

Chinese Painting in Contrast with Western Painting and Their Mutual Influence Since the Seventeenth Century

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Abstract

Chinese and Western painting represent two entirely different trends in the world history of fine arts. They differ from each other not only in art style but also in the artists' painting skills. Chinese classic paintings focus on the vivification of a conception but not the true image of the scene or object in the picture. That is to say, the focus is not a physical resemblance but a more refined and spiritual resemblance of what has been painted. As a result, no matter whether they are painted in color or in black and white, the persons, objects or landscapes in the pictures are often unrealistic or even out of proportion and scale. On the other hand, the western classic paintings stress the creation of real and lively images of the objects or people in the picture. And they are often marked with the effect of light and shade and the contrast of color and size, whether in oil or in water color, resulting in a "true to life" style (Shen, 1996, p.277). But these two entirely different paintings have influenced each other in the history of their respective development. Chinese painting and western painting began to have close contact since the seventeenth century. They influenced each other to a certain extent. This essay discusses the difference between Chinese painting and western painting in respect of medium, painting techniques (line, color, shade, perspective, basic training), possibility of correction, subject-matter, philosophy, style and the relationship with the literati. Western influence on Chinese painting since the seventeenth century was limited whereas Chinese influence on western art since the seventeenth century was mainly embodied in the Rococo art.

Keywords: Chinese painting, painting medium, shade, color, perspective, Chinese literati painting

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The material basis of Chinese painting and western painting is different. The characteristics of Chinese painting are closely bound up with the nature of the medium. Chinese painters use a pointed-tipped brush made of hair of goat, deer, or wolf set in a shaft of bamboo. Thus the brush is very soft. The basic material of Chinese painting is black ink. Chinese ink is a wonderful substance, capable of an immense range and an extraordinary beauty of tone. On the contrary western painters use a flat, hard brush of uniform length. The basic material of western painting is colored oil or watercolor. Thus comes the name oil painting. A Chinese painter usually paints on a length of silk or a sheet of paper, the surface of which is very absorbent, thus allowing no erasure or correction. A western painter usually paints on a piece of cloth or on the wall. Western painting’s different technique makes erasure possible.

Since the medium used by Chinese and western painters is different, their respective

painting skills and techniques are consequently different. In the use of line, color, shade, perspective and in the basic training for beginners, Chinese painting forms a sharp contrast with Western painting.

The biggest difference between Chinese painting and western painting is the use of lines. Since Chinese painting uses the same instrument as Chinese calligraphy, Chinese painting is closely related with calligraphy. Chinese painting has the same source with calligraphy. Although painting and calligraphy have been separated in their long development in China, their spirits are the same. Chinese calligraphy is an art of pure lines. Therefore in Chinese painting line is very important. The expressive technique of Chinese painting adopts in a large part the brush-using method of Chinese calligraphy. That is the reason why in China painting pictures is often called writing pictures. When painting on a plane, the three fundamental factors are dot, line and plane. Only line can express the movement and rhythm. So line is very important to Chinese paintings. Line is the key element in Chinese painting. While in classic western painting, pure lines are seldom used (not including modern painting). Limited by the western painting instrument, western painters smear flatly or paint dryly. Not until the impressionist school appeared did Western painting begin to use lines and strokes. But the change of lines is much less than in Chinese painting. The abundant use of lines is the biggest merit of Chinese painting. And it is also the quintessence of Chinese painting (Sun, 1999).

In accordance with this intense attention upon lines Chinese painters have paid much attention to the use of the brush. There are three levels to use the brush. The first is to trace (miao), the second is to paint (hua), the third is to write (xie). These three ways have big difference between them. When tracing, the brush has no light or heavy forces. And the picture is not powerful. When painting, the brush has forces but has no rhythm. When writing, the brush has forces that are differentiated by slowness and rapidness, lightness and heaviness. The written picture is very powerful and rhythmic and the picture is of the highest quality (Sun, 1999). Thus

writing is the highest level of using the brush. When writing pictures, the vital linear rhythms of the brush helps to form the spirit-consonance of pictures, or, the Qiyun of pictures. And Qiyun is one of the basic requirements of Chinese painting.

