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# The Temporal Spirit, Expressiveness and Nationality of Contemporary Chinese Painting

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Abstract--- The relevance of the study is determined by the fact that China, like Japan, took oil painting relatively recently. Japan became closely acquainted with Western technology in the 19th century, but at that time they still imposed a taboo on oil painting, the authorities in every way prevented its spread, protecting the traditions of national art. Only the 20th century allowed new trends to finally settle down. The work shows that the understanding of the European painting technology was widely represented in the imperial Celestial Empire. The article shows that the artists did not make a big problem to learn painting skills from the Europeans (originally the Portuguese). They learned the lessons, techniques and technology of European art, despite the fact that they had never had a similar school before. Separately, it is stipulated that cooperation after the formation of the USSR played a great influence on contemporary paintings. This explains the fact that many paintings by Chinese painters are very similar to Russian school of fine art. The authors determine that the Russian style, fully perceived by the PRC, was formed collectively from the Renaissance approach, with the inclusion of impressionism motifs. The authors define the significance of the work in respecting the paintings of ancient traditions with the addition of the features of modernity, the deep integration of traditional art with modern visual techniques.

**Keywords**---China, national motive, originality, painting, style.

#### Introduction

Over the past five years, contemporary Chinese art has made a kind of "cultural revolution": unexpected tectonic shifts have occurred on the world market of painting, which previously dominated Western art for 500 years. After analyzing the results of 2900 auctions held from July 2017 to June 2018, the journalists of the English newspaper Independent made a list of 20 contemporary artists whose works are in the greatest demand on the global art market. It turned out that

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among the leaders are five from China. For example, the volume of transactions on works by Zhang Xiaogang, who took fifth place in the period under review, reached \$ 32.3 million, thereby overtaking "kitsch king Jeff Koons" (in sixth place – Zeng Fanzhi, in the seventh – Yue Minjun, in ninth and tenth – Wan Guanyi and Liu Xiaodong respectively). True, the financial tsunami has made its own adjustments to the astronomical figures of financial indicators. Still, they are no longer "catch up". This phenomenon arose on the basis of the economic and political transformations that took place in the PRC, and the relations between the artist and the market that grew stronger at the end of the twentieth century (Gao et al., 2017).

If you look at the history of Chinese painting, it is easy to see that paper and ink have dominated here for thousands of years, and the achievements of foreign colleagues by vocation were practically unfamiliar (Man, 2015). Therefore, the majority of sought-after Chinese artists who masterfully practice replicas of Western art have no idea of the way that it has been traveled by world contemporary art (Chou, 2013). Although one cannot say that Chinese pro-Western art originated in a vacuum. No matter how it was there, and for some time friendship with the USSR grew and strengthened, and the worked out methods of political propaganda using good-quality painting of social realism were not in vain (Chen, 2006). It is said that today, in the workshops, Chinese guests are happy to buy their favorite paintings of Soviet art stock: carefully written multi-figure compositions telling about the success of socialism (Brubaker & Wang, 2015).

It was as a result of the comprehension of the Tiananmen events that the main current of actual Chinese painting appeared – cynical realism, to which most popular Chinese artists in the West (Introduction to Interactive Digital Chinese Painting and Calligraphy, 2009). This detached, sarcastic rethinking of the communist past and the socialist present has found understanding among the Western public.

#### Literature review

Traditional Chinese painting, in contrast to Western art, is designated by the term gohua (national painting) (Zou et al., 2018). Guohua painting is based on artistic traditions that have been in China for more than two thousand years (Chen, 2008). Since ancient times, Chinese painting has a characteristic painting-scroll on silk or a long strip of thin paper glued onto silk fabric. The horizontal picture-scroll is usually stored in a collapsed form and it is gradually deployed in front of the viewer (Zhou, 2015). This form of the painting corresponds to the narrative character of Chinese painting (Man, 2015; Hradil et al., 2003; Oda et al., 2011). Narrow vertical scrolls serve to decorate walls (Luo et al., 2018). The artist paints ink and vegetable paints with a brush, which replaces him with a pen and a pencil (Gao, 2018). Chinese artists use different colors of mascara: light, thick and dark, sometimes they use burnt China ink or China ink the color of sea water (Zhang, 2015). The masterful use of China ink of different shades allowed artists in paintings to achieve the effect of multicolor (Gao, 2018).

