



THE COMBINATION OF TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES AND MODERN INNOVATIONS IN OIL PAINTING: A PRACTICE-BASED EXPLORATION OF CONTEMPORARY CHINESE ART

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Abstract

The study's overarching goal is to enhance readers' understanding of the subject by delving into the ever-changing intersection of Western oil painting innovations and traditional Chinese painting techniques. The researchers are doing this investigation to better comprehend the historical interactions between these two domains. The development of modern Chinese art will be the lens through which this understanding is seen. The researchers in this study want to achieve their aims by exploring the many ways artists are reimagining and combining classic and modern elements via the use of a practice-based approach. Features like as compositional ideas, symbolic motifs, and ink-inspired brushwork are all part of this group. This research centres on modern Chinese artists who have explored ways to merge ancient practices with cutting-edge technology in order to create visual languages that communicate cultural identity. Within the backdrop of a society that is increasingly globalising its viewpoint, this study is being conducted. The unprecedented prospect of a merging of modern and traditional practices in the realm of contemporary art has been thrust into the limelight by this endeavour. This purpose is achieved via the analysis of case studies and the development of unique artworks that highlight the creative possibilities of this combination. These two civilisations have merged and integrated their cultures as a result of growing cultural interaction in recent times. Because of their interactions with one another, these two cultures are now much more interdependent.

Keywords: *Modern Chinese Art, The Arts of Painting, Traditional Techniques, Contemporary Innovations, Practice-Based Research.*

Introduction

An emerging style of modern Chinese painting has been fusing traditional brushwork with modern oil painting methods in recent years. This method shows how the modern art world and China's rich cultural history are always having a conversation. Oil painting is being redefined by modern Chinese painters who combine traditional techniques with creative ideas. So, they're making revolutionary art that changes the face of art history and pop culture all at once. The most remarkable example of this style is the work of CAFA Art Museum director Zhang Zikang. In his ground-breaking achievement, the scholar combined modern oil painting techniques with those of ancient China. Among the things that distinguish Zhang's portfolio from those of other young Chinese painters is the fact that it combines realistic and abstract elements. His method plays double duty: it elevates Chinese oil painting to the global stage, which in turn helps to preserve the rich heritage of the art form, all the while encouraging fresh perspectives on art (Bosco et al., 2021). Using a practice-based approach, this research project will evaluate the methods used by modern Chinese painters. To do this, one must be familiar with the ways in which these artists use both traditional and modern aesthetic concepts and practices within the historical and cultural framework of oil painting. The topic of practice-based optimism in oil painting has been extensively covered in literature over the last several decades. The importance of ethics and fundamental moral concerns in modern Chinese art, however, is being highlighted by critics such as Fennell. Academic publications that examine modern Chinese art from the vantage point of civilised oil painting are enriching this



discussion. The importance of oil painting as an esteemed, long-standing creative medium is emphasised throughout the introduction. Because of their adaptability and expressive possibilities, oil paints are shown in this exhibition. These paints have been treasured by painters for aeons because of their long drying period, wonderful textures, and very vivid hues (Chen, 2023).

Background of the study

Chinese modern oil painting draws inspiration from the country's rich cultural and philosophical heritage. Oil painting, according to the researchers, has its roots in Chinese philosophy, which advocates for a balance between people and the natural world, places a premium on aesthetic refinement, and condemns over-editing. The artist's genuine hues and details are on display in a work of art. These philosophical concepts greatly influenced Chinese oil painting, particularly in landscape painting. Contrarily, traditional Chinese art exalts the natural world to its fullest. By combining subjective and objective aspects, paintings reveal how humans function inside. By using elements unique to Chinese culture, oil painters are able to portray China in their works. There are aspects of humanistic principles and Chinese culture. Chinese artists' oil paintings reveal a humanistic temperament that is unusually open and sensitive, influenced by a wide range of cultures (Bonaduce et al., 2019). The oil painting canon of China reflects the country's artistic awareness and spans centuries of painters. Oil painting has long been favoured by Chinese painters due to its rich history in ancient Chinese art. In modern times, oil painting has emerged as a significant artistic movement in China. Integral to Chinese thought is the arts. According to the researchers, there is some shared ground with philosophy, and that is not going to change. Oil painting has a legendary history that transcended national borders, even though it originated in the West. As a medium, oil painting has gained increasing renown in China in the last few decades, and the country's artistic and cultural heritage would be incomplete without it. This change gave rise to a new school of modern Chinese painting that drew from both Western ideas and more conventional Chinese practices. With a focus on its role in the modernisation of Chinese art, this research analyses oil painting as a means of fusing contemporary and classical approaches (Li, 2023).