The fundamental requirements of a Chinese painting were first set down in writing by the painter and critic Xie He (A. D. 500) of South Qi of the Five Dynasties. In the short preface to his classified list of still earlier masters, he set forth his celebrated “six principles”: spirit-consonance and life-movement; the “bone method” in the use of the brush; conformity to the shapes of objects in nature; conformity to their colors; care in placing and arranging the elements in the composition; transmission of the tradition by copying past models (Sullivan, 1964, p.198). Later critics and theorists emphasized one aspect or another, but all were agreed upon the fundamental importance of the first, spirit-consonance (Qiyun). Its precise meaning is hard to explain. It may simply be said that it concerns the vital cosmic spirit or breath (Qi) to which the painter must attune himself (yun) if he is to be able to express the life and movement, or perhaps life-in-movement, that is manifest in nature. This vitality is conveyed by means of the second principle, the structural strength and tension of the brush-stroke, implied by the apt use of the “bone” image, that painting and calligraphy share in common (Sullivan, 1964, p.198).

Another big difference between Chinese and western painting is the appliance of color. Chinese painting mainly uses black and white. Although color is sometimes added to make the effect more true to life, the ink-drawing remains almost always the foundation of the design. Color is not a formal element in the design in Chinese art as in western art. In fact Chinese painting has evolved from splendid colors to black and white. This phenomenon is very rare in the world. Only Chinese painting has such a feature. Chinese painting before the Song dynasty is characterized by different colors. This can be proved by the murals in Dunhuang (Sun, 1999). At that time, pictures were mainly painted on walls or on silk. Later with the appearance of paper, it became very convenient to paint on paper, so paper was widely used. The paper was made in

the city of Xuan in Anhui, so it was called Xuan paper. This kind of paper was very white, soft and absorbent. It was much more convenient than silk. But since the paper was too thin and soft, it was not suitable for spreading thick and heavy colors. Since then Chinese painting has turned to use black ink on white paper. It has become an art to leave blank on the paper while painting with black ink. This evolution from splendid colors to black and white is very scientific and it agrees with the principle of colorology. As we all know, the colors black and white are the two poles of colors. In the solar spectrum, red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple are only middle colors. Black and white are the fundamental colors of all colors. In respect of color the highest standard of aesthetics is black and white. Chinese painting accords with this aesthetics standard. The ancient Chinese people took black and white as yin and yang. Therefore “black upon white” has become the color view of Chinese painting (Sun, 1999). In contrast with this, Western painting pay much attention to the use of variant colors in their paintings. Color is the key element in western painting, just as line is the key element in Chinese painting.

Chinese painting differs much from western painting also in the use of shade and perspective. In western painting shade is very important. Shade helps to express the effect of light. It can make the painted object more real and stereoscopic. But in Chinese painting there is no shade. And the Chinese painters didn't think shade necessary in ancient times when they began to have contact with western art. They even regarded shade harmful. When the British envoy Lord Macartney offered a portrait of oil painting to the Qing emperor, a Chinese official pointed out that the picture's shady rendering on the nose was a “stain” on the otherwise perfect artwork (Shen,1996, p.281).

