

The Influence and Reflection of Chinese Philosophy on the Aesthetics of Chinese Printmaking

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Abstract: From the pre Qin Confucianism, the Two Han Dynasties Confucian to the Song and Ming Neo Confucianism, ancient Chinese traditional philosophy not only has a systematic development trend, but also presents intuitive philosophical laws through the history of Chinese calligraphy and painting aesthetics. To deeply analyze the connection between Chinese philosophy and Chinese aesthetics, it is necessary to start thinking from pre Qin philosophy. In this context, this article is based on the philosophical concepts of Laozi and Zhuangzi, and takes Chinese printmaking as the research object of calligraphy and painting art. Through philosophical concepts such as “nature” and “six laws”, it elaborates on the influence of Chinese philosophy on the aesthetics of Chinese printmaking, and further analyzes the aesthetic standards and value orientation in Chinese art practice.

Keywords: Chinese philosophy; Chinese aesthetics; print; Affected

Chinese philosophy is centered around Confucianism and Taoism, and its key needs to be analyzed from pre Qin philosophy. This requires us to have a deep understanding of classic books such as Laozi, Zhuangzi, I Ching, and Xunzi, and analyze their philosophical concepts and aesthetic ideas from them. As an important category in China’s art system, printmaking occupies an important position in visual language art. It not only presents a unique woodcut atmosphere, but also has important value and status in the history of Chinese art. This article is based on Chinese philosophy and explores the aesthetic ideas and practical expressions of Chinese printmaking.

1. The Aesthetic Relationship between Chinese Philosophy and Chinese Printmaking

In the development process of Chinese printmaking art, its aesthetic characteristics have been deeply influenced by Chinese philosophy. The philosophy of Laozi and Zhuangzi is a key factor influencing the aesthetic concepts and creative techniques of Chinese printmaking, especially under the theories of “following the natural way” and “governing by inaction”. The aesthetic pursuit of Chinese printmaking is consistent with the philosophical pursuit of Laozi and Zhuangzi’s ideas, both of which are based on the fundamental goal of harmonious unity between humans and nature. Therefore, Chinese painting has a high pursuit of “artistic conception”, and its key lies in presenting the harmonious relationship between humans and nature, thereby showcasing the beauty of nature and human emotions. At the same time, Chinese calligraphy and painting are also influenced by the philosophy of Laozi and Zhuangzi in terms of creative techniques, especially under the influence of the theory of “governing by inaction”. It is not limited to deliberately imitating and reproducing nature, but rather pursues the deep integration of the beauty of nature and the emotions of characters. Through the use of brush and ink, it showcases the inner charm of natural scenery and character emotions.

1.1 The Influence of the Thought of “Following the Way of Nature” and “Governing by Non action” on the Aesthetics of Chinese Printmaking

As early as the pre Qin period, the representative figure of Taoism, Laozi, proposed the concept of “nature” and used it to explain and explain the state and creative process of the existence of the universe in his philosophical theory. At the same time, Confucianism also proposed concepts such as “knowing the destiny of heaven”. However, from the perspective of traditional Chinese calligraphy and painting aesthetics, the influence of “Dao follows nature” in Laozi’s Taoism is more extensive. “Nature” refers to the inaction of nature, which explains the state of the universe itself. In the process of creating all things in heaven and earth, the universe has not undergone special design and thinking, thus presenting a natural effect that can be applied to the creation of calligraphy and painting art.

From a macro perspective, any artistic practice is influenced by both human and natural factors, with natural factors specifically referring to the artistic atmosphere, aesthetic emotions, emotional attitudes, and aesthetic styles bestowed upon creators or artists themselves. These natural factors are inherent to creators or gradually formed through their life experiences. Human factors are specifically manifested in the artistic form, creative techniques, and materials used by creators. On this basis, Chinese printmaking art continuously enhances its admiration and admiration for nature, and integrates “nature” into the aesthetic needs of traditional aesthetics. This has led to in the history of Chinese art development, printmaking works that highlight human characteristics or are not natural enough are difficult to receive people’s praise and love. For printmaking works with indistinct human traces and distinct natural features, they have become highly regarded masterpieces in ancient Chinese art. It is not difficult to see that in traditional Chinese printmaking art, the aesthetic and artistic value of works are mainly influenced by their naturalness.

