

The Impact of Mountain-Water Concepts on East Asian Art in the Context of Cross-Cultural Exchange

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Abstract: This paper discusses the historical evolution of the concept of mountain-water and its important role in cross-cultural communication. The concept of mountain-water originated from people's reverence and aesthetic pursuit of nature in ancient China, and gradually developed into an indispensable part of China's traditional culture in the long history. Firstly, this paper traces the origin of the concept of mountain-water, and analyzes its development and changes in the history of China, showing how landscape painting evolved from a simple description of nature to an art form with profound cultural connotations. Furthermore, the article focuses on the unique position of the concept of mountain-water in cross-cultural communication, especially its wide spread and far-reaching influence in East Asia. The article also discusses in detail the multi-dimensional expression of the concept of mountain-water in China's traditional fine arts, and its remarkable promotion to the fine arts development of Japanese, Korean and other East Asian countries.

1. Introduction

Today, with the acceleration of globalization, cross-cultural communication has become an important force to promote cultural development around the world. East Asia, as one of the regions with the longest cultural history in the world, is deeply influenced by various cultural exchanges [1]. Among them, the concept of mountain-water, as an important part of China's traditional culture, not only occupies a decisive position in the history of China's fine arts, but also has a far-reaching impact on the fine arts of other countries and regions in East Asia under the background of cross-cultural communication [2].

The concept of mountain-water is not only a description of natural scenery, but also contains profound philosophical and aesthetic ideas. It originated from the awe and worship of nature in ancient China, developed from the pursuit and expression of the beauty of landscape by literati, and finally formed a unique landscape painting school and aesthetic system [3]. This concept emphasizes the harmonious coexistence between man and nature, and expresses the vivid charm of landscape through the shade of pen and ink and the density of lines, thus conveying the painter's feelings and interests.

With the increasingly frequent cultural exchanges between China and other countries in East Asia, the concept of mountains and rivers has gradually spread and influenced the artistic creation of these countries. This influence is not a simple imitation or replication, but a profound change and innovation in cross-cultural communication [4]. While accepting the concept of mountains and rivers, artists from East Asian countries also combined it with local art traditions to create unique works of art.

Influenced by the concept of mountain-water, East Asian artists began to pay more attention to the beauty of nature itself, rather than just taking it as the background of figure painting. Through in-depth study of the shape, color and light and shadow changes of natural scenery, they use rich pen and ink techniques and composition methods to express the natural artistic conception. This independent expression of natural beauty not only enriches the expression forms of East Asian art, but also promotes the progress of art techniques.

It is worth noting that the spread and influence of mountain-water concept in cross-cultural communication is not one-way [5]. While accepting and absorbing China's mountain-water concept, other countries in East Asia also fed back their local art elements and aesthetic concepts to China,

thus promoting the diversified development of China's fine arts. This two-way cultural exchange not only contributes to the mutual integration of fine arts in various countries, but also promotes the progress of fine arts in East Asia as a whole.

To sum up, the concept of mountain-water has had a far-reaching impact on East Asian art in cross-cultural communication. It not only enriches the creative themes and forms of East Asian art, but also promotes the progress and innovation of art techniques and aesthetic concepts. This paper will discuss the concrete manifestation and significance of this influence from the perspectives of history, culture and art, so as to provide readers with a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the development of East Asian art.

2. Historical evolution of mountain-water concept

The concept of "mountain-water," as a pivotal element in traditional Chinese culture, has traversed a lengthy and intricate historical evolution. Tracing its roots back to early references in the Book of Songs, where "mountains" and "waters" were invoked as symbols closely tied to human emotions, this concept encapsulates profound reflections on the relationship between humans and nature in Chinese culture. The concept of mountain-water primarily encompasses three dimensions: 1. The early Shenwen era, where in the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties, people envisioned the world as filled with divine power, manifesting in the form of "jiangshan" (rivers and mountains), represented by mythical mountain systems like Kunlun and Penglai. 2. The political and religious system, where the idea of mountain-water merged with the concept of the Five Sacred Mountains and the Four Great Rivers, symbolizing a unified ideological framework for governing the land. 3. Aesthetic appreciation of mountains and waters, where they serve not just as geographical references but as metaphors, evoking specific emotions. For instance, the beauty of mountains and waters lies in their uniqueness and tranquility, offering an endless exploration of aesthetic experiences beyond the ordinary.

