



The expression of the artistic conception of "Three Far Method" in Chinese film space -- taking *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* as an example

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Abstract. "Three far method" is an extremely important spatial layout technique in Chinese landscape painting. The space shaping of "far" contains the unique aesthetic conception of the ancients. The unique artistic conception of "lofty, secluded and diluted" is constructed by "lofty, profound and peaceful" in landscape painting, and the realistic space and spirit shaping displayed by it have been handed down to the present. Influenced by the structure of national culture, Chinese films, especially martial arts films, have absorbed the spatial concept and expression form of "far" in traditional Chinese landscape painting, and constructed the spiritual space of films through the spatial layout technique of "far". This paper tries to analyze the "Tao" artistic conception behind the landscape space of the film from the "three-distance method".

Keywords: Sanyuan method; Artistic conception; *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*; Tao.

1 Introduction

"Far" is a prominent feature of the spatial state of traditional Chinese painting. "Far" not only refers to the distance of time and space in painting, but also means the distance of spiritual conception in painting. Based on the aesthetic image accumulation of "far and far wandering eyes" and "satiating wandering eyes", Guo Xi refined the creation method of "three far" landscape painting. The space of Chinese landscape painting constructed by the "three Yuan method" is not only a transformation of perspective looking down, looking up and looking at, but also integrates one's body with the natural landscape through the method of "far and far looking". Wuxia film is an important type of Chinese film. *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, as one of its representatives, has left a strong mark in film history with its typical landscape scenes.

2 The Origin of the "Three Distances Method"

"Three far Method" is actually a summary of the Northern Song Dynasty landscape space treatment methods. Before Guo Xi in the Northern Song Dynasty, there were many rough or in-depth descriptions of landscape space treatment in the history of Chinese landscape painting. "Landscape Painting Preface" is considered to be the earliest academic work on landscape painting in the history of Chinese painting. Zong Bing of the Southern Dynasty pointed out in the book: "And the Kunlun mountain is big, the pupil is small, forcing the eye to inch, then its shape is not to be seen, the sweep to a few miles, then it can be surrounded in inch eyes. Sincere by going to a little wider, then its see micah small." ^[1]. Based on his personal intuitive experience, Zong first proposed a simple basic principle of perspective, that is, near large and far small. With the release of Guo Xi and his son's work, *Forest and Spring High*, the perspective theory of landscape painting gradually shifted from intuitive feelings to more rational analysis. In the book, Guo Xi elaborated on the "three far method": "There are three far mountains, from the bottom of the mountain and the top of the mountain, which is called high and far; From the front of the mountain and look after the mountain, that is far-reaching; From the near mountains and looking far mountains, that Pingyuan" ^[2]. Later generations summarized it as "high and far, far-reaching and Pingyuan" theory of three distances, which is related to Zong Bing's simple perspective principle of near and far and small. However, Guo Xi's three far method is not only a method of observation, but also a method of landscape painting when it is presented on the picture, that is, a method of artistic conception creation.

3 The "Three Far Method" and its Artistic Conception in Traditional Painting

The spatial dimension of Chinese landscape painting is mainly divided into three levels. The first layer is the simple two-dimensional space displayed on rice paper that the viewer can see with naked eyes; The second layer is the three-dimensional space displayed in the two-dimensional plane, that is, the space in the painting; And the third layer is the emotion space of higher dimension beyond the mathematical geometry space. In the development of Chinese painting, it can be found that the relationship between the height, front and back, and left and right of things in the painting is very important. Therefore, three-dimensional space is widely used in Chinese painting, especially landscape painting. The high dimensional emotional space consciousness of the third layer has also become the unique spatial consciousness of Chinese painting. The "three-distance method" is the embodiment of three-dimensional space, in which the space used is different from the physical and geometric spatial consciousness in Western painting, but a self-subjective, poetic and creative artistic space. Lofty, far-reaching and flat are not only the angles of observing things, but also the artistic conception created by the three-dimensional space in the painting.