From a micro perspective, the concept of “governing by doing nothing” is also a key factor affecting the techniques of printmaking creation. In printmaking creation, most creators avoid deliberately imitating natural landscapes and instead cleverly integrate human emotions with nature, presenting both natural features and emotional elements. The key lies in the concept of “governing by doing nothing”, which completes creation through a natural and free state without pursuing results.

1.2 The Relationship between the Thought of “Relationship between Heaven and Man” and the Aesthetics of Chinese Printmaking

In printmaking creation, creators usually incorporate the harmonious relationship between nature and humans into the picture, in order to present the characteristics of harmony and unity between humans and nature. This unity and harmony can not only be presented through the visuals of printmaking works, but also demonstrate the process of the creator creating printmaking. Every creator must have a more solid and intuitive observation and experience of nature and life in order to truly integrate their emotional thinking and ideological consciousness into their works, thereby endowing printmaking art with deeper cultural connotations and displaying new artistic value.

Therefore, in printmaking creation, the emphasis on the harmonious relationship between nature and humans is often guided by the idea of “the relationship between heaven and man”. The application and presentation of this idea also benefit from the creator’s profound understanding of nature and profound insight into life, thus forming the charm and characteristics of Chinese printmaking aesthetics.

1.3 The Relationship between the Thought of “Vivid Charm” and the Aesthetics of Chinese Printmaking

In the creation of ancient Chinese printmaking, “vivid charm” is the most fundamental aesthetic principle and creative method. Creators need to consider the inner spiritual temperament of the artwork and be able to use colors, lines, and composition design to convey the inherent charm and characteristics of the artwork; To highlight the overall rhythm and systematicity of the picture, and then present a lively and natural atmosphere in the picture.

In the philosophy of Laozi and the classics of the Book of Changes, “gasification” is one of the most important philosophical ideas. During the Han Dynasty, the concept of “qi transformation” gradually upgraded to the theory of “vitality”. However, during the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, Xie He formally proposed the theory of “vivid qi and rhyme” in his “Record of Ancient Paintings”. This theory is the highest principle of the “Six Methods” for calligraphy and painting creation proposed by Sheikh. Specifically, the “Six Methods” specifically refer to the six means of calligraphy and painting creation, including “transmission, transfer, description, management of position, coloring according to categories, application of objects and shapes, ancient brushstrokes, and vivid charm.”. As one of the aesthetic principles, “vivid charm” has metaphysical characteristics and is regarded by Sheikh as the highest rule of calligraphy and painting creation. In printmaking creation, “vivid and vivid” emphasizes the “artistic conception” and “charm” presented in the picture. It is not difficult to find that under the interaction and influence of various philosophical ideas and aesthetic concepts, the idea of “vivid and vibrant” has gradually formed, and has endowed Chinese printmaking with the most unique aesthetic value and artistic characteristics.

Overall, the creation of Chinese printmaking emphasizes the harmonious relationship between humans and nature, while also emphasizing the creation of an artistic atmosphere. It not only presents the characteristics of the artistic conception through elements such as lines, colors, and composition, but also uses the characteristics of the artistic conception to showcase the emotional attitude and ideological concepts of the creators themselves, thus forming a unique charm of the works. The charm of printmaking works can be seen as their own breath, charm, and rhythmic characteristics. The length, thickness, rigidity, softness, and straightness of the lines, the brightness, intensity, and warmth of the colors, and the concentration, dispersion, density, and layering of the composition can be reflected through the combination and creation of different elements, such as intense and unrestrained, peaceful and beautiful, lonely and lonely, which are more likely to trigger emotional resonance and inner thinking in the audience.

2. The Influence of Chinese Philosophy on the Practice of Chinese Printmaking

In the field of calligraphy and painting art in our country, printmaking is a painting form with unique charm and artistic value. Whether it is its creative process or its classification standards, it demonstrates the philosophical ideas and artistic concepts in Chinese culture. In modern printmaking creation, it further presents the fusion effect of traditional culture and modern technology. Printmaking, as a form of artistic creation that uses knives or chemicals for carving or etching, involves materials such as wood, stone, zinc, copper, and hemp glue in the layout. In terms of form, there are carved and printed drawings. In the early days, printmaking specifically referred to woodcut, which gave it a unique knife charm and wood flavor, making it occupy an independent position in the field of Chinese calligraphy and painting art, presenting unique artistic value and creative character.

