

The Influence of Cubism on 20th Century Abstract Art: A Comparative Analysis of Visual Language

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Abstract: Cubism and abstract art play an important role in promoting the development of art in the whole world, and there is a certain correlation between the two. It is necessary to conduct in-depth research on them, summarize their commonalities and differences, and serve as the basis for art research and improvement. In this study, based on the perspective of visual language, this paper explores the influence of cubism on abstract art in the 20th century, analyzes the origin, development and characteristics of cubism and abstract art, establishes targeted theoretical research models, analyzes the differences in visual language between the two from different perspectives, and obtains corresponding enlightenment, providing strong support for the study of art development history and the development of modern art.

Keywords: Cubism; Abstract art; Visual language

1. INTRODUCTION

There are relatively many studies on cubism and abstract art in the academic circle, but there are relatively few studies on the influence of cubism on abstract art, especially those based on visual language. However, based on the analysis of the generation and development history of cubism art, abstract art rose rapidly after it entered the "low point" period. At this time, the influence of cubism did not completely disappear, but still existed, and there was a certain "continuity" between the arts, so cubism had a certain influence on abstract art (Cheng, 2021). In addition, based on the analysis of the characteristics of cubism and abstract art, there is a large "gap" between it and traditional art, reflecting a certain "personalized" characteristics.

Therefore, the analysis based on the perspective of visual language is relatively more "direct", which is more conducive to the interpretation of cubism and abstract art. The purpose of the research in this paper is to make up for the lack of research in the relevant aspects of the academic community, and to analyze and learn cubism and abstract art more deeply, so as to provide effective power for the innovation and development of modern art (Mitchell, 1989).

2. AN OVERVIEW OF CUBISM AND ABSTRACT ART

2.1 The cubism

Cubism, a school of Western art, is also known as cubism. It was first produced in France in 1908. In terms of painting style, it takes the concept as the basis and guidance, pays attention to the construction of geometric forms, and generates a sense of beauty through arrangement and combination (Yin, 2021). The original three-dimensional space painting is transformed into a two-dimensional space painting, through the light and shade, the role of light, atmosphere and other aspects to form a kind of guidance, inspiration, interest and emotion. Instead of observing and feeling things from one viewpoint, the information from multiple viewpoints is pooled together to form a multi-viewpoint picture, thus highlighting the continuity of time. When painting, it mainly relies on the author's sensibility, concept and thinking, and has the formalistic tendency of giving money (D. Galenson, 2008). Its representative painters are Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque. It has mainly gone through three historical stages, namely, initial cubism, analytical cubism and comprehensive cubism, as shown in Table 1. By 1914, however, its influence had waned, and art professionals considered the genre "too" formal, a visual sense of beauty, and not enough of the beauty of art. However, the achievements and influence of cubism in art are still far-reaching and worthy of further exploration (Wang, 2021).

Table 1: Stages of development of Cubism

The Stage	Form	Time	Overview
Phase 1	Early Cubism	1907~1910	The main influence comes from black sculpture and Cezanne, which has more viewpoints
The Second Stage	The Cubism of analysis	1910~1911	Disintegrating, the picture transforms from spatial form to plane
The Third Stage	Integrated cubism	1912~1915	Picture material wear innovation, appear text



Figure 1: Examples of Cubist works

2.2 Abstract art

Abstract art refers to the description of any real natural object, according to a certain logic and aesthetic thinking to simplify, or completely withdraw from it. Its artistic beauty comes from the combination of form, line, color and other aspects, reflecting certain characteristics of style, fuzzing, overlapping coverage, decomposition into basic forms and so on, and even unable to identify the original appearance and theme positioning (Wang, 2023). Abstract art belongs to a kind of art without theme, logic and story. It needs to carry out heuristic feelings outside individual experience, display and describe with the help of abstract colors, lines, color blocks and structures, pursues originality, and contains emotional, spiritual and human thinking (Mao, 2022). Based on the analysis of the essence of the universe, it belongs to the abstract world, while abstract art is based on the essence of the universe for the sublimation and thinking of an art. It not only requires the creator to have strong cultural quality and artistic quality, but also requires him to have a deep understanding of society and human nature, so as to form an abstract view of art. In addition, as an appreciator of abstract art, it is also necessary to have high cultivation in relevant aspects, otherwise it is difficult to feel the artistic beauty from it. Therefore, abstract art is also called soul art, thinking consciousness and high art. Its representative figures are Kandinsky, Mondrian, Malevich and so on (Rothman & Verstegen, 2007). Summarizing its development history, it was first produced in 1910 and proposed by Kandinsky. From 1910 to 1930, it developed rapidly, and related theories were gradually improved, forming various schools. After 1930, the forms of abstract art continued to increase, basically becoming the mainstream art mode, breaking the painting concept that must imitate nature (Jin, 2020).