In ancient China, the concept of mountains and rivers originated from reverence and worship of nature. In ancient times, people lived in natural environments and developed a deep emotional attachment to natural landscapes such as mountains, rivers, etc [6]. This kind of emotion gradually sublimated into an aesthetic emotion, and people began to try various ways to express their longing for mountains and rivers. During this process, the concept of mountain-water gradually sprouted and developed.

With the passage of history, the concept of mountains and rivers has gradually been more deeply reflected in Chinese culture. In the pre Qin period, the ideas of various schools of thought had a significant impact on the concept of mountains and rivers [7]. As Taoism emphasizes the "Dao follows nature" and advocates harmonious coexistence with nature, this ideology injects new connotations into the concept of mountains and rivers. Confucianism emphasizes that "benevolent people enjoy mountains and wise people enjoy water", linking mountains and rivers with people's moral cultivation, further enhancing the cultural status of mountains and rivers.

During the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, the concept of mountain-water architecture entered an important stage of development. During this period, society was turbulent and unstable, and literati and literati sought solace in the mountains and rivers. They express their love and longing for mountains and rivers through forms such as poetry and painting, promoting the prosperity of mountain and water culture. At this time, landscape painting gradually separated from the background of figure painting and became a specialized art form. Painters began to delve into the form, color, and changes in light and shadow of mountains and rivers, using rich brush and ink techniques and composition techniques to express the artistic conception of mountains and rivers.

During the Sui and Tang dynasties, landscape painting further matured and many outstanding landscape painters and works emerged [8]. They not only focus on expressing the natural beauty of mountains and rivers, but also convey their personal emotions and interests through the richness, dryness, and wetness of their brushstrokes, as well as the density and dispersion of their lines. The landscape paintings of this period, such as Zhan Ziqian's "Spring Tour" and Li Sixun's "Jiangfan Lounge", fully demonstrate the artistic charm of landscape painting.

The Song Dynasty was the peak period for the development of landscape painting, and a large number of excellent landscape painters emerged, such as Fan Kuan, Guo Xi, and so on. Their works not only have exquisite craftsmanship, but also profound artistic conception, fully reflecting the artistic value of landscape painting. At this time, landscape painting is no longer simply a natural depiction, but incorporates more cultural connotations and humanistic spirit. Painters express their views on life, values, and aesthetics through landscape painting, making it an art form with profound ideological connotations.

With the increasingly frequent cultural exchanges between China and other East Asian countries, the concept of mountains and rivers has gradually spread to these regions. In countries such as Japan and South Korea, the combination of mountain-water concepts and local cultural traditions has formed unique styles of landscape painting. Artists from these countries not only incorporate Chinese landscape painting techniques, but also incorporate their own aesthetic taste and natural concepts, creating unique artistic works. This cross-cultural exchange not only enriches the connotation of East Asian art, but also promotes the development of art in various countries.

3. Mountain-water concepts in cross-cultural communication

The dissemination of mountain-water concepts in cross-cultural communication first benefits from the extensive influence of Chinese culture. As one of the birthplaces of East Asian culture, the concept of mountain-water in Chinese culture began to spread to the outside world very early on. With the opening of the Silk Road and the rise of maritime trade, Chinese art and cultural concepts gradually spread to East Asian countries such as Japan and South Korea. Among them, landscape painting, as an important representative of traditional Chinese painting, its unique artistic style and aesthetic concept are deeply loved and pursued by artists from various countries.

