

LANDSCAPE OF THE SOUL

Chapter 4 (Hornbill)

PowerPoint Presentation

The author- Nathalie Trouveroy

Masters in History of Art and Archaeology, specialisation in Japanese Art and calligraphy, accomplished translator - remains an Art Historian

Nathalie Trouveroy, wife of the Belgian Ambassador to India, is an art historian. Recently she and her friend Agnes Montanari translated William Dalrymple's masterpiece on Delhi, 'City of Djinns' in pictures.

"As an art historian I had read many books on Delhi written by authors like French naturalist Francois Bernier, Ibn Battuta and Khushwant Singh. But Agnes and I chose Dalrymple's work because we wanted to explore India from the contemporary foreigners point of view," says Nathalie, who is among the most popular wives of envoys to India.

Nathalie who has done her Masters in the history of art and archaeology, with a specialization in Japanese art from the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium, is pained at the eroding heritage of Delhi. "The problem is that Delhites don't have a sense of belonging," she says and adds, "A majority of people staying in Delhi are migrants from pre-partitioned Punjab or from states like Bihar or Southern India. A need to preserve the heritage is missing."





Relevance, facts
and figures
mentioned in the
text

- Shanshui

In China, '*shanshui*' means 'mountain water' or in other words, the 'landscape' that the artist represents. These landscape paintings usually center on mountains. Mountains had long been seen as sacred places in China which were viewed as the homes of immortals and thus, close to the heavens. Water is the feminine element in such poetry balancing the power of the masculine mountains.

- Yin and Yang

The Chinese philosophy believes in the concept of Yin and Yang. According to this philosophy, everything in the universe may be classified as masculine or feminine. The masculine entities will be vertical, dry, warm, stable, active, powerful and so on. The feminine entities will be horizontal, moist, fluid, cool, unstable, receptive, gentle and so on. The interaction between these two aspects maintain the balance of the world. Without one or with the dominance of either, the world shall see chaos. This crucial interaction takes place in what the Chinese call 'the middle void'. A neutral space where the elements mingle and balance each other.

Confucius

(/kənˈfjuːʃəs/ kən-FEW-shəs,^[1] 551–479 BC) was a Chinese teacher, editor, politician, and philosopher of the Spring and Autumn period of Chinese history.

The philosophy of Confucius, also known as Confucianism, emphasized personal and governmental morality, correctness of social relationships, justice and sincerity.

Confucius is traditionally credited with having authored or edited many of the Chinese classic texts including all of the Five Classics

He espoused the well-known principle "Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself", the Golden Rule. He is also a traditional deity in Daoism.

His followers competed successfully with many other schools during the Hundred Schools of Thought era only to be suppressed in favor of the Legalists during the Qin Dynasty





Zhuang Zhou and Taoism

- **Zhuang Zhou** (/dʒuˈɑːŋ ˈdʒoʊ/), [1] often known as Zhuangzi (/ˈʒwæŋˈziː/; [2] "Master Zhuang"), [a] or Chuang Tzu, was an influential Chinese philosopher who lived around the 4th century BC during the Warring States period, a period corresponding to the summit of Chinese philosophy, the Hundred Schools of Thought.
- He is credited with writing—in part or in whole—a work known by his name, the *Zhuangzi*, which is one of the foundational texts of Taoism.
- **Taoism** (/ˈdaʊɪzəm/, /ˈtaʊ-/) or **Daoism** (/ˈdaʊ-/), is a religious or philosophical tradition of Chinese origin which emphasizes living in harmony with the Tao (Chinese: 道; pinyin: Dào; literally: "the Way", also romanized as Dao).
- The Tao is a fundamental idea in most Chinese philosophical schools; in Taoism, however, it denotes the principle that is the source, pattern and substance of everything that exists.
- Taoism differs from Confucianism by not emphasizing rigid rituals and social order.