In the first centuries of our era in China, a kind of diagonal line perspective solution was discovered, different from the linear perspective in the West (Gao, 2018). This decision became the law of the perspective of Chinese painting – the drawing is given either as a single line or as colorful silhouettes placed against a neutral background (Guo et al., 2017). The line in Chinese painting plays a major role (Jiang & Huang, 2004). Chinese painting was closely associated with calligraphy (Mounin, 1985). Since remote times, calligraphy has been considered an art equivalent in value to painting, and there were many different techniques and styles in it (Meng et al., 2018; Yang, 2021; Li & Huan, 2019). Almost all great artists were famous calligraphers at the same time (Zhang, 2013). Painting and calligraphy seemed to be complemented each other, and usually the Chinese picture is decorated with a calligraphic inscription.

#### **Materials and Methods**

The leading method of research was chosen method of historical perspective, which basically contains a direct method of comparing the historical development of all possible categories of art. In this work, it is used to compare and highlight transitions from one category of art to another, which allow us to trace the entire evolution.

Computer analysis of the digital method made it possible to identify features that show the commonality of all the analyzed areas of art. We believe that this method is taken more in perspective, when it will allow to fully identify common features in various fields of art (Adam-Troian et al., 2020). This will allow a more accurate historical assessment of the genesis of phenomena in culture.

## **Results and Discussion**

The origins of Chinese painting go back to the end of the Zhou period (4th-3rd centuries BC). By this time, the earliest known to us paintings on silk with the image of a woman, over whose head a dragon and a phoenix are fighting. The picture, despite some schematism, is written very expressively, realism is combined with a bizarre fantasy in it. In the paintings of the Han period (2nd century BC. E. – 2nd century BC. E.), the main place is occupied by the image of a man. According to the composition, perspective, subject, transfer of the human body, the painting of that time is closely connected with the bas-reliefs and with the stamped pattern on the bricks (Christensen & Ball, 2016; Rietzschel et al., 2007; Dumas & Dunbar, 2014).

In the III-V centuries Chinese art is entering a new phase of its development. In this era, two great painters and theorists of painting worked, who played a huge role in the development of Chinese art: Gu Kai-ji (321-379) and Xie He (5th century AD). Gu Kai-ji was famous as a portrait painter. His picture-scroll Instructions for Women' is distinguished by subtlety of the pattern, original composition, softness and elegance of colors. Gu Kai-ji believed that the main thing in painting was a man. In the image of a person the main thing is the disclosure of his spiritual content. The artist paid great attention to the composition of paintings and techniques of brushing.

The first theoretical treatise on painting "The Six Rules" was created by the portrait painter Xie He. The essence of the rules of Xie He is to ensure that in order to achieve the truth of life, the artist must master the technique of brush and line mastering. Works by the artist should be a realistic reflection of reality, and not a passive, naturalistic depiction of it. To improve the technique, one should study the works of the old masters, not blindly copying them, but catching the very essence of these works. These rules have retained their value to the present.

Buddhism from India had a strong influence on Chinese art. But Chinese masters, borrowing foreign designs, never lost their national color. They combined foreign influences with the old traditions of their art and created a new style. The main monuments of Buddhist art are cave temples-monasteries with amazing sculpture and painting. The most popular among the many monastery temples are the Cave of a Thousand Buddhas near the city of Dunhuang, named by the Russian explorer S.F. Oldenburg as the museum of Chinese Buddhist art. The paintings of the Dunhuang caves have a total length of up to 25 km. In the caves, in addition to religious compositions, you can see the military, domestic, hunting scenes, landscapes and the portrait stands out as a special genre of painting. Numerous compositions depicting pilgrims and donators introduce the life of that time.

