

# An Analysis of the Elegance and Vulgarly of Chinese Traditional Painting

Zhang Gewu

School of Communication, Weinan Normal University, Shaanxi 714000, China

**Keywords:** Great Customs, Elegance, Chinese Painting

**Abstract:** Chinese Painting Has a Long History. in the Long-Term Cultural Heritage, There Are Many Subjects That People Like to See and Enjoy and That Are Enduring. They Are Rooted in the Hearts of the Chinese People with Their Beautiful Images and Rich Moral Implications. They Are the Most Vulgar Arts, the Essence of Which is People's Pursuit of a Better Life, the Symbol of Auspicious Meaning, and the Most "Vulgar" Material Prayer for Human Life. However, These Themes Are "Elegant" Art, Because They Have Spiritual Demands Beyond Material, and Are People's Pursuit of Unique Qualities and Styles. Therefore, It is Difficult to Separate "Elegance" from "Vulgarity". It Can Be Said That "Elegance" is the Antecedent of "Vulgarity" and "Vulgarity" is the Most Widely Recognized Way of "Elegance".

## 1. Introduction

Approaching Chinese painting, we can easily find that there is a more unique phenomenon in this unique artistic form, that is, some painters paint on a specific material, and some paint on a theme even the direction of life, which is unique among other painting types. For example, Wu Daozi painted people, Han Gan painted horses and Qi Baishi painted shrimps. They specialize in their art and have made immortal contributions in the history of Chinese painting. Chinese painting has accumulated a lot of content that people like to see in this development process. For example: plum, orchid, bamboo, chrysanthemum, etc. After the baptism of time and the transformation of people's wisdom, they are still alive in the works of painters. From the writing style of the literati to the common decoration in the life of the common people, they are really the art of enjoying both refined and popular tastes. These themes have been deeply rooted in the hearts of the Chinese people and become part of the national blood. This is possible only because they represent the Chinese people's yearning for a better life in the future and their wishes for the happiness and well-being of their loved ones.

The most common theme in Chinese painting is fish. Because the homophonic meaning of "fish" is "Yu", it is given a symbol of wealth. People often use its sound to get lucky and rich. In New Year pictures, there is a big fat doll holding a big red carp, which means "more than once a year". In fact, as early as Paleolithic, people began to believe in and worship fish. The "painted pottery terra-cotta fish pattern basin" unearthed in Banpo is most likely the product of primitive beliefs at that time. In the nature, the fish's reproduction ability is extremely strong, the fish's roe is dense and endless. Under the condition that people's living ability is not strong, the nature of people's worship of fish is the worship of life. Fish as mascot, besides its general meaning, also refers to goldfish and carp. The traditional Chinese design "happy ever after" is an image of several goldfish playing. In carp culture, the story of "carp jumping over the dragon gate" is most talked about by people. The process of "carp jumping over the dragon gate" is very difficult. It reflects the perseverance and enterprising spirit of the Chinese nation. Therefore, "Carp Jumping the Dragon Gate" is a blessing for a successful career. In the eyes of the Chinese, having children is closely linked to the happiness of marriage, so fish later developed into a sign of love. "Pictures of Pisces" and "Pictures of Fish and Lotus" are often used as wedding flowers to express young men and women's longing for a better life in the future. The symbolic meaning of fish is happiness, beauty and peace. The temperament of fish is ordinary and common. It conveys a happy life concept of family harmony and kinship.

Lotus, also known as lotus. Also called Fulong, Handan, etc. Lotus, as a plant, is not only used to

sign female genitals but also to embody the meaning of having many children. So its original meaning is to express people's desire for reproduction. Later, it gradually evolved into a bumper harvest of products according to its homophonic "Lian". For example: "More than once a year" and "More than once a year" have given birth to a son. In the imperial examination culture, "A Heron and Lotus Lotus" is also used to express "All the way to Lianke". After Buddhism was introduced into China, lotus has a new meaning. The white lotus represents the state of eliminating personal selfishness and abstaining from desires, so the bodhisattva sits on the lotus table. It is said that whenever anyone in the world practices successfully, a new lotus will bloom in the lotus pond of the western paradise. Since ancient times, painting lotus has been the common hobby of folk painters and literati. From different angles, the painters depicted the outstanding temperament of lotus flowers that emerge from the mud but not imbrued, clean and smooth but not evil, thus achieving their life pursuit of taking lotus as an example, abstaining from desires and fame and wealth.

