



Received: 2025-03-31

Revised: 2025-09-07; 2025-10-13

Accepted: 2025-10-14

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THE CONCEPT OF THE "FLASHING IDEAL WORLD": THE EXPERIENCE OF ANCIENT CHINA FOR TODAY

Abstract: The origins of dé-coincidence in traditional Chinese architecture and art lie in the specific worldview of the Chinese, which was formed over thousands of years under the influence of local beliefs – Taoism and Confucianism, and borrowed Buddhism. It is significant that in China, as well as in Japan, these three teachings did not oppose each other, but formed a specific religious syncretism, since they were all built on a similar basis – the belief in the variability of phenomena in the universe, nature as a model of perfection, as well as the absence of the image of the Creator, present in the monotheistic religions of Christianity and Islam.

The essence of dé-coincidence in traditional Chinese and Japanese art is to endow the hidden essence of the phenomenon with the properties of ideal beauty. Therefore, this hidden essence can only be felt "from heart to heart", with the heart, not with the mind. Thus, the sacredness of the act of the artist's creativity lies in the "moment" of merging of the artist with nature and transferring through artistic means how the energy of nature turns into the energy of creativity and from it into the energy of a work of art.

Keywords: concept, "flashing ideal world", experience, ancient China, in the past and today.

Introduction

One of the main problems of modern society is the inability to feel beauty in ordinary everyday things. Modern people are too focused on work, they constantly have to be in touch and feel a lack of time. In conditions where problems caused by the war are added to these issues, it is predicted that more than 10 million citizens of Ukraine will have some psychological issues in the future. Even now, scientists, doctors and psychologists advise finding ways to get people out of such a state.

Unlike the people of the past, modern Europeans have lost the ability to regularly admire nature and flowers. It is difficult for us to imagine the emotions of the Japanese poet Myoe (February 28, 1173 – February 18, 1232), who wrote: "Looking at the moon, I become the moon. The moon I look at becomes me. I immerse myself in nature, connect with it." And this is already Matsuo Bashō (1644-1694): "To feel beautiful means to follow nature, to be a friend of the four seasons. All you see is a flower, all you think about is the moon. For whom things are not a flower, that is a savage. He who does not have a flower in his heart is a beast. Drive out the savage, slay the beast, follow the Universe – and you will return to it"¹.

The spread of outrageous types of art and the elevation to the rank of a work of art of that which previously did not belong to it is precisely what indicates the presence of crisis phenomena in modern society and the feverish search for a way out of the crisis.

Against the background of the growth of psychological problems in society and the number of suicides, the popularity of Eastern practices aimed at achieving peace and harmony with one's own self has recently increased in the world. To a certain extent, we now resemble people at the end of the 19th century, when society was experiencing a crisis of religious authorities and traditional culture under the influence of changing social formations and scientific and technical achievements. The discovery of Japanese culture by the world was such a "breath of fresh air" for the despairing European society. From the end of the 17th century to the middle of the 19th century, Japan was practically isolated from the outside world, which helped to form a unique national culture based on the religious syncretism of Shinto and Buddhism. We can talk about the same principles, but on a national basis, in Chinese culture, which influenced Japanese culture in the early Heian period.

¹ Н. С. Николаева, *Художественная культура Японии XVI столетия*, Искусство, Moscow 1986, p. 52.

Conventionality has been inherent in Chinese art since ancient times, from the periods of the Qin dynasties (221 BC-206 BC), Western Han (206 BC-25 AD) and Eastern Han (25-220 AD), as evidenced by ritual wall paintings in tombs². In ancient times, the forces of nature were depicted in the form of mythical creatures – the heavenly ruler Fusi, who was considered the first ruler of China, his sister Nuywa – the goddess of the Taoist pantheon with a human head and the body of a snake, a three-legged crow, etc. There are also images of these ancient Taoist beings in the Dunhuang sanctuaries, as well as the flying Feitians. And just as in the sanctuaries of Dunhuang, the wall paintings simultaneously contain images of Buddhist and Taoist deities, people and mythical creatures. The simultaneous depiction of real people and supernatural beings in the same plot has been known since the Han period (206 BC-581 BC). It is believed that in this way the concept of the existence of the universe with mystical beings, deities and people was visually embodied. Local beliefs turned out to be so stable that not only did they not disappear under the influence of Buddhism borrowed from India, but formed a religious syncretism with it, which did not deny the images in the Buddhist grottoes of Dunhuang Fusi, Nuyiwa and the Taoist goddess Si-wang-mu with sacred animals.