The Tang era (618-906) is considered the 'golden age' in the history of Chinese art. When the Tang dynasty flourished a variety of genres of painting: religious painting, portrait, historical themes, everyday subjects, etc. The largest portrait painter of the Tang era was Wu Tao Tzu (700-760). Perfectly possessing the 'power of the brush', he created paintings, full of rapid movement. One of the characteristic features in Tang painting was the selection of a landscape into an independent genre. The founders of the two main schools of landscape painting are considered to be Li Si-xun (651-716) and Wang Wei (698-759). Landscapes of Li Sixun – the founder of the northern school of painting – are characterized by brightness and decorative colors, green and blue tones using a golden contour line. Representatives of the Southern School, founded by Wang Wei, are characterized by monochrome ink painting.

The Song Period (960-1279) opens another brilliant page in the history of Chinese classical painting. During this period, landscape becomes increasingly important. Song's landscape is characterized by a deep knowledge and understanding of nature. A significant role in the artistic life of that time was played by the so-called Academy of Painting. Artists of the "Academy" reproduced reality, carefully writing out even the minor elements in the picture. A member of the "Academy" was the famous landscape painter Guo Xi (1020-1090). His treatise "On the beauty of landscape painting" had a great influence on the further development of the landscape. The great landscape artists of the Song time, Ma Yuan (1190-1224) and Xia Gui (1194-1224), created a lyrical landscape. Such a landscape often leads from a strongly stressed and carefully written foreground without any transition to the distance indicated by several lines. In the Song era, along with the landscape of its higher development, the painting of flowers and birds was achieved. Portraiture at the time was of secondary importance.

In addition to painting members of the "Academy", there was a special direction Wenrenhua ('painting scientists'). It is characterized by subjectivity, narrow themes and extravagance. But at the same time, many artists of this trend achieved high craftsmanship and, in their paintings, seized the inner essence of the depicted object. The largest representatives of Wenrenhua are Mi Fu (1051 – 1107) and Su Dongpo (1036-1101).

Later, in Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) periods, Wenrenhua painting became more and more subjective, tending to accurately recreate the external form and blindly copy the old masters. Despite the fact that at that time a number of well-known artists worked, both in the landscape and in the painting of flowers and birds, the craftsmen failed to achieve the veracity of the image that was inherent in the old artists. The decline of painting, which is closely connected with the general crisis of Chinese feudal culture, intensifies in the 15th century. The revival of painting that occurred at the beginning of the 20th century is associated with the names of two of the greatest artists, Qi Baishi (1860-1957) and Xu Beihong (1895-1953), who sought to update Chinese painting while maintaining the best national traditions.

In his works, Qi Baishi managed to reflect the inner life of nature. The living beings depicted in his paintings – shrimps, crabs, crayfish, frogs, cicadas, as well as flowers and trees are drawn by lively and truthfully, with all their characteristic features. The painting of Qi Baishi absorbed the healthy traditions of folk art with their characteristic clarity, simplicity and colorfulness. In the last years of his life, the artist responded to the events of our time. He wrote the picture "The World", depicting doves, resting among the flowers.

The remarkable innovative artist Xu Beihong developed his own distinctive style, enriched modern Chinese art. Xu Beihong worked in various genres. He is known as an animalist; his landscapes enjoy the deserved success. He masterfully painted portraits of his contemporaries, created historical paintings. Interestingly, its symbolic composition 'The Night Before the Storm,' written in 1937, when the Chinese people rose up to fight against the Japanese aggressors. The picture allegorically expresses the national rise in China in this period. In the latest works of Xu Beihong, his ardent desire to reflect the rich reality is one.

One of the best works of the revived traditional painting is also a large composition "Refugees", created by the famous artist Jiang Zhaohe. Showing the suffering and distress caused to the people by the Japanese military, the picture gave birth to high patriotism. Trying to create a new art artist abandon the conventionality of old painting. The main features in the works are truthfulness characteristic of the classical art of China.