3.1 "High and Far" to Enter the Lofty Realm

Gao Yuan, that is, "from the bottom of the mountain to the top of the mountain", puts the Angle of view at a low place, the horizon line is at the bottom of the picture, and looks up from the bottom of the mountain to the top of the mountain. Gao Yuan reflects a lofty and lofty mountain that can be seen from the top of the mountain, mainly used to trace the high mountains. In order to highlight the height of the mountain, the houses, trees and figures in the picture can be painted very small, showing the state of a large mountain. Sometimes the top of the mountain can be hidden into the clouds or pushed out of the painting, so that people have more imagination of the height of the mountain. In the description of the peak, the use of clouds to hide the mountainside, the foot of the mountain can also create a sense of Chongjun, that is, Guo Xi said: "the mountain wants to be high, it is not high, and the cloud lock its waist is high."^[3]

In Fan Kuan's "Traveling Map of Streams and Mountains" in the Northern Song Dynasty, the main body of the picture is the towering mountain. The travelers, trees and houses in the picture are deliberately made small, and the hollow foot of the mountain further sets off the towering mountains. In the painting, the distant mountain, which occupies two-thirds of the picture, is huge and has a straight line and rugged shape. The viewer is placed in the insect's perspective, facing the mountain, and can not help but feel a flutter in the heart. In the foreground, the two travelers hurry along with four donkeys carrying heavy loads. Even though the road ahead is wide, it is difficult for them to see the sky and to raise their level, because they do not have time to look up. Just as people in the real world struggle to make breakthroughs, the result is likely to be the same day after day, and it is difficult to move to the next level. The mountain never changes its gaze on the life below, and the traveler is always in the "eye" of the mountain. The pursuit of the world and the persistence of the distant mountains together create the lofty landscape of the picture.

3.2 "Far-reaching" to Enter the Distant Realm

"Far-reaching" focuses on the depth of space. Guo Xi pointed out in the book that when people stand at the foot of a mountain and look far ahead, their vision suddenly ends around the bend as the canyon extends. Far-reaching gives people a mysterious and distant sense of distance. Through the change of the line of sight, the space extends to the depth. The far-reaching perspective overlaps the scenery, and layers of mountains and dark colors match to reveal an "endless" space^[4]. The "secluded and distant land" comes from Han Zhuo's "Another discussion on three distances". The "secluded and distant land" in Han Zhuo's view is clearly proposed and established in painting. Han Zhuo advocated in the "landscape pure Complete works" that the monk Taoist temple should be painted, and the hermit's residence should be "hidden valley" and "secluded"; The character of scenic spot must have the posture of "pure and elegant, quiet and leisurely"; The performance of cold forest should be "quiet charm, Qingqi"; The qi rhyme of the picture should have "quiet and elegant taste"^[5]. Thus it can be seen that "Youyuan" means the secluded landscape and the secluded spirit in the painting. As the

matching and fusion of "environment" and "meaning", the two together constitute the "secluded and distant environment".

In "Early Spring Picture", Guo Xi achieved the shape of secluded space through the "far-reaching" composition of the river valley. Extending from the U-shaped valley to the depths, the viewer is presented with a curved and rugged gully, where the undulating earth falls in layers and the ground is superimposed in an arc. The color of the ink gradually thinned from heavy, from heavy to light, reaching far into the distance. Within these intricate gullies, trees are arranged in a chaotic array, varying in length and color. Some trees maintain their intact form while others break off their branches, and the whole scene is imbued with an atmosphere of desolation, silence and emptiness. In the distance, the mountains show only the outline of their peaks, and the layers of mountains are obscured by a thick mist that seems visible but is not, they seem real and yet they are some kind of magical fantasy. The depth of the river valley and the distance of the mountain create a deeper profound expression, allowing the viewer to experience the profound space of the picture while increasing the sense of remoteness.

3.3 To Detach the Plot and Establish Reality

In Chinese landscape painting, "Pingyuan" presents a broad and mysterious visual effect. The layout of its "Pingyuan" landscape is very simple, with a lot of white space, and only a few trees, grasses or exotic stones show its expansive sense of space. When describing the height and depth of the mountains, Guo Xi uses the words "Yang" and "yeye" respectively, the former referring to the feeling of looking up and being lofty, the latter referring to the discovery of a prying eye. The relationship between the near mountains and the far mountains, as described by Pingyuan, is not based on the main mountain, but on the relationship between mountains. Laozi said in the Tao Te Ching: "If the great surplus is chong, it is not^[6] poor in use", "Chong" means empty and frivolous, and "light" means indifferent and indifferent. "Dilute", meaning indifferent and quiet, in order to the mind and spirit of the state of vacuity.