As the French philosopher François Jullien noted, traditional Chinese art is an expression of dé-coincidence, that is, the transmission of the variability of phenomena through the artist's figurative perception and symbolism, which changes the meaning of phenomena. Here it is worth quoting the Japanese poet Kyorai (1651-1704): "The beautiful is born at the right moment. It is worth capturing this moment." These words are equally suitable for both Japanese and Chinese art, based on the ability to "learn to draw pine from pine trees, bamboo from bamboo."

In turn, we decided to investigate the phenomenon of changing literal meanings not only in traditional Chinese art, but also in the field of art that is related to architecture, namely fresco wall painting.

The origins of dé-coincidence in traditional Chinese architecture and art lie in the specific worldview of the Chinese, which was formed over thousands of years under the influence of local beliefs – Taoism, Confucianism and borrowed Buddhism. It is significant that in China, as well as in Japan, these three teachings did not oppose each other, but formed a specific religious syncretism, since they were all built on a similar basis – the belief in the variability of phenomena in the universe, nature as a model of perfection, as well as the absence of the image of the Creator, present in the monotheistic religions of Christianity and Islam.

² Y. Ding, I. G. Sandu, *Genesis of Images and Technique of Ancient Chinese Wall Painting*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2021, vol. 12, iss. 4, pp. 1309-1326.

Here it is worth mentioning the Chinese treatise *Tao Te Ching* (*The Book of the Way and Virtue*, 6th century AD), which proclaimed the law of changing phenomena in nature and the variability of the universe as the main principle of the existence of the universe: "When in Heaven it is known, that the beautiful is beautiful, it also appears disgusting. When everyone learns that good is good, so does evil. That is why being and non-being give rise to each other, heavy and light create each other, long and short are mutually correlated, high and low are mutually determined, sounds, merging, come to harmony, the previous and the next follow one another"³.

A certain departure from the realism of the image is traditional Chinese art. Thus, the ancient Buddhist genre of ink painting "shan-shui" ("mountains-waters") is not a literal image of a specific mountain or waterfall, instead it conveys the impression of the greatness of nature and the insignificance of man in the universe compared to the formidable natural force. The genre "hua-niao" ("flowers and birds") is also not a literal image of a flower, rather, the creation of an idealized perfect image of a flower and a bird.

Similar symbolism is present in Chinese wall painting. For example, there were canons of depiction of people of different social status. The figure of the emperor was the largest, and then the figures of courtiers, officials and servants decreased in size according to their social status. There were canons on how to depict the poses and faces of people of different social status: the emperor, high-ranking officials, monks and philosophers were depicted in static poses with detached, calm facial expressions, only commoners were allowed to show emotions and lively poses. This is noticeable in frescoes that depict scenes of holidays, village life, etc.

Certain conventionality also existed in the transmission of the spatiality of the image. This is very clearly visible on the example of the Dunhuang complex, which was formed over a millennium and is essentially a visual encyclopedia of Buddhist art, since by comparing the wall paintings of sanctuaries from early to late, it is possible to analyze the genesis of Buddhist frescoes⁴.

At an early stage, it is a limited palette of colors and conventionality of figures that exist as if outside of space. Gradually, in parallel with the

³ Н. С. Николаева, *Художественная культура Японии...*

⁴ S. Wang, I. Sandu, *The Influence of Political Events and Ideology on the Formation of the Picture Concept of Dunhuang Caves Frescos*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2023, vol. 14, iss. 4, pp. 1443-1462; S. Wang, I. Sandu, K. Paprzyca, O. Ivashko, O. Kravchuk, T. Yevdokimova, *Genesis of the Planning Structure and Ceilings of Dunhuang Sanctuaries*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2024, vol. 15, spec. iss., pp. 349-370; M. Żychowska, Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, A. Dmytrenko, N. Kulichenko, X. M. Zhang, *The influence of traditional Chinese landscape architecture on the image of small architectural forms in Europe*, "Landscape Architecture and Art" 2021, vol. 18, no. 18, pp. 59-68.

improvement of artistic methods and techniques, methods of conveying space and planning of images were also improved, and the background became saturated with objects and characters. However, in the late period, the foreign ruling dynasties of Xi Xia and Yuan again turned to a certain conventionality of images under the influence of Tibetan Buddhism.