In 1956, the institutes of Chinese national painting were created in Beijing and Shanghai. Since 1957, the magazine "Fine Arts" began to be published. Artists use national traditions in their works, developing and summarizing them on the basis of modernity. Theme of construction is often found in the Guohua artists' paintings. Picture by Guan Shapiyue "New Highway" (1954) shows the creative work of people – conquerors of nature. Pan Yun's Scroll "Restoration of the Dam

of the Large Canal" contains many human figures and a wide expanse of landscape.

Contemporary Chinese artists continue the best traditions of painting flowers and birds (Halinen & Törnroos, 2005; Dann, 2010). There are paintings full of lyrical mood (for example, "Wild Ducks on a Moonlit Night" by Wang Yufu, "Birds in the Spring on an Apricot Branch" by Yu Fen-An). Modern landscape painting is characterized by a bright colorful range. In the works of landscape painter Lee Kejen, traditional convention is combined with direct observation of nature.

In recent years, oil painting, which appeared at the beginning of the 20th century, has received significant development in China. There appeared oil-painted historical-revolutionary paintings, reflecting the stages of the struggle of the Chinese people for their independence. Modern Chinese Engraving is closely related to life, it is militant, politically active. The prints are dominated by bright colors, and they are characterized by a special emotional sound, characteristic of revolutionary Chinese art. As in the painting of Guohua, the Chinese masters inherit the best traditions of the old Chinese engraving and at the same time perceive everything progressive and useful in the art of foreign countries.

Chinese engraving exists either in the form of book illustrations, or as woodblock printing Nian Hua (literally "New Year's picture"). This name comes from the custom to decorate New Year's Eve walls and doors of dwellings with woodblock printing. It was believed that the popular prints depicting a rich harvest, children, the connection of coins playing goldfish (a symbol of peace and happiness) will bring happiness and prosperity to the house in the coming year. The composition was often narrative in nature: the plot took place in space and time. Often explanatory inscriptions were made to the illustrations and popular prints.

The earliest dated woodcut found in Dunhuang dates back to 868. From the 9th c. woodcutting with its simple technique began to grow rapidly in China. Engravings, illustrated dramas, short stories, scientific treatises, etc., appeared in the Song period. Early Nianhua samples belong to this time. In the Ming period engraving reaches its greatest development. The most important centers for the production of engravings at that time were: Beijing, Nanjing, Jianyang (Fujian province), Xinyani (Anhui Province). In connection with the existence of various centers of woodcutting, there is a variety of styles of engravings (Pennycook et al., 2012; Parker et al., 2007). The most perfect Minsk prints were made in Xinyan. In these engravings masters managed to achieve beauty of lines, completeness of composition and fidelity of images. At the end of the Ming period, color prints appear. Known five-color prints, giving the impression of drawing. On the splints of Ming time not only deities are depicted, but also legendary beauties and heroes.

During the Qing dynasty, the main woodcut center was Beijing. In the second half of the XVIII century. Under the influence of the missionaries, mixed Chinese-European prints appear. Theme lubok greatly expanded in the XIX century; popular prints appear on legends and dramas, popular prints depicting women and children, popular prints depicting landscapes, flowers and birds, popular prints in the form of genre scenes, New Year's welcome popular prints.

In the second half of the XIX century engraving and lubok propaganda character reflecting the struggle of the Chinese people for independence were developed. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, due to the proliferation of cheaper printing methods – lithographic and photomechanical, the art of woodcutting declined. It was revived only in a few decades.

After the movement on May 4, 1919, the engraving becomes the weapon of the proletariat in its struggle and occupies a leading place in the work of revolutionary artists. In 1930, artists close to the proletariat united in the League of Left-wing Artists. He did a lot for the revival of woodcuts. He encouraged the development of illustrative graphics, seeing in it one of the means of enlightenment and organization of the masses, and widely promoted the work of Soviet engravers. The war against the Japanese invaders became a military school in which the art of engraving developed and strengthened. Lubok this time also became an effective weapon of political agitation.