2.1 The Influence of Chinese Philosophy on Chinese Printmaking Creation

The influence of Chinese philosophy on printmaking creation practice is mainly reflected in three levels.

Firstly, printmaking emphasizes the design and processing of elements such as lines, colors, and composition. In terms of selecting the length, thickness, rigidity, softness, and straightness of lines, color brightness, intensity, and temperature design, as well as the concentration, dispersion, density, and hierarchical expression of composition, printmaking is deeply influenced by Chinese philosophy such as “following the natural way”, “governing by inaction”, “the relationship between heaven and man”, and “vivid charm”. Therefore, it showcases the different artistic pursuits and ideological concepts of creators, presenting the unique artistic language and expression effect of published paintings.

Secondly, guided by Chinese philosophy, printmaking tends to express the harmonious relationship between humans and nature. Especially in visual presentation, creators can present a harmonious and unified effect of the relationship between humans and nature through their visual characteristics. This pursuit of harmony and unity lies not only in the creator’s own creative philosophy, but also in their observation and experience of daily life. Therefore, in the process of integrating ideological consciousness with printmaking works, it presents cultural connotations and artistic values with Chinese philosophical characteristics.

Thirdly, Chinese philosophy also has a certain influence on the technology of printmaking creation. Whether it is the philosophical

thinking presented in the process of printmaking conception, plate making, and printing, or the carving, etching, printing and other means used in creation, all contain the characteristics and beauty of Chinese philosophy, expressing the elegance, vividness, rhythm, and beauty of Chinese aesthetics.

2.2 The Influence and Practice of Chinese Philosophy on Chinese Printmaking Creation

In modern printmaking creation, from Zhang Shuyun to Yang Chunhua, from Monday Qing to Zhang Fang, all generations of printmaking artists have maintained a style and characteristic of pursuing the beauty of simplicity and simplicity. They not only emphasize the beauty presented by nature and nature, but also pay attention to expressing their true feelings through nature, thus continuously developing towards higher aesthetic taste. This is the continuous influence of Chinese philosophy on Chinese printmaking art after thousands of years.

There are significant differences between printmaking and other traditional calligraphy and painting works, which are reflected not only in materials, tools, and techniques, but also in creative techniques. However, regardless of the era, people's evaluation of printmaking art works is not based on their techniques, methods, and materials, but on the artistic conception and emotions presented by their paintings themselves. This is the result of the integration and development of Chinese philosophy and aesthetics.

On the other hand, printmaking creation pursues both the naturalization of painting techniques and the naturalization of painting materials and content. Through naturalized inspiration, content, and creative techniques, printmaking works can achieve the effect of returning to nature, and the creator's own thoughts and ideas can be expressed naturally. Coming from nature and going to nature is the core concept and central idea bestowed by Chinese philosophy on Chinese printmaking art. Just like works such as Zhang Shuyun's "Fishing Port", Zhou Yiqing's "Midsummer", and Yang Chunhua's "Kitchen", their content all presents ordinary scenes in public life. However, it is precisely the ordinary content of the scenes that naturally displays the lifestyle and habits of the public, and also obtains emotional resonance and love from the public.

3. Conclusion

In summary, Chinese philosophical thought is a key factor influencing the development of Chinese art and aesthetics, especially in the field of printmaking creation. It not only has a direct impact on the ideological theory of printmaking art, but also has a subtle and convergent guiding effect on its creative methods and forms, thereby demonstrating unique Chinese aesthetic thought and taste. Chinese philosophy and aesthetics are fundamentally consistent, both emphasizing the pursuit of comprehension, wholeness, and transcendence. They are based on both intrinsic values and spiritual temperament, as well as life experience and natural expression, thus ushering in a new stage of development in Chinese culture and art. Firstly, the aesthetic attitude and consciousness are constantly developing towards the inner spirit of things. Secondly, the essence and value of beauty are increasingly closely connected with morality and truth. Thirdly, the aesthetic realm and experience are constantly transforming beyond the secular world and the universe. Fourthly, the connection between creative concepts, expressive techniques, and philosophical thinking continues to strengthen. On this basis, Chinese philosophy drives the development of Chinese printmaking aesthetics, and at the same time, Chinese printmaking has created a new way of presentation and understanding carrier for Chinese philosophy, becoming the key for us to grasp Chinese philosophy and the aesthetic ideas of Chinese printmaking.

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