This paper presents a detailed argument for the causes of the development dilemma of contemporary Chinese calligraphy painting by analyzing and generalizing the data in the form of a sampling tool of character interviews. Due to the obvious regional differences, there are certain limitations to the research study. One, the limited resources for data collection do not allow for a broader and more complete collection of opinions about the development of contemporary Chinese calligraphy painting. Second, in the background of the materialistic society, people's spiritual civilization is declining, especially the arrogance of treating aesthetic civilization, in fact, there are many people who are confused and ignorant about the real connotation of beauty. As a result, the crowd treats the reading of Chinese painting and accepts the purchase of artworks so helplessly. So, the complexity of the commercial market and social environment is very unfavorable to the development of contemporary Chinese painting.

11. Conclusion and Recommendations

Contemporary Chinese calligraphy painting is one of the most important branches of Chinese painting, with a rich heritage of cultural heritage. Due to the continuous development of society and the evolution of artistic concepts, contemporary Chinese calligraphy painting faces some challenges and opportunities. This paper discusses the current situation and trends of contemporary Chinese calligraphy painting, strategies and suggestions for developing contemporary Chinese calligraphy painting, and the significance of artistic creation and educational transmission of contemporary Chinese calligraphy painting.

First, it is necessary to strengthen the applied research and educational heritage of contemporary Chinese calligraphy and painting in colleges and universities to cultivate more outstanding artists. Second, contemporary Chinese calligraphy and painting need to focus on innovation and practice, and continue to explore innovative techniques and methods. The development and management of the art market should be strengthened to promote the commercialization and industrialization of contemporary Chinese painting and calligraphy. Finally, the future orientation of contemporary Chinese calligraphy and painting should draw on the essence of traditional painting while remaining current, innovative and exploratory. By strengthening artistic creation and educational heritage, focusing on innovation and practice, and

promoting market and industrial development, we can both promote the growth and development of contemporary Chinese painting and shed light on the creation and cultural heritage of contemporary art.

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