After the formation of the PRC, serial paintings and popular prints on contemporary themes began to be produced in large numbers. Among the old masters of engraving, Gu Yuan is very popular. Gu Yuan brings together an engraving with a poster, seeking to devote his work to the demands of the day. A series of engravings by Gu Yuan is dedicated to the exploits of the People's Liberation Army. His landscapes are distinguished by sincerity and warmth.

Currently, New Year's splint not only serves as a festive decoration, but also plays an agitational role. He continues to maintain the brilliance, brightness, generalization and availability of images. It is characterized by a variety of topics. Lubok became the most popular and favorite art form, its circulation reaches 200 million copies a year. It should be noted, however, that in recent years, the splint has lost some of its specificity and tradition, so popular before.

Picture books are very popular in modern China. Small in size, with a color cover, they contain drawings that are accompanied by extremely simple text. Picture books acquaint readers with classical and modern literature. Picture books appeared about forty years ago. At first, they were primitive in form and often reflected reactionary ideas. Currently, their artistic level is growing noticeably. The most famous picture books illustrated by artist Li Jiyu. This is a "Letter with Cock Feathers" and "Teacher Dunga". Some picture books with a large number of illustrations (sometimes more than a thousand) are created by a group of artists. Political caricature was born after the 1911 revolution. The early caricatures depicted political figures guilty of blaming the peasantry, as well as embezzlement, militarist and ministerial squabbles. Revolutionary caricaturists combined their activities with propaganda work and created the grotesque images of Chiang Kai-shek and his associates. Numerous caricaturists in modern China respond to events in international life and ridicule the backwardness and old remnants kept in everyday life.

The art of the poster appeared recently. This mass propaganda art grew during the liberation struggle of the Chinese people. In 1948-1949, the artists began to issue posters about the successes of the People's Liberation Army. At present,

posters are being posted at enterprises and in villages with an appeal to increase labor productivity, improve product quality, etc.

Usually, the composition of the poster consists of one or two main figures expressing the basic idea of the poster. The language of the poster is so figurative that the inscriptions on it are often superfluous. In his treatise "Lunyuy" Confucius, speaking of beauty ("Shao"), defines its essence in this way: "That which is extraordinarily beautiful is not yet extremely virtuous." The philosopher professed the idea of a balance of integrity and beauty, and in painting he also noted: "After painting, everything returns to its original color." In other words, he focused on the fact that all the rules and laws of painting determine the initial "color" of the moral and ethical form.

The aesthetic ideas of Confucianism are fully revealed in the principles of "ritual" (rules of conduct) and "beauty", the achievement of which by man lies through the education of "humanity" and virtues through self-improvement of "noble person". It is noteworthy that Confucius himself and his followers, such as Men Ji, Dong Zhong Shu, Zhu Xi and others were supporters of the idea of active "entering the world" with its "ritual" and demands for continuous improvement of human nature through cognition and, it is important to note, skill. The word "skill" in those times united the names of six arts: calligraphy (including painting), shooting, riding, counting, ceremony and music. In the search for and striving for perfection, a person (it was, of course, about the elite of the then society, including "scholars") must rely on honesty, rely on humanity and plunge into art, and also compose music based on poetry. Only in this way can the Confucian standard of "humane perfect man" be achieved, which, by the way, was the only one that had the right to evaluate works of art.

The merit of introducing the Confucian model of educating a person into the sphere of aesthetics belongs to Men-Tzu, who in particular considered: "One must desire beauty, and then this will lead to sincerity and further to beauty." In other words, such inner qualities of a person as mercy, humanity, "loving heart", which outwardly manifest themselves in life-affirmation and, while being improved, are conditioned by the desire for beauty.