The view toward perspective forms a sharp contrast between Chinese and western artists. Chinese painting adopts shifting perspective, or rather, Chinese painting has no perspective. On the contrary western painting always has a certain perspective. Perspective is essential in western painting. The apparent lack of perspective in Chinese painting is bound up with the desire to

avoid a complete or finite statement about objects or scenes. If perspective means the delineation of forms on a flat surface as they would appear to a viewer standing at a fixed point, then Chinese painting indeed has no perspective. The Chinese painters object to the principle of one-point perspective because it sets arbitrary limits to the power of the artist to embrace the whole. Most characteristic of Chinese landscape painting in all periods is what might be called a continuous perspective, which shifts horizontally in the hand-scroll and vertically in the hanging scroll, so that the view of each successive area is correct to the eye directly opposite that point. By thus avoiding a fixed viewpoint, and by the subtle placing in his panorama of a winding mountain path, a ferry, perhaps a tea-house, and a few small figures, the painter not only creates the illusion of an actual landscape, but he also cunningly invites the readers to explore it (Sullivan, 1964, p.195). In accordance with this shifting perspective, Chinese paintings are usually in the form of hanging scrolls or of horizontal scrolls, in both cases normally kept rolled up. The latter paintings, often of great length, are unrolled bit by bit and enjoyed as a reader enjoys reading a manuscript. A succession of pictures is presented, though the composition is continuous. Thus, in the case of landscape, for which this form has been used with felicity, one seems to be actually passing through the country depicted (Zhao, 1998, p.1).

But perspective is very important to western painting. Western artists often paint picture from a certain angle. Shifting perspective is utterly impossible to them. So they didn't appreciate this lack of perspective. Matteo Ricci, whose account of Chinese civilization in general is remarkable for its penetration and accuracy, severely criticized Chinese painting. He commented that Chinese painters "know nothing of the art of painting in oil or of perspective in their pictures, with the result that their productions are likely to resemble the dead rather than the living" (Sullivan, 1964, p.167).

On the other hand, ancient Chinese painters and critics disapproved the western application of the principle of one-point perspective. The eleventh-century critic Shen Kua wrote

that “This (one-point perspective) is absurd, all landscapes have to be viewed from the angle of totality to behold the part... If we apply this method to the painting of mountains, we are unable to see more than one layer of the mountain at one time. How could we then see the totality of its unending ranges?...” Shen Kua thought that the one-point perspective set arbitrary limits to the power of the artist to embrace the whole (Sullivan, 1964, p.195).

Since Chinese and western painting techniques are so different from each other, the basic training for respective beginners is also not the same. In western painting the basic training is called “sketch”. In sketch single color is used, mainly black and white. Black and white are divided into three tones and nine color stages. The three tones are bright tone, middle tone and dark tone. Each tone is divided respectively into three tones: bright, middle and dark. Thus come the nine color stages. The beginners shall observe the object closely. They are required to know the right size and proportion of objects. They have to learn to use shade and perspective in their sketches. In China the basic training for beginners is called Bai-miao, which means pure drawing. Whereas in sketch the drawer needs to observe the object’s form, light and shade, in Bai-miao the drawer needs to observe and draw the object’s outline with the method of “double-drawing”(Sun, 1999). And it is not required to apply shade and perspective to the picture. But just as in sketch, the color used in Bai-miao is black and white. Although the method is different, the aim of Sketch and Bai-miao is to train the beginners’ hand and eye.

Therefore we can see that Chinese painting and western painting employ different techniques. As a result, there is another difference between them in the process of painting. Chinese painting admits no correction whereas Western painting admits correction. Western painters spread pigments on cloth layer by layer. Each layer is a little different from the former layer. In this case, correction is admitted. The painter can correct his painting until he is satisfied. But for a Chinese painter, he must know beforehand what he intends to do. He closely observes and stores his observations in his memory. He conceives his design, and having completed the

mental image of what he intends to paint, he transfers it swiftly and with sure strokes to the paper or silk. It is said that in a master's work the idea is present even where the brush has not passed. This, however, demands confidence, speed, and a mastery of technique acquired by long practice (Zhao. 1998, p.1).