The same principle of merging with nature and the symbolism of each element is present in the traditional landscape design of China (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. The Dai Xuan Ting Pavilion in Zhuōzhēng Yuán Garden. Drawing by P. Chang, 2020.

Each element of the Chinese garden becomes not just a part of a well-thought-out landscape design, but a carrier of a certain hidden meaning: the lake with the three mountains of the Immortals is not just a lake, but a desire for eternal life; the impossibility of simultaneously viewing the garden from afar means protection from the evil spirits of the sky, which walk only in direct ways. The same role of protective screens is performed by folding multi-leaf screens, which at the same time transform the interior space, artificial screens – in houses and temples, symbolic green screens of landscape paintings that overlap each other – in private gardens.

Small forms – pavilions-arbours – also become a symbolic element of the garden. This type of a pavilion has gone a thousand-year path from a simple military border object of purely strategic importance to one of many functions – postal, temple, at markets, entrances to a city, memorials, pavilions on bridges and in gardens, etc. And again, there is a constant change of meanings here: every detail of a small form is not accidental, both images and colors have a certain hidden meaning: yellow tiles identified the most important imperial objects, green – objects that belonged to the princes of the imperial house. The significance of the objects was also determined by the number of ritual figurines on the crest of the roof of the pavilion.

The purpose of the study is to highlight and analyze the means of conveying the variability and conventionality of the world in various types of traditional Chinese culture, in particular, in landscape design and ritual wall painting, where these phenomena are felt most strongly.

The objectives of the research are as follows:

- analyze traditional ritual fresco wall painting, its symbolism and conventionality;
- draw a parallel between the means of conveying the variability of the world and the convention of phenomena in painting and frescoes: not the image of a specific phenomenon, but the symbol of a specific phenomenon in an idealized form.

To solve the problems of the research, sources were analyzed in the following areas:

- traditional Chinese architecture and art⁵,

⁵ M. Krupa, Y. Ding, V. Tovbych, L. Gnatiuk, *Sakralność, mitologizm i realizm. Malarstwo ścienne dynastii Han i jej wpływ na dalszy rozwój chińskiej sztuki i architektury*, "Wiadomości Konserwatorskie – Journal of Heritage Conservation" 2020, no. 63, pp. 116-124; Y. Ding, M. Orlenko, Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, M. Krupa, K. Kuśnierz, I. G. Sandu, *The Specificity of the Restoration and Monument Protective Measures for the Preservation of Historical Chinese Gardens*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2021, vol. 12, iss. 3, pp. 1003-1026; Y. Ding, I. G. Sandu, *Genesis of Images and Technique of Ancient Chinese Wall Painting*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2021, vol. 12, iss. 4, pp. 1309-1326; Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, A. Dmytrenko, T. Kozłowski, D. Mykhailovskyi, *Influence of structural schemes on the shaping of historical wooden buildings: On the examples of traditional chinese pavilions, pavilions of the chinoiserie style and ukrainian wooden churches | Wpływ układów konstrukcyjnych na kształtowanie zabytkowych obiektów drewnianych na przykładzie tradycyjnych pawilonów chińskich, pawilonów w stylu chinoiserie oraz ukraińskich kościołów drewnianych*, "Wiadomości Konserwatorskie – Journal of Heritage Conservation" 2021, no. 67, pp. 49-60; Y. Ivashko, D. Kuśnierz-Krupa, P. Chang, *History of origin and development, compositional and morphological features of park pavilions in ancient China*, "Landscape Architecture and Art" 2019, vol. 15, no. 15, pp. 75-82; Y. Ivashko, D. Kuśnierz-Krupa, P. Chang, *History of origin and development, compositional and morphological features of park pavilions in Ancient China*, "Landscape architecture and Art" 2020, vol. 15, no. 15, pp. 78-85; Y. Ivashko,

- style as a carrier of national characteristics and means of their expression⁶,
- category of art and works of art⁷,
- restoration activities based on preservation of authenticity and monument preservation activities⁸,
- professional training of specialists⁹.