The level of the artistic form is the level at which the active production of symbol carriers, significant elements relative to established cultural codes, takes place. This is a kind of melting pot that constantly enriches the visual culture. This is the level at which color, tonal, plastic, rhythmic, compositional tasks are solved to create an artistic image. Here, the sign level can be a line, a stroke, a combination of colors, a ratio of volumes, texture, etc. These are the signs that S. Kh. Rappoport calls inspired, which affect the emotional level of perception. At this level, art can converge with literature (plot compositions) or with music (impressionism). Plato believed that painting and sculpture to a greater degree imitate nature, and music is more capable of expressing the soul. He is right in some way. In music, the lack of direct similarity with nature represents a pure structure, an aesthetic form, but in fact an aesthetic form is present in painting and sculpture, only it is less obvious in subject visual arts, since it is built from knowable things, and you need to have special skills for her perception. In

painting, the external similarity with nature blinds, but it does not affect the soul of the viewer, but the art form.

It is important to emphasize that the artistic image carries information that we sometimes cannot directly see, since the individual elements of the image are interconnected at the level of ideas. Yu. M. Lotman highlights that for an artist who breaks with the naive realism of empirical thinking, the subject of the image is not individual things, but a system of relations between the phenomena depicted among themselves and the author to their totality.

The portrait is a special semiotic structure with its inherent features, due to the fact that the portrait is a genre in which the subject of artistic knowledge is the human individuality. The portrait suggests individual similarity, but this main feature introduces a significant contradiction into the portrait genre. The portrait combines the artistic and extra-artistic, documentary function, but the extra-artistic content, according to the laws of artistic creation, becomes artistic. Yu. M. Lotman considered the portrait as the most philosophical in its nature genre of painting, since the portrait "is built on a comparison of what a person is and what a person should be." This, the scientist emphasizes, "allows us to read the portrait in different ways: we can see the features of people of a particular era in it, psychological or etiquette differences of female and male behavior, social tragedies, various embodiments of the concept of a person". The portrait genre embodies various possibilities of revealing the essence of man by means of interpreting its face.

As a work of fine art, the portrait, on the one hand, writes Yu. M. Lotman, "serves as documentary evidence of the person's identity and image" and, in this case, it is ahead of the function of photography. At the same time, the art value of the portrait is completely different: in the artistry, which mysteriously affects the viewer, causing aesthetic experiences, and has the ability through them to have a transforming effect on the person who perceives. The usual similarity – the main condition for the existence of the portrait genre in the visual arts is inferior to the art image. As a result, the portrait in the ordinary sense of the word turns into an artistic portrait.

A special attraction of visual art is like in any art embodies the state of the human spirit. The portrait is the most clearly demonstrated it. The subject of visual activity is not in the image of something, but in the art of transforming a person's consciousness, which is reflected in German etymology: Bild – "image"; Bilder – "enlighten, educate". In ancient Egypt, visual activity was painted by the word "birth", and the master or sculptor called "the one who makes alive".

Breathing life into a work, making you feel the living soul of the person being portrayed is the task of any portrait painter. An example of this is the search for the famous sculptor S. T. Konenkov in solving the sculptural portrait of the outstanding composer J.S. Bach. The artist set a goal for which the composer's lifetime traditional ceremonial portraits were not suitable because of lacking life and soul. For him, Bach was a living embodiment of music, and he dreamed of expressing his admiration for this miracle. He looked for the means to mold the

"symbol of music". Johann Sebastian Bach was such a symbol for Konenkov. But he could only comprehend the elevated image of the composer when he was doing other work when sculpted blind people. In their detachment from the vainness of the visible world, he found something in common with Bach's immersion into the world of musical harmonies. Therefore, the composer's eyes are closed in his work. From the semiotic viewpoint, it is not at all easy to determine to what type of signs the Bach closed eyes should be attributed. It may seem like an index mark or a sign (which is the same). Let's try to understand this in detail.