Purpose of the research

The purpose of this study is to investigate oil painting within the framework of contemporary Chinese art in order to clarify its function as a vehicle for the fusion of conventional Chinese artistic practices with Western innovations. Oil paintings are often thought of as belonging to Western art traditions. The purpose of this study is to examine oil painting's potential as a medium for reviving, reinterpreting, and maintaining creative processes that have existed for a long time. Symbolic visual language established compositional rules, and the exacting brushwork that characterise Chinese ink painting are all examples of these methods. This project takes a practice-based approach to studying the works of modern Chinese artists and then creating new artworks that include these elements. Consequently, it provides an all-encompassing examination, both theoretically and pragmatically.

Literature review

As an interesting branch of contemporary Chinese art studies, the study of artists' use of modern oil painting methods in conjunction with traditional Chinese techniques is an effort to define modern Chinese art. This has resulted in an increase in the number of research that target this particular area (Dang, 2023). Many researchers have delved into the beginnings of oil painting, beginning with its debut in China in the early 20th century and continuing forward. These



studies set out to do just that, looking at the medium through the prism of different political times, such Soviet realism and academic realism in the West. Artists linked to this movement do, on occasion, strike a balance between paying homage to local traditions and participating in global creative dialogues, according to the study. Modern attempts to include these aspects need an understanding of classical Chinese aesthetics, which includes the study of brushwork, symbolism, and the philosophical underpinnings of Daoism and Confucianism (Nardelli et al., 2021).

Research question

- How does technological progressions influence on Modern Chinese Art?

Research methodology

Research design: Qualitative data analysis was conducted with SPSS version 25. The odds ratio and 95% confidence interval were used to ascertain the magnitude and direction of the statistical link. The researchers set a statistically significant threshold at $p < 0.05$. A descriptive analysis was performed to ascertain the main elements of the data. Qualitative approaches are often used to evaluate data obtained from surveys, polls, and questionnaires, as well as data modified by computational tools for statistical analysis.

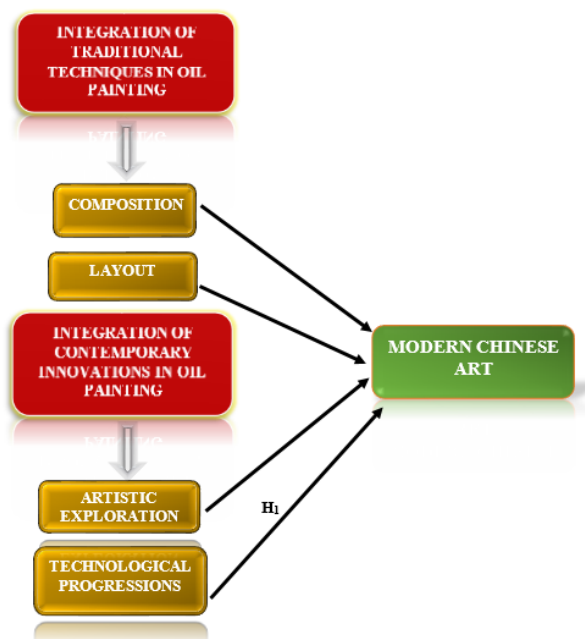
Sampling: An uncomplicated sampling technique was used for the study. The research used questionnaires to gather data. The Rao-soft program determined a sample size of 231. A total of 516 questionnaires were distributed; 436 were collected, and 96 were rejected due to incompleteness. A total of 340 questionnaires were used for the study.

Data and Measurement: The investigation mostly used a questionnaire survey for data collection. Participants were first requested to provide fundamental demographic information. Participants were then instructed to evaluate several facets of the online and offline channels using a 5-point Likert scale. Diverse sources, particularly internet databases, provide secondary data.

Statistical Software: The statistical analysis was performed with SPSS 25 and MS Excel.