Materials and methods

The specific tasks of the research determined the choice of scientific research methods. The method of historical analysis made it possible to analyze the existing artistic methods and techniques in traditional Chinese art in different periods, the method of comparative analysis made it possible to compare techniques with each other, the method of philosophical analysis determined the philosophical background of the art and architecture of ancient China,

P. Chang, P. Zueva, Y. Ding, T. Kuzmenko, *Continuity of traditions and innovation in modern landscape design in China*, "Landscape architecture and Art" 2021, vol. 18, no. 18, pp. 94-103; Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, *Modern "Chinese-Style" Arbours: Image Authenticity or Distortion?*, in: *Defining the architectural space. The truth and lie of architecture*, W. Celadyn, ed., Oficyna Wydawnicza Atut, Wrocław 2020, pp. 19-31; S. Wang, I. Sandu, *The influence of Political Events and Ideology on the Formation of The Picture Concept of Dunhuang Caves Frescos*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2023, vol. 14, iss. 4, pp. 1443-1462; S. Wang, I. Sandu, K. Paprzyca, O. Ivashko, O. Kravchuk, T. Yevdokimova, *Genesis of the Planning Structure...* pp. 349-370; M. Żychowska, Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, A. Dmytrenko, N. Kulichenko, X. M. Zhang, *The influence...*, pp. 59-68.

⁶ Y. Ivashko, T. Kuzmenko, S. Li, P. Chang, *The influence of the natural environment on the transformation of architectural style*, "Landscape architecture and Art" 2020, vol. 15, no. 15, pp. 101-108.

⁷ P. Gryglewski, Y. Ivashko, D. Chernyshev, P. Chang, A. Dmytrenko, *Art as a message realized through various means of artistic expression*, "Art Inquiry. Recherches sur les arts" 2020, vol. XXII, pp. 57-88.

⁸ S. Baiandin, Y. Ivashko, A. Dmytrenko, I. Bulakh, M. Hryniewicz, *Use of Historical Painting Concepts by Modern Methods in the Restoration of Architectural Monuments*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2022, vol. 13, iss. 2, pp. 381-394; M. Orlenko, Y. Ivashko, *The concept of art and works of art in the theory of art and in the restoration industry*, "Art Inquiry. Recherches sur les arts" 2019, vol. XXI, pp. 171-190; M. Orlenko, M. Dyomin, Y. Ivashko, A. Dmytrenko, P. Chang, *Rational and aesthetic principles of form-making in traditional Chinese architecture as the basis of restoration activities*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2020, vol. 11, iss. 2, pp. 499-512; M. Orlenko, Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, Y. Ding, M. Krupa, K. Kuśnierz, I. G. Sandu, *The Specificity of the Restoration and Monument Protective Measures for the Preservation of Historical Chinese Gardens*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2021, vol. 12, iss. 3, pp. 1003-1026.

⁹ D. Kuśnierz-Krupa, J. Kobylarczyk, J. Malczewska, Y. Ivashko, M. Lisińska-Kuśnierz, *Qualitative analysis of architectural education in the protection of a historic city | Analiza jakościowa edukacji architektonicznej w zakresie ochrony miasta zabytkowego*, "Wiadomości Konserwatorskie - Journal of Heritage Conservation" 2021, no. 65, pp. 20-25.

the method of religious analysis – the religious background, respectively. The grapho-analytical method, the method of art analysis, and the photofixation method were also used as a basis.

Results and discussion

Symbolism and conventionality of traditional Chinese painting and its connection with the art of landscape design

It is worth noting that it was religion that "set the tone" of dé-coincidence in China and Japan, since monotheistic religions are precisely aimed at expressing the static and stability of the world created by the Logos – the Creator. So, if we compare the traditional architecture and art of China, Japan and European countries of the same time period, we will notice fundamental differences that have remained throughout the ages.

In Europe, works of art are built on the laws of composition, to create the effect of completeness of the work. Similarly, objects of traditional architecture, up to and including the 20th century, create the impression of static and reliability. On the opposite basis, traditional Chinese and Japanese buildings were erected as secondary to the natural environment and aimed not at being fenced off from it, but at harmonious merging with nature according to the principle of "letting nature in, filling the space artificially created by man." This is especially visible in the examples of the combination of residential buildings and pavilions with landscape design (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Chongjing Pavilion in Cang Lang Ting Garden in Suzhou.
Watercolour by P. Chang, 2020

According to the philosophical concept of Taoism, all natural phenomena could be explained by the natural alternation of light and darkness, heat and cold, the change of seasons, the transformation of the first elements (the five elements – wood, fire, earth, metal and water) according to the laws of Tao. In this cycle of phenomena of the universe, the human being was interpreted as part of general cycles, also subject to the laws of Tao: "Man follows the laws of the earth. Earth follows the laws of heaven. Heaven follows the laws of the Tao, and the Tao follows itself"¹⁰.