In respect of subject-matter, Chinese painting presents a striking contrast with western painting. Landscape is often accounted the most important of all subjects in Chinese painting. Landscape painting includes man and all living things. In it, the whole is greater than the part. Flowers, birds, mountains and lakes are quite as important as human figures. While in western countries they have Christian themes, in China we have Buddhist themes and the stories of Taoist legend and the fairy tales. Unlike western art, among the typical themes of Chinese art there is usually no place for war, violence, the nude, death, or martyrdom. Nor is inanimate matter ever painted for its own sake. In Chinese painting, the very rocks and streams are felt to be alive. They are visible manifestations of the invisible forces of the universe. Usually, no theme would be accepted in Chinese painting that was not inspiring, noble and refreshing. And there is not the Chinese artistic tradition for an art of pure form divorced from content. And the Chinese cannot conceive of a work of art of which the form is beautiful while the subject matter is unedifying. The Chinese painter's aim is always to present a view of the world that is satisfying and spiritually refreshing. Consequently only themes which carry this message would be considered worthy of his brush. He would regard with horror the rapes, executions, and massacres which westerners are trained to contemplate as works of art; for to him the form and content of art is indivisible. Westerners have the ability to admire color, form, and composition in a picture without being in any way affected by distasteful subject-matter. Mr. Michael Sullivan thinks that this ability implies, "if not a corrupt view of the world, then at least a dangerously fragmented one" (Sullivan, 1964, p.196). As for western painting, it often employs religious themes in which there is both pleasant and unpleasant things.

So from the subject-matter employed by both paintings, it can be seen that Chinese painting is closely related with nature. Then what is the philosophy behind it? To find the answer it is necessary to trace the origin of Chinese painting. In early times, such as the Shang and Zhou dynasties, Chinese paintings were made chiefly for sacrifices to Heaven and to the spirits of clan ancestors, who were believed to influence the living for good. At the same time, one of the aims of Chinese philosophy and religion is to discover the workings of the universe and to attune man's actions to them. Therefore Chinese society has always laid great stress on the need for man to understand the pattern of nature and to live in accordance with it. The world of nature was seen as the visible manifestation of the workings of the Great Ultimate through the generative interaction of the yin-yang dualism. As this view developed, the purpose of Chinese painting turned from propitiation and sacrifice to the expression of man's understanding of various forces of the universe through the painting of landscape, bamboo, birds and flowers. A Chinese painting, therefore, not only embodies the visible forms and forces of nature, but also displays the painter's understanding of their operation. His purpose is to present the subtle and complex forces of nature as harmoniously interacting, to show man in his true relationship to the universe, and to convey the life that is in all things by means of the springing vitality of his brushwork. In this sense every picture, however slight, is a generalized philosophical, or rather metaphysical statement, even though it may be inspired by a particular place or memory. For the painter is not concerned with individual events, or with the accidents of time and place. This generalization, or apparent detachment is quite different from the passionate attachment to visible objects that people can find in western painters such as Rembrandt, Chardin, or Van Gogh (Sullivan, 1964, p.194).

Thus it can be justly concluded that the style of Chinese painting is symbolic, for everything that is painted reflects some aspect of a totality of symbols of a more specific kind. Bamboo suggests the spirit of the scholar, which can be broken by circumstances but never bent.

Jade symbolizes purity and indestructibility. The dragon is the wholly benevolent symbol of the emperor. The crane, the symbol of long life. The lily symbolizes Christianity, a symbol of purity. The plum, which blossoms even in the snow, stands for constancy. And the pine tree represents the unconquerable spirit of old age (Zhao, 1998, p.3). On the contrary, it can be roughly concluded that style of western painting is realistic. Western painting pursuits realness and liveliness of the objects or the people in the picture. Its “true to life” style determines that it should be realistic. Of course in the long development of Western painting, there appear other schools of painting, such as impressionist school, abstract school, fauvism, expressionism, cubism, futurism, dadaism and surrealism etc. But the fundamental spirit of western painting is realistic.