Statistical Tools: Descriptive analysis was used to comprehend the essential nature of the data. The researcher must analyse the data with ANOVA.

Conceptual framework





5. Results

❖ Factor Analysis

A common use of Factor Analysis (FA) is to ascertain the presence of latent variables within observable data. In the absence of readily discernible visual or diagnostic indicators, it is customary to use regression coefficients to provide ratings. In FA, models are crucial for success. The objectives of modelling are to identify errors, intrusions, and apparent correlations. A method to evaluate datasets generated by multiple regression analyses is the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test. They ascertain that the model and sample variables are representative. The data exhibits duplication, as shown by the figures. Reduced proportions facilitate comprehension of the data. The output for KMO is a numerical value ranging from zero to one. If the KMO value ranges from 0.8 to 1, the sample size is deemed sufficient. These are the allowable limits, as per Kaiser: The subsequent approval requirements established by Kaiser are as follows:

A lamentable 0.050 to 0.059, subpar 0.60 to 0.69

Middle grades often reside within the range of 0.70 to 0.79.

Exhibiting a quality point score between 0.80 and 0.89.

They are astonished at the interval of 0.90 to 1.00.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Sampling Adequacy Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measurement: .980

The outcomes of Bartlett's test of sphericity are as follows: Approximately chi-square, degrees of freedom = 190, significance = 0.000

This confirms the legitimacy of claims made just for sampling purposes. Researchers used Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to ascertain the significance of the correlation matrices. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure suggests that a value of 0.980 signifies the sample's adequacy. The p-value is 0.00 according to Bartlett's sphericity test. A positive outcome from Bartlett's sphericity test indicates that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix.

Table: KMO and Bartlett's

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.980
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3252.968
	df	190
	Sig.	.000

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity further confirmed the general relevance of the correlation matrices. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin metric of sampling adequacy is 0.980. Researchers calculated a p-value of 0.00 using Bartlett's sphericity test. The researcher recognises the correlation matrix as faulty due to a significant result from Bartlett's sphericity test.

❖ INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

➤ Integration of Traditional Techniques in Oil Painting



Mixing the philosophy, aesthetics, and creative processes of the past with the contemporary, adaptable medium of oil paint is what it means to embrace traditional techniques in oil painting. Artists often achieve their aims via the employment of seemingly dated methods, such as symbolic iconography, spatial composition, layering techniques, and modernist brushwork styles. When compared to other efforts at style copying, this approach is light years ahead. Many people still think that oil painting is only used in Western art. Western art is increasingly incorporating classical visual notions such as emptiness, harmony with nature, and balance, as well as non-Western practices such as calligraphy and ink painting. Paintings of ancient Chinese figures and landscapes served as an inspiration for artists who sought to honour the past via techniques including ink-wash painting, compositional groups, and inlaid calligraphic lines. When seen through a philosophical lens, the artist's attempt to merge their own culture with the language and patterns of creation throughout the world becomes clear. There is a chance to give tradition its due by situating it within the context of modern art critique. The innovative vitality and cultural continuity that characterise contemporary art are on display in this hybrid technique, which revitalises oil painting by using elements of both traditional and new media approaches. Oil painting successfully combines conventional wisdom with contemporary scientific knowledge, making it both an art form and a cultural statement (Mecklenburg, 2020).

➤ **Integration of Contemporary Innovations in Oil Painting**

Included under the title "contemporary innovations in oil painting," this part provides a concise overview of the continuous endeavour to modernise the age-old art form by integrating fresh concepts, methods, and materials within the classical framework of oil painting. Examples of these developments include the use of digital tools in the design or execution process, the integration of approaches that use rare materials and mixed media to effect social change, and the integration of these solutions into the resolution of contemporary problems such as globalisation, identity, and environmental issues. While challenging established norms in the field, modernists working today are challenging the boundaries of oil painting and related fields like as conceptualism, installation, digital manipulation, and abstraction. The multidisciplinary elements that enhance the narrative or sensory part of the artwork include photographs, movies, performances, and virtual reality, among others. Chinese artists working today who express themselves visually in novel and conventional ways; for example, by fusing urban aesthetics with performance art, oil painting, political commentary, and other visual genres. The conventional wisdom about art as purely ornamental or realistic is challenged by these methods, which reimagine oil painting as an adaptable medium capable of tackling modern concerns and expressing individuality in a dynamic society. By fusing their ideas with the depth, texture, and richness of oil paint, contemporary artists create works that are contextual, multi-functional, and intellectually captivating. Along with method, there is a dynamic interaction between the past and the future, between substance and meaning, and between tradition and innovation (Amany et al., 2022).