Thus, we approach the question of the philosophical and religious origins of the Chinese garden (as well as the Japanese garden), which were completely different from European gardens. The main place in the teachings of Taoism is given to the eternal and constantly changing nature, which changes and improves itself, all the time turning into something new, different. Nature is interpreted in this way as the foundation of the universe and the measure of universal harmony.

At the same time, it was believed that true perfection and harmony, the true Tao, cannot be expressed in words, but can only be felt through detached contemplation.

There is a classic example from the teachings of Buddhism, which explains the principle of perception of beauty in China and Japan. When Shakyamuni Buddha delivered his "Flower Sermon" on Vulture Peak, he stood silently in front of the faithful, holding a lotus flower in his hand. Only his disciple Mahakashyapa understood the meaning of the sermon and smiled at the Master. Buddha said: "I have the treasure of the vision of the perfect Dharma, the magical spirit of nirvana, free from the impurity of reality, and I have given this treasure to Mahakashyapa." In this way, the Buddha initiated a dialogue "from heart to heart", and this dialogue is the basis of traditional Chinese and Japanese art, when not a specific object is depicted, but its generalized image and the hidden essence is conveyed through the transfer of emotions from the artist to the viewer.

Here it is worth making an allusion to the philosophy of art based on Buddhism. A tender white-pink lotus bud sleeps for a long time in the dark water of the swamp, and then reaches for the light for the same long time on a thin long stem, and only then it blooms, revealing to the world a beautiful and pure pink flower, untainted by the mud of the swamp. The same thing happens with a person's feelings and emotions: if they wake up prematurely, the flower of feelings will bloom in the water of the swamp and will be defiled by its dirt. If they freeze, like a bud, on the way to the light and for a while are replaced

¹⁰ Н. С. Николаева, *Художественная культура Японии...*, p. 41.

by reason and spiritual understanding of the truth, then after the emotions are revealed, the pure flower of highly spiritual feelings will enrich more than one person. In the same way, before creating a masterpiece, the artist improves internally in order to feel and convey the beauty of the world, and to include viewers in this process of exchanging emotions without words, according to the principle "from heart to heart", who, joining in viewing of the work, become its cocreators.

The German scientist Heinrich Lutzeler believed that it was precisely in the art of China and Japan that the philosophical idea of Buddhism of incompleteness, convention, "a hint of reality" manifested itself most clearly, where the core is emptiness as the basis that everything comes from and returns to.

According to the philosophy of Buddhism, every phenomenon goes through the stages of origin, development and a peak of prosperity, after which decline and disappearance begin. Thus, it is possible to avoid this without reaching the peak of perfection, using the technique of convention, without finishing the element, background, etc.

So, the principle of creativity in China and Japan was fundamentally different from the European one, the ability to feel the moment of life and convey it was placed above professional skill.

This convention is present in both secular wall painting and religious wall painting, which is clearly visible on the examples of the frescoes of the unique Dunhuang complex with the Mogao Caves, the Western Thousand Buddha Caves (*Xī Qīnfó Dòng*), the Eastern Thousand Buddhas Caves, the Grotto with the Five Temples and the Yulin Grotto.

The specificity of wall paintings lies in the fact that, having appeared at the time of the spread of Buddhism in China and thus being subject to the strict canons of ritual painting, over time, under the influence of local traditions and local beliefs of Taoism and Confucianism, they diversified in subjects and were enriched with secular images, especially during the period of maximum development in the Tang era (618-907).

It is worth tracing the means of conveying space and plots in different periods (Figs. 3, 4, 5).



Fig. 3. Wall painting of cave 272. Northern Liang era



Fig. 4. Wall painting of cave 254. Northern Wei era



Fig. 5. Wall painting of cave 201. Tang era

Early frescoes had a purely ideological and ritual meaning of influencing the faithful, so they were minimalistic. Precisely in the case of early frescoes, one can speak of a "return to the beginnings" of Buddhism, when everything superfluous, particularly decoration, is rejected in the images. The early frescoes of the Northern Liang Dynasty (401-439), Northern Wei Dynasty (439-534), Western Wei Dynasty (535-556) and Northern Zhou Dynasty (557-581) are marked by limited colour gamut, simplification of figure images and symbolism of applied colours. However, even in the early stages, particularly in the Western Wei era, Chinese mythological subjects and Chinese landscapes in the genre of "shan shui" ("mountains-waters") are added to canonical conventional images.