Figure 2: An example of abstraction

3. RESEARCH POINTS AND THEORETICAL MODEL

3.1 Research Highlights

From the perspective of visual language, we should pay attention to the following three points when exploring the influence of cubism on abstract art: first, we should pay attention to the exploration of the origin of its creative thought. Thought belongs to the soul of the painting, which forms the reality under its guidance. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the characteristics and influence of thought and analyze its possible visual language "effect" (Ma, 2020); Second, pay attention to its characteristics in the form. For cubism and abstract art, it is necessary to analyze their formal characteristics, including color, line, light and shade, composition, etc., and conduct comparative analysis according to their forms to explore the commonalities and differences. At the same time, form is also a key factor in the generation of visual language, and direct visual impact is more conducive to the formation of initial cognition (Liu, 2020); Third, pay attention to the analysis of the needs of the appreciator. In previous studies, there are few analyses on the perspective of appreciators' needs, which is also the innovation of this study. Cubism and abstract art have different demands on viewers, which are embodied in cultural literacy, life experience, art cultivation and other aspects (Weibel, 2005). The same painting has different visual language responses to different viewers. In short, paintings are appreciated and need to be understood by the viewer, otherwise the visual language they produce will lose its practical meaning.

3.2 Theoretical model

According to the origin and characteristics of Cubism, the analysis of its influence on abstract art is reflected in the formation of cubism is influenced by abstraction, which is inevitable, because the nature of the world is abstract. In the process of the gradual development of cubism, it provides certain ideas for the formation of abstract art. It can be simply believed that cubism has a certain contribution to the generation of abstract art, while abstract art is the "great revolution" of cubism and integrates the thoughts of other artistic schools (Wang, 2020). The visual language produced by Cubism and abstract art is different, but there are some similarities, so visual language can be used as a "bridge" for the communication between cubism and abstract art. However, their differences are mainly reflected in depth (Lan, 2022). In contrast, the visual language of abstract art is more focused on introversion, while the visual

language of Cubism is more inclined to the visual stimulation of paintings.

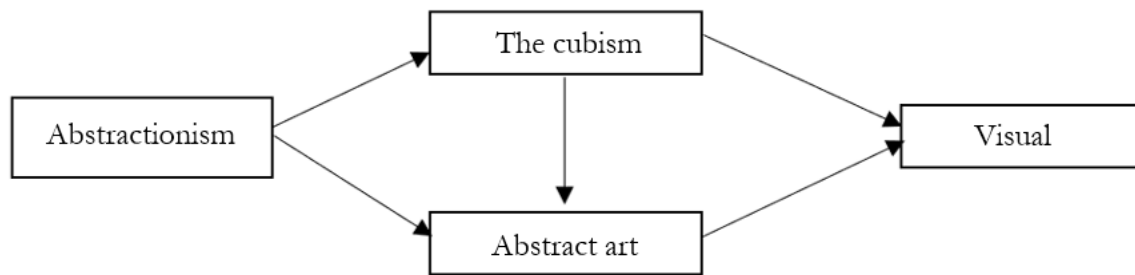


Figure 3: Research theoretical model

4. ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF CUBISM ON ABSTRACT ART

According to the above analysis of the characteristics of cubism and abstract art, as well as the research points and models, the influence of cubism on abstract art is explored based on visual language. The details are as follows.