In cross-cultural communication, the concept of mountain-water has been accepted and integrated into the local art of East Asian countries, forming unique artistic styles. Taking Japan as an example, after accepting the influence of Chinese mountain-water concepts, Japanese artists combined them with local art forms such as ukiyo-e to create unique Japanese landscape paintings. These works not only preserve the traditional Chinese landscape spirit, but also incorporate Japanese aesthetic taste and natural concepts, presenting a new artistic style. Table 1 shows the characteristics and changes in the artistic styles of China, Japan, and South Korea after adopting the concept of mountains and rivers.

Table 1 Characteristics and changes of art styles in different countries

Country	Art style before accepting the concept of mountains and rivers	Artistic style and characteristics after accepting the concept of mountains and rivers
China	Mainly based on figure painting, with landscape painting as the background or accompaniment	Landscape painting has become an independent genre, emphasizing the techniques of brushwork and artistic expression
Japan	Mainly using local art forms such as ukiyo-e	Integrating mountain-water concepts and forming Japanese style landscape paintings, emphasizing line expression and color application
Korea	Focusing on traditional Korean painting, emphasizing decorative and symbolic elements	Embrace the concept of mountain-water painting, develop landscape paintings with Korean characteristics, and integrate traditional Korean painting elements

In China, landscape painting gradually separated from the background of figure painting and became a specialized art form. In Japan and South Korea, the combination of mountain-water

concepts and local artistic traditions has formed unique landscape painting styles.

In addition to its influence on artistic style, the concept of mountain-water also promotes the progress of artistic techniques and aesthetic concepts in cross-cultural communication. Artists from various countries continuously develop their artistic expression techniques through mutual learning and reference. For example, Japanese artists have incorporated their own aesthetic taste into Chinese landscape painting techniques, forming a unique artistic style. At the same time, Chinese artists also draw inspiration from works of art from Japan and South Korea, further enriching China's landscape painting art.

4. Embodiment of the Mountain-water Concept in Traditional Chinese Art

The embodiment of the concept of mountain-water in China's traditional art is profound and diverse, which not only runs through the long history of China's painting, but also permeates various art forms. Table 2 lists some representative works and their characteristics.

Table 2 Representative works and their characteristics

Work Title	Author	Creation Era	Embodied Mountain-water Concept Characteristics
"Spring Outing"	Gu Kaizhi	Eastern Jin Dynasty	Depicts the vitality and energy of spring landscapes through delicate brushstrokes, reflecting the beauty of landscapes and the harmony between humans and nature
"Xiaoxiang Tu"	Dong Yuan	Five Dynasties	Uses the theme of Jiangnan landscapes, employing gentle brushwork and elegant tones to express the hazy beauty and tranquil atmosphere of landscapes
"Travelers Among Mountains and Streams"	Fan Kuan	Northern Song Dynasty	Uses magnificent mountains and rivers as the backdrop, showing the grandeur and magnificent momentum of landscapes through delicate brushstrokes and deep colors

4.1. Development and Characteristics of Landscape Painting

Landscape painting is an essential category of traditional Chinese painting. It depicts natural landscapes, expressing the grandeur, artistic conception, and beauty of landscapes through brushwork, composition, and color. Landscape painting pursues not only formal similarity but also spiritual resemblance, emphasizing the expression of the painter's subjective emotions and thoughts. In landscape painting, the mountain-water concept is most directly embodied.

As history progressed, landscape painting gradually formed various styles and genres. From Gu Kaizhi's "Spring Outing" in the Eastern Jin Dynasty to Dong Yuan's "Xiaoxiang Tu" in the Five Dynasties, and then to Fan Kuan's "Travelers Among Mountains and Streams" in the Northern Song Dynasty, landscape painting evolved continuously, forming a unique artistic style. These works not only showcase the beauty and grandeur of landscapes but also reflect the painter's awe and love for nature.