Another important feature of Chinese painting is that it is unseparably associated with literature and other arts, such as poetry and calligraphy. The painter’s carefully placed signature, inscription (often of a poem) and seals are an integral part of the composition. Many of the painters were poets; some, like Wang Wei (699-759 A. D.), equally distinguished in both arts. Consequently a painter means more to the Chinese than to the westerners (Zhao, 1998, p.3). Western painting has not such intimate relationship with poetry and calligraphy. In fact, many of the Chinese painters are scholar elite. They practice painting as a pastime rather than as a profession. Scroll painting is traditionally produced for the exclusive intellectual elite. The Chinese elite painters lock themselves in their own circles, leaving the decorative art and religious murals to the “folk-artists”. Thus the special Chinese literati painting (Wenren Hua) gradually comes into being in Chinese painting history. The tradition of scholarly painting flourished in China in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Chinese literati painting attaches great importance to the painter’s moral quality. For a Chinese painter, painting is the concrete expression of his moral integrity and the reflection of his inner feelings. Thus if a painter has not good moral quality, his painting would never reach

a high level. The great scholar Mr. Cheng Yingke once said in his article “The Value of Literary Painting” that the level of a literary man’s painting is determined by four factors, first, personality or moral quality; second, learning; third, artistic talent; fourth, thought. If one can achieve these four things, his painting is sure to reach a high level (Sun, 1999). Thus during different times in Chinese history painters always pay much attention to the cultivation of their moral characters.

Since the seventeenth century Chinese painting and Western painting began to have closer contact than before. They influenced each other in both technique and style. However, Western influence on Chinese painting was not great at that time. In Mr. Sullivan’s opinion, any foreign idea, form, or technique that reaches China has had to reckon with the formidable strength and unity of the Chinese artistic tradition itself. On a superficial level she has always been ready to borrow from abroad. On a deeper level, elements of foreign art have been appropriated only when they fulfilled a need which could not be supplied by China herself (Sullivan, 1964, p.229). Since Chinese painters regarded their art an integrate one, they absorbed little from western painting.

When the Jesuits introduced European painting in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, court painters and craftsmen admired these new techniques. The Italian painter Giuseppe Castiglione (1688-1766) served as a court painter in the Qing Dynasty. He was able to combine his western painting skills with the Chinese style. He learned how to use the Chinese painting brush and pigments to paint on tough-silk scrolls, while still employing the western techniques such as shade and perspective (Shen, 1996, p.280). At the same time he introduced these Western skills to the court and the painting circle in China. Yet although the followers of Castiglione applied western perspective and shading to their paintings with laborious charm, Chinese painters looked upon these attainments as mere technical tricks (Sullivan, 1964, p.230). The eighteenth-century court painter Tsou I-kuei disregarded western perspective. He was the

court artist to the emperor Qian-long. While Europe accused China of a total lack of perspective, as mentioned earlier in this essay, Tsou was criticizing the Jesuit painters for a slavish adherence to such technical tricks. “Even if they attain perfection”, he commented, ‘it is mere craftsmanship. Thus foreign painting cannot be called art’ (Sullivan, 1964, p.167). At that time the Chinese literati completely ignored these techniques. Wu Li (1632-1718 A. D.) was one of the six great masters of the Qing Dynasty. He was the only important Chinese painter who became a Christian convert. Although he was in close touch with the Jesuits and spent the last twenty years of his life as a Catholic missionary, yet his landscape painting showed not the slightest hint of European influence (Sullivan, 1964, p.230). Wu Li’s landscape painting was in the tradition of pure Chinese literati painting (Wenren Hua). The western painting techniques nearly made no impact on Chinese painting, for the artists thought that the application of these techniques would have served to distort, rather than to assist, the expression of purely Chinese ideas.

Western art made little impression on the Qing painters because the painters saw it in isolation. They could not regard it as the expression of anything of which China felt herself to be in need. Nevertheless the effect of Western art in the twentieth century has been far greater, precisely because it is the expression of ideas and forms which China has been strenuously adopting. The move towards Westernization in art began just before the Revolution of 1911 (Sullivan, 1964, p.230).