Wu Daozi

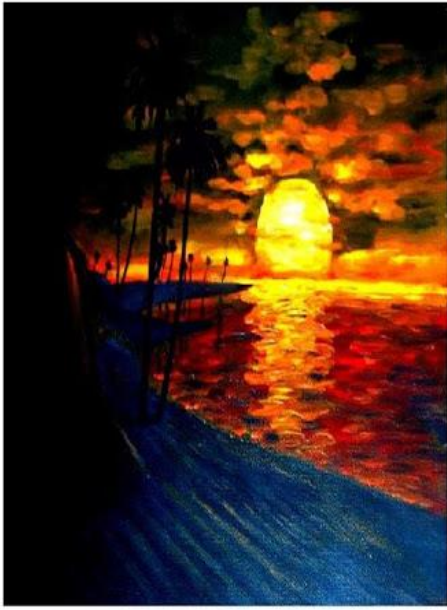
- **Wu Daozi** (680–c. 760), also known as **Daoxuan**, was a Chinese artist of the Tang Dynasty. Michael Sullivan considers him one of "the masters of the seventh century,"^[1] Some of his works survive; many, mostly murals, have been lost.
- Wu traveled widely and created murals in Buddhist and Daoist temples. Wu also drew mountains, rivers, flowers, birds. No authentic originals are extant, though some exist in later copies or stone carvings.^[2] Wu's famous painting of Confucius was preserved by having been copied in a stone engraving.
- Numerous legends gathered around Wu Daozi, often concerning commissions by Emperor Xuanzong.



INTRODUCTION



'SUNSET' BY CHEN ZHENG-LONG



'SUNSET' BY NATALJA PICUGINA

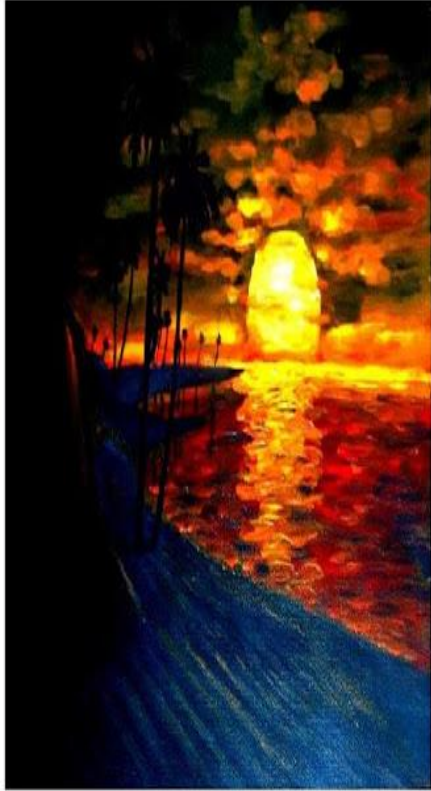
Landscape of the Soul - Reading and Analysis

Take a look at the two paintings below. Both have been titled 'The Sunset'. As you observe them, try to answer the following questions:

- Which one immediately brings a sunset to mind?
- Why, that is, which aspects of this painting remind you of the sunset so promptly?
- Why do you think the other painting has also been titled, 'The Sunset'?
- Look at the names of the painters. Which one do you think is a painting from the western part of the world, which one from the east?