4.2. Embodiment of the Mountain-water Concept in Garden Art

Classical Chinese gardens are another crucial carrier of the mountain-water concept. The layout and design of gardens often draw inspiration from the composition and artistic conception of landscape paintings. By stacking rocks, diverting water into ponds, planting flowers and trees, and other means, a natural aesthetic feeling of "although made by humans, it seems to have been opened by heaven" is created. The embodiment of the mountain-water concept in garden art not only highlights the philosophy of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature but also provides people with a spiritual home where they can express their emotions and cultivate their minds.

5. Influence of the Mountain-water Concept on the Art of Other East Asian Countries

As an important part of China culture, the concept of mountain-water not only has a far-reaching impact on China's fine arts, but also spreads to other countries in East Asia through cultural exchanges, which has a positive impact on the local fine arts development. Table 3 lists some affected countries and their representative painters and works.

Table 3 Affected countries and their representative painters and works

Country	Representative Painter	Representative Work	Manifestation of the Influence of the Mountain-water Concept
Japan	Katsushika Hokusai	"Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji"	Utilizes Chinese landscape painting techniques and compositional principles, combining Japanese natural scenery and aesthetic tastes to form a unique Japanese landscape painting style
Korea	Kim Hong-do	"Landscape of Kangwon Province"	Incorporates Korean cultural elements and aesthetic tastes into the spirit of Chinese landscape painting, showcasing the unique charm of Korean landscape painting
Vietnam	Le Phu	"Landscape Scroll"	Draws inspiration from Chinese landscape painting techniques and artistic conception, depicting Vietnam's unique natural scenery and cultural landscapes, reflecting the universality of the mountain-water concept

5.1. Influence on Japanese Art

Chinese landscape painting has had a profound influence on Japanese art. Based on learning Chinese landscape painting techniques, Japanese artists have developed landscape paintings with Japanese characteristics by combining their natural scenery and aesthetic tastes. For example, the painter Katsushika Hokusai from the Edo period in Japan was deeply influenced by Chinese landscape painting. His work "Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji" includes paintings such as "The Great Wave off Kanagawa," demonstrating his exquisite use of Chinese landscape techniques and the integration of Japanese characteristics.

5.2. Influence on Korean Art

In Korea, the mountain-water concept has also been combined with local artistic traditions to form unique Korean landscape paintings. Korean landscape paintings emphasize the expressive power of brushwork and the harmony of composition while incorporating Korean cultural elements and aesthetic tastes. Through cultural exchanges between China and Korea, the mountain-water concept has been widely disseminated and accepted in Korea, injecting new vitality into the development of Korean art.

5.3. Influence on Vietnamese Art

Vietnamese art has also been influenced by the Chinese mountain-water concept. Vietnamese artists have gradually formed a unique landscape painting style by learning from and drawing on Chinese landscape painting. They use rich brushwork techniques and color expressions to depict Vietnam's unique natural scenery and cultural landscapes, demonstrating the universality and vitality of the mountain-water concept.

6. Conclusions

The concept of mountains and rivers is deeply rooted in traditional Chinese culture. After thousands of years of development and evolution, it has not only become an important chapter in the history of Chinese art, but also has a profound impact on the art of other East Asian countries. This article delves into the historical evolution of mountain-water concepts, their manifestation in cross-cultural communication, and their impact on traditional Chinese art and art in other East

Asian countries, revealing the rich connotations and widespread influence of mountain-water concepts.

From the perspective of historical evolution, the concept of mountain-water has gradually evolved from the initial worship of nature to an expression of aesthetics and emotions, reflecting the philosophical idea of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature. In traditional Chinese art, landscape painting has become a treasure of Chinese culture with its unique artistic form and aesthetic concept. At the same time, the concept of mountain-water also permeates multiple fields such as garden art, demonstrating its diverse artistic charm.

In cross-cultural communication, the concept of mountain-water has become an important bridge for cultural exchange among East Asian countries due to its unique cultural connotations and artistic expression. By accepting and integrating mountain-water concepts, East Asian countries such as Japan and South Korea have developed their own unique landscape painting styles, enriching the diversity of world art.

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