After the end of World War One many young men went to Europe to study art and then returned to China to teach western painting as well as Chinese painting, such as Liu Haisu and Xu Beihong. Both of them studied abroad and then came back. Liu founded the school which later became the Shanghai Academy of Art. Xu taught in National Central University in Nanjing and later became head of the Academy of Art in Beijing. When Xu died, he was succeeded by his pupil Wu Zuoren. These painters and their students worked very skillfully in both oils and

Chinese ink. Xu Beihong, particularly, became noted for his realistic brush studies of horses (Zhao, 1998, p.10-11).

In the Meantime another school was founded in Guangzhou in 1917 by Gao Jianfu, who was dedicated to depicting modern industrial society, and even warfare, in the traditional medium (Zhao, 1998, p.11). So this school employs western themes for traditional Chinese painting. Western realism found its most powerful expression in the Woodcut Movement, launched by the great writer and critic Lu Xun in 1929. The movement was intended for a propaganda of social and political ideas, though in the work of some later engravers, notably Huang Yung-yu, it has become more lyrical and personal (Sullivan, 1964, p.231). Both the Guangzhou School and the Woodcut Movement were given official approval in 1949 as reflecting socialist realism demanded in art by the People's Republic of China.

During the 1950s the artists such as Pang Xunqin and Lin Fengmian, having returned from France, were beginning to create a new style that was both Chinese in feeling and at the same time in tune with the modern international movement. The outbreak of the Japanese War in 1937, however, cut short this promising development. As artists became refugees in the remote western provinces and as nationalism replaced the montparnasse as their inspiration, their work became much more Chinese in theme and often in Style as well (Zhao, 1998, p.11).

In modern times there appeared the school of abstract expressionism in painting in western countries. This is a style of painting totally abstract and free in form. It is also called "action painting". Its representative is the American painter Jackson Pollock (1912-1956). When he painted, he dripped or splashed paint onto the canvas and sometimes applied paint directly from the tube (Wang, 1992, p.455). But this western abstract painting has made little or no impression on Chinese art, partly because the abstract element in art has already been so thoroughly explored in calligraphy, and partly because the Chinese painter is never content with mere form (Sullivan, 1996, p.231). For the western abstract painter, pure form, divorced from

content, is all; form, in fact, is content. But even the most extreme of Chinese expressionists always endeavour to seek a meaning beyond pure form. The passage of calligraphy would be less admirable if it were totally illegible or its content trivial. In painting, the most outrageous techniques of the modern abstract expressionists were anticipated by Chinese essentrics in the eighth and ninth centuries, that is to say, in the Tang Dynasty. They were actually action painters. One master would flip his ink-soaked hair at the silk; another would splash it with ink while he danced to music, facing in the opposite direction; a third would spread ink in pools on silk laid out on the floor, then drag an assistant round and round sitting on a sheet. But these bizarre methods were never ends in themselves. The record tells that having thus spilled their ink, the painters then proceeded to turn their smears and blotches into landscapes, by the deft addition of scattered trees, waterfalls, and pavilions. The Zen ink painters of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries expressed their moment of illumination in the brushwork hardly less explosive. For the Chinese painter, as for the calligrapher, mere form was never enough (Sullivan, 1996, p.199).

From the above it can be seen that western influence on Chinese painting since the seventeenth century was limited. Since this influence was mutual, China also had a certain influence on western art. Chinese Influence on western art since the seventeenth century is mainly embodied in the Rococo style. The Rococo art in Europe was greatly influenced by the spirit of Chinese painting. This artistic style became prevalent in France during the reign of Louis XIV (1638-1715) and Louis XV (1710-1714). Rococo style in art is usually associated with architecture and interior decoration. It is characterized by elaborate ornamentation imitating shellwork and foliage and it has a curving and elastic pattern. In Rococo art, the sublime gave place to the graceful, the grandeur of size to the charm of eloquence. It was luxurious, sensual and delicate (Wang, 1992, p.243). So the Rococo art seems to have a similar spirit with Chinese painting. As a style in art, Rococo became for a time the vogue all over Europe. It spread from France to England, Austria, Germany and Russia. Then how did Chinese