Peony is a national flower. "Peony is loved all over the world" although it is definitely a little bit, but it does reflect the position of peony in the hearts of the Chinese people. Peony painting is an independent theme in painting, which adds gorgeous colors to Chinese folk art. Peony has the title of "rich flower" because of its large color, magnificence and magnanimity. For a long time, peony has become a symbol of wealth and prosperity. The combination of peony and other plants is also widely spread. For example: Peony and Catharanthus roseus mean "rich Changchun", Peony and Narcissus are "immortal riches and honour", Peony and Peach mean "longevity, wealth and honor", Peony is often painted with lotus, chrysanthemum, plum blossom and other flowers, symbolizing the four seasons, Peony represents the flowers blooming in spring. Peony themes are also the objects that painters of past dynasties have tried hard to depict. Whether it is meticulous painting or freehand painting, the petals are delicate and gentle with distinct levels, or the atmosphere is soft with bones. Peony shows its elegant temperament in various forms. The culture attached to peony has strong penetrating power and involves various cultures such as philosophy, religion, literature, art, pharmacy, botany, folk customs, etc. It is a typical Chinese symbol system.

Pine, bamboo and plum are called "three friends of the year cold". according to su Shi's "two music of wind and spring, three friends of pine and bamboo" Two lines of poetry. During the years in North Song Shenzong, Su Shi was arrested and imprisoned. After Wang Anshi and others rescued him, he was given a lighter sentence and placed under Huangzhou's control. During his stay in Huangzhou, Su Shi asked the prefect of Huangzhou for tens of mu of land to improve his life. He planted crops such as rice and wheat in the fields, and built garden walls and houses. The house was named Snow Hall and snowflakes were painted on all sides. The garden is full of pine, cypress, bamboo, plum and other flowers and trees. One spring, Huangzhou Zhizhou came to see him in the snow hall and joked, "you sleep in this room, look around and see that there is snow everywhere. When it's really cold and snowy, it's hard to see people. Don't you think it's too cold? So Su Shi recited the first two poems. This is the origin of "three cold friends". All along, people with lofty ideals, scholars and poets have taken this opportunity to show their noble character of being proud of frost and fighting snow, and being firm in character. The spirit of Confucianism does not change from understanding and helping others to advocating the Taoist hermit spirit of "poverty and retreat and good alone". In fact, it is the inherent character of pine, bamboo and plum as aesthetic objects, and is the essence of Lao Zi and Zhuang Zi's spirit. Bamboo, guilty and indifferent, is known as the festival; Loose, vigorous and powerful, it is in line with the clear and relaxed mentality of despising the world. Mei Zerui's pride in snow is even more inspiring. These humanistic implications, which embody the spirit of seclusion, are the core of Chinese "pine, bamboo and plum" cultural series. On the other hand, the common people value that the evergreen is not old but not withered in winter, which is extended to the exuberance of vitality, so it has also become a symbol of auspiciousness. Pine can live a long life, so it is given a symbol of longevity. In art works, there are often "pine and pine growth in spring", "fair spots gather constructions", "pine Chrysanthem prolongs life", "pine crane prolongs life", etc.

Perhaps because of the strong fragrant smell of pine and cypress, it is said that planting pine and

cypress on the grave can protect the body from being invaded by monsters. People believe that the withered and glorious trees on the grave reflect the safety of the dead on the ground. Pine and cypress have the function of guiding and protecting the dead. No matter what form pine and cypress appear, almost all contain auspicious content.

People cherish the lofty character of bamboo, which is straight and restrained, hollow and firm. It is compared to a gentleman in a tree. The literati praised its high style and bright festival. Zheng Banqiao's painting of bamboo is a unique skill. His "bamboo in eyes", "bamboo in chest" and "bamboo in hand" have become models for later generations to learn painting. The Chinese believe that bamboo is of noble nature, so they regard it as a symbol of the steadfast love between men and women. Bamboo shoots quickly, which is consistent with the Chinese concept of having more children and more blessings, so it has become a symbol of prosperity and family happiness. Bamboo has a festival, and has the auspicious meaning of "rising steadily". Rich and noble bamboos are often made into bamboo pagodas to express their longing for a better life.

Mei culture has a long history and enjoys an important position in Chinese tradition. Plum blossom is in full bloom in the wind and snow, proud and cold in Feng Ling, and unyielding in character. It has attracted numerous scholars and scholars to express their feelings through plum blossom. Various artistic works with plum blossom as the theme emerge in endlessly, forming a splendid plum culture. "The shadows are slanting, the water is light, and the fragrance is floating on the moon and dusk.", Lin Bu's two verses from Yongmei are the last songs of Mei culture. Mei is most suitable to be painted with flowers, birds, trees and rare stones, such as "four gentlemen" (plum, orchid, bamboo and chrysanthemum), "zhi xian birthday" (ganoderma, crane, bamboo and chrysanthemum) "beaming" (magpie and plum blossom) "Wu Qing" (pine, bamboo, plum, orchid and stone), etc., which makes people understand the customs and feel relaxed and happy.