4.1 Comparative analysis of visual language based on creative thought

First of all, the creative idea of cubism is to highlight cubism, transform the original three-dimensional space picture into a two-dimensional plane, and produce beauty with the help of the arrangement and combination of forms, which is a structural form change and display dimension change of the original picture. Based on this analysis, the generation of its visual language is the visual impact brought by relevant changes, and the objects displayed in the painting are easy to identify, without high recognition difficulty; Secondly, the ideological origin of abstract art focuses on the display of abstract beauty. The content of its paintings is relatively difficult to understand, and there are themes, stories and logics. It is a kind of expression of spirit, emotion and consciousness of the creator based on his own literacy. So, it doesn't show the real thing (D. W. Galenson, 2008). The visual language of Cubism is more direct, while the visual language of abstract art is more indirect, which belongs to the visual language generated from within. In terms of influence, the visual language of Cubism cannot be eliminated, which is also the embodiment of the essential characteristics of the paintings themselves. The visual language under the combination of forms will still exist in the abstract art paintings, but it is not the main part. It is divided based on the principle of "20 to 80," as shown in Table 2. The visual language of Cubism constitutes a ratio of 2/8 inside and outside, and that of abstract art is 8/2.

Table 2: Proportion of visual language

Source of Visual Language	External Form	Understanding of Connotation
The Cubism	80%	20%
Abstract Art	20%	80%

4.2 Comparative analysis of visual language based on formal composition

First of all, in terms of the form composition of paintings, cubism reflects the geometric form of each body, that is, the relevant components have clear lines, presenting a state of "block", giving people a feeling of multiple "blocks" combined together. In terms of visual language, the viewer can directly and clearly watch each kind of thing, and will not produce a feeling of depression, crowding, confusion, or even form a relaxed state of mind. Secondly, in terms of the form composition of abstract art paintings, there is a certain regularity, and the lines are not clear, there are characteristics of ambiguity, and more emphasis on the overall effect. In terms of visual language, it is difficult to feel its connotation and artistic beauty through a "small part", which is one-sided and requires a feeling and perception through the whole. On this basis, the feeling and perception of a "small part" can be formed. Thus, from the aspect of visual language of form composition, Cubism is from part to whole, while abstract art is from whole to part. In addition, cubism belongs to a visual language under decomposition, while abstract art belongs to a visual language under ambiguity. However, in terms of formal composition, Cubism has a certain disorder and also shows a certain sense of abstraction, which is not completely described and arranged in accordance with the natural scenery. Abstract art also adopts this mode, which is more disordered and basically completely not described in accordance with the natural scenery entity. It can be seen that abstract art has a stronger degree of expression in terms of formal composition (Sgourev, 2013).

4.3 Comparative analysis of visual language based on the needs of appreciators

First of all, for cubist paintings, the internal literacy requirements for the appreciator are more focused on artistic accomplishment, and the literacy requirements for other aspects are relatively less. In addition, even a poor appreciator of artistic accomplishment will understand the corresponding painting and understand a certain subject. It can also be called direct visual impression and natural induction; Secondly, for abstract art paintings, it is necessary for the viewer to have high artistic accomplishment, cultural

accomplishment and social experience, and at the same time, it is also necessary for the viewer to have certain understanding, logical thinking ability and imagination. Therefore, it has high requirements for the viewer's accomplishment. For abstract art paintings, different people have different opinions, and each appreciator has different impressions and gains after watching them. Even for the same appreciator, after appreciating the same painting at different times, the feelings generated will change. It can be seen that the visual language of cubism is relatively simple and less dynamic. The visual language of abstract art is complex and dynamic, and there may be an inexpressible visual language, that is, visual impact and feeling are generated, but they cannot be described, only forming a kind of ups and downs in the heart. Therefore, when appreciating abstract art, we can close our eyes and think quietly after watching it, and interpret it through the detachment of thought and heart.