The flourishing periods of Dunhuang art are called the Sui (581-618) and Tang (618-907) eras, when conventional ritual wall painting acquires features of realism and artistic perfection based on local artistic traditions. Although the mural preserves conformity with the canons of Buddhism, artistic techniques are diversified, holy persons are depicted in traditional Chinese clothes and in a Chinese landscape, the plan and perspective of the image are maintained. Along with preserving the principle of generalization in the depiction of the Buddha and bodhisattvas, whose features are replicated from image to image, realistic images of rulers, benefactors with their families, military

battles, etc., appear. So, in wall painting, there are simultaneously two types of images – the image is not of something concrete, but its ideal image without individual features (Buddha, bodhisattvas, Fei tian flying fairies – apsaras) and the image of the concrete (portrait genre, battle and genre scenes).

During the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms (907-960) and the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127), a gradual decline in the level of artistic decoration of the Dunhuang sanctuaries, and the rise to power of foreign dynasties, the Xi Xia (1038-1227) and Yuan (1271-1368) began, although it contributed to the increase in the level of wall paintings, already in the style of Tibetan Buddhism with local layers of the Central Plains of China.

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that in traditional Chinese art, the transfer of emotions from the artist to the viewer is considered more important than the technical perfection of the work. At the same time, in China there were works of painting with conventional images, which is clearly expressed in the Buddhist genre of "mountains and waters", and works of painting with maximum detail – as in the genre of "flowers and birds". If we talk about the specifics of religious wall painting, the example of the Dunhuang sanctuaries, it shows a closed cycle of the development of wall painting: from simplification and conventionality to maximum improvement and, through a gradual decline, back to simplification and conventionality. Therefore, in the early and late periods, not something concrete was depicted, but its maximally generalized laconic image, and in the middle period these images are given features of specificity.

In traditional Chinese art, the artist first had to see the image in the heart and only then depict it technically. This is picturesquely described in an ancient Chinese legend. The emperor invited a famous artist to paint a picture and paid him handsomely. The artist set a deadline of one year for the painting. There were three days left and he was still sitting in front of an empty wall and did not start painting, which caused the displeasure of the courtiers. To all their attempts to hurry him, the artist only answered "Do not disturb." Then he suddenly got up and quickly painted the best picture of his life, saying after finishing the work: "It is not long to do, but first you have to see what you will do."

There is also another Chinese legend. A famous artist was invited to a monastery to paint two dragons. He masterfully performed his work, but he did not draw the pupils of the dragons' eyes and the monks began to laugh at him. The artist got angry, drew pupils for the dragons, they flapped their wings and flew away.

An analogy can be made here with the Japanese belief that if you draw one pupil of a daruma doll and make a wish, the *daruma* will make it come true so that you don't have one eye, and then you have to draw a second pupil.

There is a certain commonality between Chinese and Japanese art in this, so the words of the playwright Joami (1363-1443) are equally relevant for defining the hidden essence of Chinese art: "The universe is a vessel that contains everything: flowers and leaves, snow and the moon, mountains and the sea, trees and grass, the living and non-living. Everything has its own season. Make these many things an object of art, make your soul a vessel of the Universe, entrust it to the spacious, calm Path of the Void! Then you will be able to grasp the initial basis of art – the Secret Flower!"¹¹ – hence the spread of the "Seasons" genre in traditional Chinese and Japanese painting as a recognition of the equivalence of each season in the universe. Therefore, a set of images-symbols of each season was gradually formed, where the beauty of each natural phenomenon acquired the features of an integral component of abstract absolute ideal beauty. In this philosophical and worldview system, there can be no ideal beauty without winter beauty, or without autumn beauty, because each season brings its signs of beauty, its "hidden essence" to the beauty of the universe.

The art of calligraphy in China and Japan is based on such principles, and artists, as a rule, were also talented calligraphers, supplementing their paintings with inscriptions. The tools for calligraphy were called the Four Treasures of Knowledge: a brush, ink, an inkwell and paper, and the process of writing a hieroglyph was interpreted not as a mechanical inscription of lines, but as the expression of the hidden essence of the line, previously "seen" by the artist's inner gaze, with black ink on white rice paper.