An inexperienced viewer does not always understand how rich a portrait can be. As A. G. Tsires notes, a portrait depicting a personality can turn into an image of the world through a personality. This image also has a landmark nature. Thus, the sailor's gaze into the distance allows us to see the sea's distance, and frowning eyebrows paint these further into Menacing coloring (index marks). The expression of intentions, emphasizes A. G. Tsires, can be any part of the body that "speaks", smiling lips, clenched fist hand. In the described comprehension of the world through personality there is one feature.

This also applies to the portrait, which as a genre of fine art has its long and interesting history, for example, in the frescoes of ancient Egypt, Assyro-Babylonia, Greece, the human face as an individual face is still missing. The artist depicted the body, but the face was replaced by a mask, the portrait researcher M.M. Tarabukin emphasized.

The fact that the source of the portrait in a mask, in a sculptural imprint of a human face, which was removed from the deceased (possibly with the purpose of a sacral ritual), is indicated by the so-called Fayum portraits, which were written in full size on the plates placed in the mummy's swaddling clothes in that place, where the face should be. These portraits were attached to the mummy's face so that from the bandages, as from a window, looked like the realistically depicted face of the deceased. This created the illusion of a real being, but, as B. Whipper notes, that there was still no individuality in the portrait image, it was just a disguised deception.

What signs allowed the scientist to draw such conclusions? What testifies to the fact that Fayum portraits are an arrangement of a sculptural mask into a language of pictorial form? These are signs that are important to an art history researcher, such as being too long or too wide, but always like splayed faces (as in Mycenaean gold masks), the poverty of shadows that would give the head a convex shape. Even more about the lack of individuality tells the researcher the inner character of the Fayum portraits. The center of the image in them – huge eyes. They amaze the viewer with their size and expressiveness. Only in them the artist sought to embody the liveliness of the human face, they are hidden in them, according to Whipper, and the deception of individuality and spirituality, which old and new viewers succumbed to.

So, Fayum portraits say today's man is much more than the ancient artist wanted to say. By B. Whipper's definition, they constitute one of the stages in the gradual "conquest of man by painting". The artist becomes freer and deeper in the manifestation of creativity, he masters "the matter of the eye and its inner,

original expression." In reality, however, a portrait appeared only when a person learned to imitate another and to recognize in another expression of his inner life but this could not happen until the man recognized his own face.

The portrait of Genghis Khan from the Imperial Portrait Gallery in Beijing is also rather a conditional ideal image of a ruler than a reliable portrait, although the researchers believe that he is closer than other portraits to reality. Here, Genghis Khan has red hair, which indicates that among his ancestors were representatives of the Caucasian race.

No less important component of the formation of the philosophical basis of Chinese culture, painting including, was Taoism, which, in contrast to the Confucian principle of "active entry into life", saw the main thing in "deepening (immersion) in nature" and "liberation from earthly suffering." One can comprehend the essence of Being, Tao (literally – the way) through "deep contemplation", "sitting in oblivion"; only by eradicating all external barriers can one comprehend the upper limits of Tao — this root of birth and existence of all things. Hence follows the Taoist interpretation of beauty, which, at first glance, seems paradoxical: beauty is in the excessive effect of "formlessness", the essence of beauty "in the "inaction".

The aesthetic opinion of Chan Buddhism is based on the "shade of cold and loneliness" inherent in the "Chan sphere." "By preferring the sphere of the spirit, you can strengthen your heart, and then it can accommodate the sun, moon, stars, earth, mountains and rivers." Chan Buddhism became, therefore, a peculiar religion for Chinese society, which, like Christianity, nourished art, spiritually stimulated its development, influenced the formation of a model of aesthetic perception of painting and the evaluation of concrete canvases. First hand, the main criteria for beautiful craftsmanship (as detailed below), and on the other – the most important principles of aesthetic perception of works of art, their evaluation criteria, among which an important place occupied by the moral and ethical component.