Guo Xi has a relatively complete expression of Pingyuan in "Tree Color Pingyuan Map", the painting is mainly autumn, Qiushan bright and clean, but there is no lack of thin breath. Near the picture is the slope stone and ancient trees, low flat hill, layer the slope, deep fade out, gradually retreat away. The dead and moist leaves of the ancient wood are interleaved and stacked, and the soft and round stone and the ancient wood form a harmonious echo relationship. The mist in the painting accumulates or diffuses, sometimes thick, sometimes light. The scene in the painting also changes with the flow of the clouds, which can be clear or fuzzy. The presence of the cloud reasonably divides the scene into multiple levels, and people's eyes change with the cloud. "The color of Pingyuan is bright and dark". The ultimate expression of Pingyuan is reflected in a series of subtle changes and balances such as light and dark, dark, heavy and dry in the painting. Every image in the painting is a combination of emptiness and reality, and the relationship between emptiness and reality is embodied in the haze and clouds. The clouds in the painting vary from distance to distance due to thick and thin, and from emptiness to reality. It can be said that the clouds are the manifestation of Pingyuan.

4 The "Tao" Artistic Conception in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*

In 2000, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee, became the first Chinese film to successfully compete for the Oscars. Different from traditional painting art, film art is dynamic. The film embodies the narrative through the layout of the picture and the moving shooting of the lens: in the scene space, the way of moving the lens up and down, back and forth, left and right to simulate the visual perception brought by the "three-distance method"; Under the fixed lens, the moving objects in the front, middle and long distance of the picture frame move in different directions to enrich the fluidity^[7] of the film space. In the composition of the picture, the film draws on the "three far method" to construct the artistic conception of landscape painting, and gives people a picturesque visual experience through unique image expression. Judging from the content of the film, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* embodies a story about jianghu chivalry, revenge and love between children. The audience will be brought into a spiritual field created by the director, from which they can experience a strong Taoist thought.

4.1 The "No Self" Artistic Conception of Freedom

At the end of the film, Yu Jiaolong chooses to go to Wudang Mountain to look for Luo Xiaohu. The camera follows Yu's movements and moves upward. The towering mountain looks like an upright pillar, and Yu struggles to move forward. On both sides of the picture are raised rocks and pine cliffs, and the mountain is divided into light and dark parts by the sun's shadow. Although Yu Jiaolong is located in the center of the picture, the figure appears particularly small against the contrast of the huge stones. The whole mountain is in a straight line, and the stairs in the mountain extend straight upward. Yu Jiaolong is placed at the bottom of the whole scene, in the contrast between mountain and man, the height of the mountain far exceeds the limited scope of vision. As a traveler in the mountains, she is more concerned about the height of the mountains than the outside viewers. The visual impact of the camera moving up and the increasing extension of the mountain psychologically magnifies the human's psychological feeling of the mountains being high and far away.

After Li Mubai's death, Yu Jiaolong's understanding of freedom had a fundamental change. Li Mubai died to save himself, making Yu Jiaolong realize that the "sacrifice oneself for others" in the "Tao" that Li Mubai believed in is the true freedom, which is completely transparent. Taoist philosophy gives man transcendent and eternal meaning. The spirit of man exists independently of the limitations of nature and body. On the basis of the ultimate understanding, consciousness and practice of life and nature, man obtains an absolute spiritual freedom^[8] that surpasses the bondage of the "object self" and "life and death" of the human body. The goal pursued by the characters in the film is to "make people empty and quiet" and "attain the Tao". "Attaining the Tao" is the state of being empty and quiet, seeking the state of "quiet" in the state of forgetting

things and self. The meaning of "vacuity" is to eliminate people's subjective prejudice and desire, and finally achieve the state of "no self".

4.2 The "Detachment" Mood of Emotion

In the film, before leaving Luo Xiaohu for Beijing, Yu Jiaolong looks far into the mountains. In the foreground, there is a clear Jade dragon, a flock of sheep, a hut, and a green mountain in the vicinity. In the back, there is a cloud of cascading mountains. Layers of mountains fall, layer after layer, and the far-reaching image is reflected in the overlapping layers. The deepest blur lies on the right side of the picture, in front of Yujiaolong, which means that its future is uncertain. The overlap of mountains is not a mechanical accumulation, but a layer of tossing and turning. The far-reaching method pushes the mountain from the deep direction to infinity, and the overlapping and dark end is the place where heaven and earth meet. "Wandering outside the dirt and dirt, free from the karma of nothing", Zhuangzi emphasized to get rid of all kinds of worldly level of devoid of individual self-bondage, return to the natural nature.