4.4 Comparative analysis of visual language based on sociological perspective

Art comes from life, so the visual language of cubism and abstract art should be analyzed from a sociological perspective. First of all, Cubism focuses on "creativity", which is not displayed through "strangeness". Although there are certain "differences" between traditional paintings and schools, it still shows strong life characteristics and sociality. In this way, when the viewer appreciates it, the formation of visual language reflects a certain taste of life, that is, "closeness". Secondly, in terms of abstract art, it has a high level and depth. Both creators and appreciators should pay attention to its connotation. Creators communicate with their hearts through paintings and establish close connections with high-end ideas, which is a kind of display of personal cognition and values (Vere, 2010). The related creative ideas come from life and society. Therefore, abstract art is not a kind of art without "basis" and "far from" reality, but based on the understanding of reality, forming a high-end ideological level, under the influence of this thought, the creation inspiration. Therefore, for the visual language of abstract art, it can be positioned as the "language of the mind", which does not need to be described but only needs to be understood. Based on sociological analysis, the influence of cubism on abstract art is reflected in the change of human cognition and the detachment of spirit, and art is regarded as a "means" to talk. Comparatively speaking, cubism is manifested as a primary mode, and the visual language generated by it belongs to the stress response. However, the visual language produced by abstract art belongs to the perception after thinking, and there is a big gap

between the two.

Table 3: Composition of visual language

Source of Visual Language	Source of Reality	The Ideal World
The Cubism	80%	20%
Abstract Art	20%	80%

4.5 Comparative analysis of visual language based on physiological perspective

Visual impact is a kind of physiological reaction. In previous academic research, the visual language generated by art is rarely explored from a physiological perspective. First of all, paintings of any kind have a visual impact. Under the visual impact, there will be certain thinking, analysis and taste, and at the same time, the psychology of the appreciator will fluctuate accordingly, forming emotions and opinions. Therefore, visual language can be regarded as the "guidance" of art, based on which other aspects of understanding and cognition can be generated. Secondly, the physiological response in art is driven differently. For Cubism, its formal "personality" will produce a certain interest attraction to the appreciator and enhance its visual language effect. In contrast, abstract art is to stimulate the curiosity of the viewer through vagueness and abstractness, so that he wants to understand and conduct research, forming a certain visual language. Under the influence of this psychology, they will obtain information through vision and serve as the basis for painting appreciation.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

5.1 Focus on innovation

Through this study, it is concluded that art needs to be developed, and it cannot be "stuck in a rut", but can be innovated. However, in the process of innovation, it is necessary to be "reasonable". That is not blind innovation, should reflect a certain artistic thinking and rational logic, the formation of a distinctive school, so as to be recognized by the society. Cubism and abstract art, for example, are different from traditional schools and need to be appreciated based on their characteristics, so that they can feel the artistic beauty and connotation from the paintings. Therefore, as artists and painting lovers, they should improve their own cognition in relevant aspects, integrate relevant ideas into the art creation and development in the new era, and promote the progress and reform of art

(Eimert, 2016).

5.2 Reflect the depth

Artistic creation is not only the form of appearance display, but also needs to have a certain connotation and depth, so that the painting will produce lasting charm, so that the audience can have a certain harvest no matter when they appreciate the painting. Abstract art, in particular, can have this effect. Therefore, abstract art can be positioned as "art with life". Inspired by it, modern art creation should also enhance vitality and make it have depth and connotation. Therefore, the content setting of the painting can be "fictitious" based on the level of thought and cognition, and its presentation form can also be unique. No matter in line, combination, light and shade, color and other aspects, it can be appropriately changed based on the creative thought.

5.3 Enhanced internal trim

Artistic creation should not simply be based on skills, and the study of professional knowledge is only an effective way to improve their ability, but also to strengthen the improvement of internal cultivation. A great artist must be a person with profound connotation and high quality. It will reflect its own thoughts and cognition in artistic creation. Therefore, in the process of art education and learning, we must pay attention to the improvement of the internal quality of relevant personnel, and adopt targeted means to achieve this goal. For example, sitting in the rain on the Wushan mountain, watching the moon on the cloud peak, listening to the tide in the angry sea, and quietly understanding Zen can all improve the art.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

To sum up, Cubism has an impact on abstract art in the 20th century, and abstract art in the 20th century belongs to the sublimation and expansion of cubism. The visual language of cubism and abstract art is explored based on the creative thought, formal composition, appreciator's needs, sociological perspective, physiological perspective, etc. In contrast, the visual language of cubism is more superficial and belongs to a formal impact, while abstract art is more profound and has connotation, belonging to the inner perception, subsumation and taste. Need to use their own cultivation and imagination to explore the subject. In addition, the visual language of abstract art is in a state of constant change, with a certain

volatility and "vitality". Under its influence and inspiration, the artistic creation of the new era should pay attention to innovation, reflect depth and pay attention to internal repair.

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