Conclusions

It is the traditional landscape design in China and Japan that is precisely the quintessence of dé-coincidence, when not a real, but an ideal natural corner is created, a natural world where many components are concentrated in one place, in one landscape picture, carriers of the signs of an ideal world. This is miniaturization of mountain landscapes and decoration of gardens with stones from Lake Taihu, and the arrangement of artificial lakes with the mountains of the Immortals.

Are landscape paintings in Chinese gardens real? Definitely not. The Chinese garden essentially turns into a kaleidoscope of ideal artificial landscapes, and this also reflects the philosophy of Taoism and Buddhism with the idea of the constant change of the universe. Such a set of landscape paintings, each of which is elaborated down to a single detail, turns from a natural landscape into a landscape symbolizing human involvement in the eternal natural cycle,

¹¹ Ibid., p. 53.

where winter is always replaced by spring, while spring is replaced by summer, autumn and winter again.

In the painting of China and Japan, the main value and perfection of the master is not their ability to apply strokes or draw a face, but to convey this wordless dialogue "from heart to heart" – not literally, but indirectly, when the picture does not depict a specific flower, but its image as it is perceived by the artist at a specific moment in their life (Fig. 6). The transfer of emotions from the creator to the viewer becomes higher than the transfer of skill.

Thus, creativity from the level of mastery turns into a sacred act, and contemplation of nature endows it with signs of divinity and a measure of perfect harmony. With this approach, nature becomes the main driving force of the cycle of phenomena in the universe, and the human being is assigned the role of passive contemplation and non-interference in natural phenomena.



Fig. 6. Sparrows on the willow tree. Painting on silk. Artist Chang Peng, 2020

So, the essence of dé-coincidence in traditional Chinese and Japanese art is to endow the hidden essence of the phenomenon with the properties of ideal beauty. Therefore, this hidden essence can only be felt "from heart to heart", with the heart, not with the mind. Thus, the sacredness of the act of the artist's creativity lies in the "moment" of merging the artist with nature and transferring through artistic means how the energy of nature turns into the energy of creativity and from it into the energy of a work of art.

The question arises, how can the experience of ancient artistic traditions of China be useful in today's conditions?

Since it has been proven by psychologists and doctors that communication with nature accelerates the recovery process of patients, especially those with neurological and psychological problems, one of the options is the use of art therapy techniques according to Chinese traditions, when group members meditate in nature, distancing themselves from their problems, under the guidance of specialists artists pay attention to the perfection of the construction of a flower or leaf, and then try to depict them. At the same time, it is emphasized that what is more important is not the technical skill of the image, but the transfer of one's own perception of a flower or leaf.

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Publication subsidised by the Visegrad Fellowship Programme of Prof. Yulia Ivashko (Kyiv National University of Construction and Architecture) for the year 2024, contract no. 6240017, implemented at the Institute of Art History of the University of Lodz.

KONCEPCJA „MIGAJĄCEGO ŚWIATA IDEALNEGO”: DOŚWIADCZENIA STAROŻYTNYCH CHIN DZIŚ (streszczenie)

Początki Dé-coincidence w tradycyjnej chińskiej architekturze i sztuce tkwią w specyficznym światopoglądzie Chińczyków, który kształtował się na przestrzeni tysięcy lat pod wpływem lokalnych wierzeń – taoizmu i konfucjanizmu oraz zapożyczonego buddyzmu. Znaczące jest, że w Chinach, a także w Japonii, nawiasem mówiąc, te trzy nauki nie przeciwstawiały się sobie, lecz tworzyły specyficzny synkretyzm religijny, gdyż wszystkie zbudowane były na podobnej podstawie – wierze w zmienność zjawisk we wszechświecie, że natura jest wzorem doskonałości, a także braku obrazu Stwórcy, jak to ma miejsce w religiach monoteistycznych chrześcijaństwa i islamu.

Istotą Dé-coincidence w tradycyjnej sztuce chińskiej i japońskiej jest nadanie ukrytej istocie zjawiska właściwości idealnego piękna, dlatego też tę ukrytą esencję można odczuć jedynie „od serca do serca”, sercem, a nie umysłem. Świętość aktu twórczego artysty polega zatem na „momencie” złączenia artysty z naturą i przekazania za pomocą środków artystycznych tego, jak energia natury zamienia się w energię twórczości, a z niej w energię dzieła sztuki.

Słowa kluczowe: koncepcja, „migający idealny świat”, doświadczenie, starożytne Chiny, dawniej i dziś.

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