painting influence the Rococo art? The answer can be found from the contact of China and Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Europe of the seventeenth century knew little about Chinese paintings or sculptures. However, during the first half of the seventeenth century the huge quantities of blue and white porcelain imported by the Dutch aroused great enthusiasm in Europe. Pieces changed hands at enormous prices. Then blue and white was copied in faience at Delft and Frankfurt, and Chinese lacquered furniture was also cleverly imitated by European cabinet-makers. A second wave of enthusiasm for things Chinese struck Europe in the middle of the eighteenth century; but by this time Chinese exporters had had the opportunity to study their market. The Chinese porcelain was often sent out in the blank from Europe and then it was painted in the European style. Pseudo-Chinese motifs, inspired by porcelain, gave added charm and gaiety to Rococo decoration prevalent at that time (Sullivan, 1964, p.168).

Through the import of highly popular Chinese porcelain to the European market, many Europeans began to appreciate the natural and serene beauty of the Chinese pictures and the exotic attraction of the Chinese sculpture art. The genres and conception of the Chinese arts served to open the eyes of the European artists to a new horizon, enabling them to free themselves with more ease from the grandiose and pompous art style of the Louis XIV era. In this way, the Rococo trend which developed in western Europe in the eighteenth century was somewhat related with the introduction of the Chinese art style into Europe in the same period (Shen, 1996, p.283). So it is not strange that the spirit of Chinese painting has influenced the Rococo art in Europe.

The representatives of Rococo painting in France are Antoine Watteau and Francois Boucher. Watteau painted many pictures about the life of high society. Boucher's painting was graceful and decorative. Mr. Adolf Reichwein, a famous German scholar, once wrote that some techniques in Watteau's painting actually came from Chinese painting, although there was not

clear evidence to show that Watteau was interested in Chinese painting. But it was very likely that he got the inspiration from the objects of Rococo style prevalent at that time (Reichwein, 1991, p.40).

The Rococo style, which was greatly influenced by the spirit of Chinese painting, also gave expression to the garden design in Europe. Some Europeans became interested in the natural beauty of the Chinese-style garden design and developed the Anglo-Chinese gardens. The English royal architect William Chambers appreciated Chinese garden style very much. In his book *Designs for Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines and Utensils*, he praised Chinese artists for their remarkable garden designs. In his view, the Chinese art of garden design had created a natural landscape, just like Chinese landscape paintings. The Chinese garden design was totally different from the artificial embroidered flower farm or green sculptures, but was far more interesting and picturesque. And the Chinese gardens were closer to nature's original form and possessed such a depth in visionary image as to supersede their actual size or space (Shen, 1996, p.290). Chambers built the Kew Garden for the Duke of Kent in the Chinese garden style in 1747. This garden design was also adopted by German and French architects. In 1774, this type of Chinese-style garden, as introduced by the English, was named "Anglo-Chinese Garden" by the French garden designer Georges L. Le Rouge (Shen, 1996, p.291). From this people can see the great influence of Chinese painting and garden designing on the Rococo architecture in Europe.

In brief, Chinese painting is very different from western painting. They are two totally alien art schools. This essay discusses the difference between Chinese painting and western painting in respect of medium, painting techniques (line, color, shade, perspective, basic training), possibility of correction, subject-matter, philosophy, style and the relationship with the literati. Western influence on Chinese painting since the seventeenth century was limited whereas Chinese influence on western art since the seventeenth century was mainly embodied

in the Rococo art. But both Chinese painting and western painting have contributed to the world treasure of fine arts. Although their mutual influence is limited to a certain extent, the influence can open the eyes of the Chinese and Western artists to a new horizon. And it is possible that Chinese painting and western painting can join forces to create new forms of vitality in each other's territory.

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