Chrysanthemum is a traditional famous flower in our country. In the frosty day of ten thousand trees and the late autumn when flowers wither, its color is gorgeous, its posture is elegant, its fragrance is pleasant, it is not afraid of wind, cold and dew, it is not afraid of changes in circumstances, it is not afraid of frost, it is clear and elegant, it is firm and resolute, it is noble and clean in Leng Yan, therefore it is generally appreciated by people, and it is called four gentlemen with plum blossom, orchid and bamboo. Chrysanthemum culture, once combined with literati's creative life, has become a kind of elegant and refined moral culture with its unique characteristics. For example: "Under the eastern fence of chrysanthemum picking, you can see Nanshan leisurely." It's been two years since the flowers bloomed and fallen. It's sad to see the flowers in full bloom. The boat is still tied to the shore, floating outside me, but my heart is long tied to my hometown and so on. With the change of the times, chrysanthemum has been loved by the people for its good medicinal, ornamental and edible properties. People give it homophonic "dwelling", so "pine Chrysanthemum prolongs life", "Lycium barbarum and Chrysanthemum prolong life", "live in your old age" (longevity stone, chrysanthemum, cat, Butterfly), etc, It expresses the wish to prolong life, "live and work in peace and contentment" (homophonic of quail, chrysanthemum and deciduous maple), "family happiness" (homophonic of chrysanthemum and yellowbird) and so on, implying a stable life and family reunion "official residence and one product" (homophonic of katydid and chrysanthemum) symbolizing high rank and fortune. "Spring is peaceful, autumn is auspicious and winter is auspicious" is represented by peony, lotus, autumn chrysanthemum and winter plum. On the day of the Double Ninth Festival, only chrysanthemums are gorgeous and open. Therefore, in the literati's writing, chrysanthemums often have an indissoluble relationship with Chongyang.

Another pet described by Chinese painters is "butch". Because she is connected with "Geely", she has been given the meaning of auspiciousness in traditional Chinese culture and has become one of the most important mascots. Standing on the stone with his head held high, the bright red male medallion has his eyes fixed on the stone and looks at the distance. This is one of the common images in Chinese painting. It is said that this represents "fame". The pattern of a guppy and a fish means "Ji (guppy) celebrates Yu (fish)". The pattern of peony and male medallion is "fame and wealth", which implies success, promotion and prosperity. It's a kind of bird, it's dawn, so people associate its characteristics with the sunrise and sunset, regard it as "Yang bird", think it's the

incarnation of sun bird in reality, and pour the awe and attachment to the sun on it. On the Han Dynasty stone reliefs, there were many images of golden birds. The male's teeth are powerful, beautiful and aggressive. They are often regarded as a symbol of heroism. Therefore, later generations often use the image of male snakehead to express their imagination and ambition.

## **2. Conclusion**

Chinese painting has unique artistic and aesthetic characteristics. It is a real symbolic art with unique oriental charm. Its main features are: the expression of matter forms a symbolic relationship, and matter symbolizes a hazy understanding or implication. Therefore, the things depicted in Chinese painting not only show its own image but also symbolize the spirit or quality contained in it. Therefore, what Chinese painting pursues is not a complete likeness, but the overall artistic conception and character of the picture. The so-called similarity and dissimilarity is the ultimate pursuit of Chinese painting for the things in the picture. The most important feature of Chinese painting, whether elegant or vulgar, is symbol. "Elegance" is a pursuit of advanced artistic effect. It is a unique artistic technique that people can use to express things beyond their shapes. Therefore, "Elegance" is the precursor of "vulgarity". In fact, "vulgar" is also a kind of advanced artistic effect, which is the most widely spread and recognition of "elegant" culture. We can understand it this way: "elegance" is a unique creation of art by a few people, and then it is loved and imitated by most people. However, people "elegant" it became "vulgar". Therefore, the real art is both refined and popular, and Chinese painting is such an art.

## **References**

- [1] Lou Yulie. Chinese Character [M]. Contemporary China Publishing House, 2007
- [2] Chen Qinjian, Yin Xiaofei [M]. Click on Chinese auspicious art, Shanghai people's fine arts publishing house, 2006.
- [3] Chen Xuguang. Why art [M]. Renmin University of China Press, 2004.
- [4] [US] Richie, brainstorming [M]. Huang Beibei, Jincheng Publishing House, Meng Tao Translation, 2009.
- [5] Niu Xiaomu. Case Study and Analysis of Ecological Art Education [M]. Nanjing Publishing House, 2008.