When depicting a person, one should first master the art of calligraphy and painting, where the minimum is to learn to hold a brush, and the maximum is to appreciate the style, to shape it. It is extremely important to come from the direct perception of specific characters with their visual forms – appearance, manners, temperament features, etc. – to a generalized, abstract, not having a specific form. That is what Qin Yuan An meant when comparing imperial calligraphy with "the sound of a song on a picturesque bridge, where a person with a blame (musical instrument) leaves insignificant."

This combination of aesthetic perception with abstract opinion contributed to the progress in the evaluation of works of art and the development of the artistic theory itself. It should be added that the above criteria for portrait painting ("jin") were also applied to the depiction of the natural world.

An analysis of the critical model of painting of this period would be incomplete without referring to the views of another prominent scholar of that time, Yao Zui. Comparing the views of the two outstanding theorists of the "transfer of a live

image" Xie He and Yao Zui, it can be concluded that they both had a great influence on the development of subsequent art criticism, although they differed regarding the criteria for evaluating paintings. Xie He, as already noted, gave primary importance to the embodiment of the complex laws of painting, but Yao Zui did not attach so much importance to the full compliance with the "six laws." He focused primarily on the "direction of thought", on the "expression of the idea" (xi i). In his opinion, the "six laws" of Xie He condemn the assessment of the style of paintings, preferring only those works that are written in an "exquisite style" (gong bi) by dignitaries of art, the academic elite of the time, or even by the powers that be ("painting of learned men"). Interestingly, the object of critical attention of both scientists was the work of Gu Kaizhi. On the basis of the "six laws," Xie He believed that the artist's portrait painting did not "reach out" to the highest — the first — group in the gradation of the "gun bi" style, deserving only the third. But, according to Yao Zui, no one can compare with him. "Gu Kaizhi has reached the heights of skill, he is boldly moving forward, from the age and still no one can compare with him.'

Considering the height of the artist's creative edge to be beyond the reach of mediocrity, Yao Zui called his paintings "divine." When arguing with the "six laws" of Xie He, Yao Zui noticed that even the "immortals" could not satisfy these laws. He also came to the logical conclusion that he still had not lost its relevance: "Having studied the external nature to perfection, you can recreate thoughts." Xie He himself was an outstanding artist of his time and tried in his work to be guided by all six laws, believing that it was impossible to achieve a high level of work, heading towards transmitting the spirituality of the content, but not complying with other principles.

The painting "huaniao hua" ("flowers-birds") represents one of the main directions of the traditional fine arts of China. For more than a thousand years, works in the "huaniao hua" genre most clearly and fully embody the national philosophical, aesthetic and ideological views, which were formed under the influence of Confucianism, Taoism, and Chan Buddhism. The paintings created in this genre are the property of the artistic culture of the Chinese people. Being a kind of link of modernity and one of the subtlest manifestations of medieval pantheism, associated with the deification and poetization of nature, this genre is based on a solid foundation of traditions.

In modern China, the genre of "huaniao hua", as a model of classical traditions, is given much attention. Special programs are being created aimed at popularizing and studying the traditions of this unique genre. Its foundations are taught in fine art school circles, and they promote the television programs of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. In art schools of all levels, a department has been opened giving vocational education in the specialty "painting huaniao hua", an association of painting "huaniao hua" has been created, headed by the leading master of this genre, professor of the National Academy of Arts in Hangzhou He Shui Fa, works which in the summer of 2010 were exhibited in the halls of the Lviv Museum of Ethnography and Arts and Crafts of the National Academy of Sciences of the Russian Federation, and He Shui Fa was elected an honorary professor of the National Academy of Arts.

#### Conclusion

Studying the philosophical basis of Chinese painting and the sources of its aesthetic essence, it should first of all be emphasized that it, like other types of fine art, in a concise form reflects the philosophical, aesthetic and moral-psychological principles of the traditional Chinese worldview in its various manifestations and forms. It is well known that the traditional Chinese mentality was formed on the basis of Confucian teachings. Together with Taoism and Buddhism, it created this trinity in the Chinese public consciousness in the aesthetic perception of works of art, in terms of their beauty and value in particular.

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