Yu's first rebellion came when he met Luo Xiaohu over a jade comb. When passing the desert, she always looks out through the small window of the car. When Luo Xiaohu and Yu Jiaolong meet, the scenes of the play are mostly vast deserts and desert oases, giving the audience a sense of openness. Yu is the daughter of an official who wants to break free from the shackles of traditional etiquette, and Luo is a free-flowing wanderer in the desert. Judging from their status, their love for each other is no accident. Yu is bound by strict rules of etiquette since childhood. In her daily life, only when she dresses in black at night can she be free for a short time. Attracted by the unfettered Luo Xiaohu, Yu wants to stay hidden in the desert and ignore her parents' search. Because here she can gain relative mental and physical freedom and be her true self. Li Mubai and Yu Xiulian are deeply bound by the secular ethics, and neither of them has the courage to face their own hearts, and they can only regret to die in the end^[9]. Yu Jiaolong and Luo Xiaohu break through the constraints of traditional etiquette and pursue spiritual freedom. The darkness in the profound place seems to be the most real desire in the human heart. Yujiaolong looks straight at the darkness, gets rid of the external restrictions, and faces the natural desire of the human being.

4.3 The "Balance" Artistic Conception of Character Creation

Li Mubai and Yu Xiulian two people looking for jade Jiao dragon way, finally get its news ready to go back to the nearest Biaoshou stop. After the two Li Yu respectively, the film uses two empty shots of the mountains and forests to connect, connecting Yu Xiulian first to the dead guard alone in the mountains and rivers on the way. The first empty shot is a panoramic shot showing the full landscape of the mountains: clouds and mist-filled clouds above the mountains show the balance between reality and static, while clouds show the characteristics of virtual and dynamic, forming the upper and lower parts, which echo and grow each other. Compared with the first shot, the second empty shot is diagonally divided into two parts, one is real and the other is hidden in the fog. The final shot is divided into the mountain forest, which takes up the majority

of the scene, and the tiny Yoo Soo-lien on the right. In this virtual and real visual design, the various struggles and emotional surges presented promote the flow of time, the transformation of vision and the further development of the story. The clouds, treetops and the flow of blue clouds on the picture all suggest that the original quiet landscape is about to be destroyed, which is obviously different from the quiet scene before the news of Yujiaolong appeared.

Lao Tzu believed that "all things are negative Yin and hold Yang, and qi thinks harmony". Although Yin and Yang are opposite, they can achieve balance. The things in the picture follow the principle of balance, and the characters in the film also show a complementary state of each other. Yu Jiaolong and Yu Xiulian show completely different personality characteristics in the film. If Yin and Yang are compared, Yu Xiulian is "outer Yang and inner Yin", and Yu Jiaolong is "outer Yang and inner Yin". Although Yu Xiulian is engaged in a man's career, she is a woman who walks all over the world, but her heart always yearns for the warmth of her family. Yu Jiaolong, on the other hand, is a very feminine and official woman, but she secretly learns martial arts and hopes to have the freedom and pride to roam the rivers and rivers^[10]. Yu Xiulian follows the rules of the society and acts according to the rules. Her personality has become very obedient under the domestication of the society. On the contrary, Yu Jiaolong confronts her feelings and dares to challenge the rules of society. Femininity and masculinity, love and hate, submission and rebellion, are all vividly reflected in these two female characters, whose antagonistic relationships form part of the film's balance.

5 Conclusion

The combination of "Three far Method" and the film is not only to make the audience's visual experience more intuitive, but more importantly, it also brings a kind of richness of meaning, as Julien said, "when the visual is also perceptual, there is scenery". The landscape spirit and martial arts spirit in the film are consistent with the modern life spirit. People can resonate with the reality in the film, so that the sense of life experience can be transcendent and sublimated. The key reason why the landscape aesthetics constructed by the "Three Far Method" can be combined with the film art and win the praise of the audience is that it is connected with the emotional world of modern people. In summary, the artistic conception of "Tao" and the inner emotions of the characters in the film are turbulent, and the poetic beauty of the landscape is intertwined with the emotions of the characters. *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* has a deeper cultural connotation, and is praised as "a postmodern masterpiece with the artistic conception of Chinese classical landscape".

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