❖ **FACTOR**

➤ **Technological Progressions**

Technological developments are the continuous invention and use of tools, techniques, and digital systems influencing the production, experience, dissemination, and interpretation of art. Technological advancements in the world of visual art have dramatically expanded the boundaries of creative expression by letting artists examine various mediums, automate processes, recreate settings, and incorporate viewers in interactive or immersive forms. Among these developments are hardware as well as software; digital painting tools, virtual and



augmented reality, 3D modelling and printing, art created by artificial intelligence, and multimedia projects. From the development of oil paint and the printing press to photography and film, historical technological developments have been crucial in defining art forms and methods. Modern times provide continuous redefinition of how artists approach technological innovation. While tools like Adobe Creative Suite, Blender, or Procreate provide additional choices for visualisation and design, internet platforms allow for real-time cooperation and global awareness. New synthetic colours, faster-drying mediums, conservation techniques, or digital tools used in the painting preparatory stages might be technological innovations in oil painting. These advances enable artists to freely explore, create faster, and push the boundaries of traditional materials. Beyond production, technology impacts audience contact with art by means of interactive installations, online galleries, or virtual displays. Therefore, technology advancements are about altering the basic relationship between art, artist, and audience, thereby impacting the future of creative expression in a world becoming more and more digital. They concern more than just tools (Morlotti et al., 2024).

❖ **DEPENDENT VARIABLE**

➤ **Modern Chinese Art**

The phrase "modern Chinese art" refers to a broad category of visual art that includes works made in China (or by Chinese artists residing outside of China) between the late 19th century and even now. These artworks show how modernism on a global scale was intricately related to social and political revolutions in China and Western art. From more conventional practices like calligraphy and ink painting to more modern forms like sculpture, photography, installation, computer art, and video, it covers it all. At the same time that the May Fourth Movement, the establishment of the PRC, the Cultural Revolution, and economic transformations occurred in China in the late 20th century, the first works of modern Chinese art emerged around the same time. Chinese philosophers and painters of the early modern era sought to update the country's aesthetic by fusing elements of Western realism and oil painting with more conventional Chinese practices and ideas. During the 1980s, as China's government started to relax its restrictions on outside influence, a new generation of experimental and modern artists emerged. Artists began to explore a wide range of topics, including politics, memory, urbanisation, legacy, and globalisation. During this period, individuality, philosophy, and a global awareness rose to prominence, while state-sponsored social realist ideologies fell by the wayside. Some of the connections that characterise modern Chinese art are the East and West, the nation and the world, the past and the present, and the historical order. As a reflection of China's dynamic society, it enriches Chinese culture at large and contributes to international dialogues on contemporary art (Duester & Zhang, 2024).

❖ **Relationship between Technological Progressions and Modern Chinese Art**

As a result of technological advancements, the terrain of contemporary Chinese art has changed, with new avenues for creation opening up and the connection between tradition and innovation being redefined. Virtual reality, augmented reality, digital media, and AI have vastly increased the resources accessible to modern Chinese artists. The development of these tools has opened up new avenues of creative expression for Chinese artists, who may now reimagine classic styles in ways that appeal to contemporary tastes. Traditional components like calligraphy, ink landscapes, and symbolic motifs are being revived via digital translation, animation, or 3D rendering, giving fresh life to these long-gone cultural markers. As a result of the proliferation of online communities and social media, Chinese artists are now able to reach a worldwide audience, host virtual exhibits, and sell their wares on a global scale. A distinctively modern visual culture with deep historical roots has emerged as a result of this



digital transformation, which has inspired a new generation of hybrid art practices that combine painting, design, installation, and technology. Not only are these innovations in technology useful for making new things, but they also make people think about how art fits into researchers increasingly digital culture and whether or not it is possible to preserve art forms, individual identities, and traditional practices. A more globally relevant and future-facing Chinese art scene is the outcome of this dynamic interplay between technological advancements and modern Chinese art, in which ancient traditions and cutting-edge innovations coexist, challenge, and enrich one another (Zabari, 2021).

Following the aforementioned argument, the researcher formulated a hypothesis that examines the relationship between Technological Progressions and Modern Chinese Art.

“H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Technological Progressions and Modern Chinese Art.”

“H₁: There is a significant relationship between Technological Progressions and Modern Chinese Art.”

Table 2: H₁ ANOVA Test

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	39588.620	145	5463.632	920.423	.000
Within Groups	492.770	194	5.936		
Total	40081.390	339			

This investigation will provide substantial results. The F statistic is 920.423, attaining significance with a p-value of .000, which is below the .05 alpha threshold. The hypothesis ***“H₁: There is a significant relationship between Technological Progressions and Modern Chinese Art”*** is accepted, whereas the null hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion

This study examines 340 examples of modern Chinese oil painting and finds a fascinating combination of traditional and modern techniques. The goal of contemporary Chinese artists, according to scholars, is to create a visual language that honours tradition while exploring new forms of expression by bridging the gap between modern and ancient practices. Research shows that oil painting incorporates elements from many ancient Chinese practices, such as calligraphic brushwork, ink painting aesthetics, philosophical approaches to composition that emphasise negative space and harmony, and symbolic themes. Nevertheless, these methods need alterations to the visual qualities and substance of oil media. By painstakingly recreating the fluidity and spontaneity of old ink washes via glazing and layering, many artists explore the expressive possibilities of oil while maintaining visual culture from bygone ages. Recent years have seen advancements in experimental materials, topic studies reflecting current geopolitical concerns, and contemporary mixed-media methods. These artists do more than just document history; they breathe fresh life into it by using digital technology across the board, imaginative surface treatments, and philosophical approaches based on current art debate. While this 340-person sample may not provide a magic solution for integration, it does provide large-scale quantitative and qualitative study, which might lead to the discovery of



commonalities. About two-thirds of the artworks have a combination of conventional brushstroke techniques and more modern compositional patterns influenced by Western abstract and conceptual art. More than 40% of these works incorporate synthetic chemicals or blend oil painting with digital media or installation, demonstrating a growing tendency for interdisciplinary methods. Based on the study, it seems that older artists place a higher value on technical proficiency and accurately transmitting historical patterns, while younger artists typically push the established bounds of medium and message via radical innovation. The evolution of the innovation vs. preservation issue in modern Chinese art is shown by this intergenerational exchange. The cultural and philosophical underpinnings of this unity have remained unchanged as well. Ancient Chinese principles, such as Daoism's emphasis on balance and Confucian ideas of order, serve as inspiration for the artists' contemporary efforts. The conceptual consistency of the works ensures their cultural depth, even when they go into unexplored creative terrain. Ultimately, the study's findings show that modern oil painting in China is a dynamic art form, not a fixed combination of traditional and modern techniques. The innovative contrasts between modernity, identity, and history enrich oil painting and contemporary Chinese art generally. The findings call for further research into specific methods, developing topics, and how globalisation impacts this hybrid kind of creative output.

Conclusion

In contemporary Chinese oil painting, this research shows how the struggle between cultural legacy and modern creative expression is reflected in the dynamic and intricate combination of ancient methods with new advances. By examining 340 examples, researchers can see how artists successfully combine the core elements of classical Chinese aesthetics—the use of brushwork, compositional standards, and philosophical concepts—with contemporary themes, new materials, and experimental approaches. The combination of these two traditions helps oil painting, a medium with deep historical roots and promising future prospects, to both maintain and expand upon its illustrious reputation as a vehicle for Chinese art. This integration is characterised by diversity in style, methodology, and conceptual approach; it is neither uniform nor static, according to the results, which are affected by generational changes and worldwide creative exchanges. Traditional components provide a philosophical and cultural basis, while contemporary concepts breathe new life into oil painting and enhance its expressive ability. In the end, this hybrid approach strengthens contemporary Chinese art's visual language and bolsters its primary influence on the international modern art scene. This dynamic creative environment may be further studied in the future in connection to digital technology, art institutions, and intercultural interactions. This research shows that in order for creativity and cultural preservation to thrive in the modern day, artists must accept both tradition and innovation.

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