'SUNSET' BY CHEN ZHENG-LONG



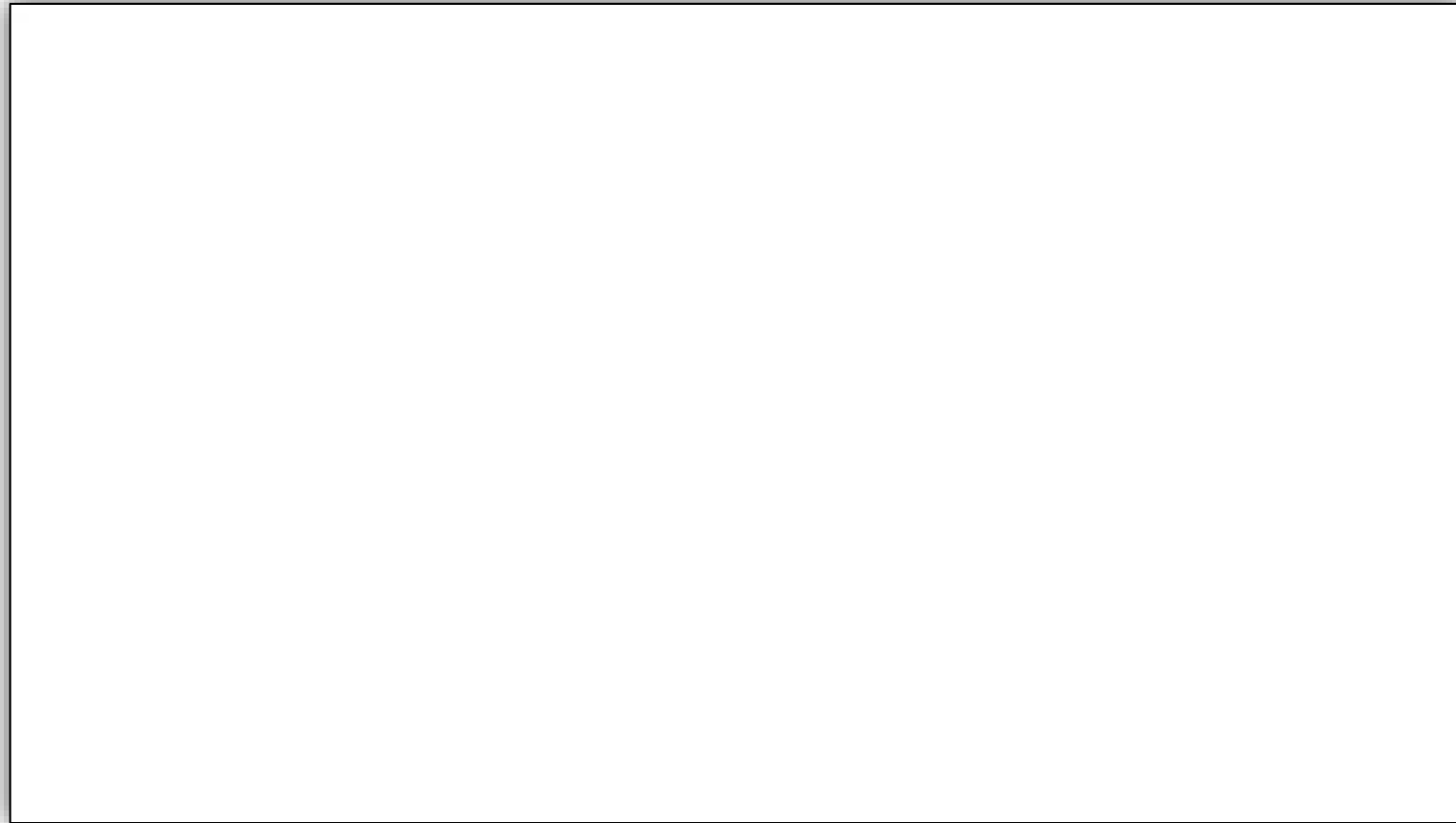
'SUNSET' BY NATALJA PICUGINA

- We all know that paintings are of myriad types - the portraits, the still life, the landscapes and so on.
- This chapter shall focus on landscape paintings and through them, introduce you to two perceptions and styles of art - the eastern and the western.
- While a painter of the west will focus on capturing an absolute reality, a likeness true to the one he 'sees', the eastern painter will paint what he 'envisions' when he looks at the landscape around him.
- The aim of the Western artist is 'delicate realism' while the eastern artist paints 'for a spiritual and conceptual space'.
- A western artist will help the viewer see what he is seeing, while the eastern artist will wish the viewer to think what he may be thinking.
- Remember, that both are creative renditions and both will take you into a world of imagination where you may have unique individual reactions to each painting.
- The author does not imply that one style is better than the other, merely points out the differences between the two.

The main plot of the story

- The writer contrasts Chinese art with European art by using two stories. The Tang Emperor Xuanzong commissioned the painter Wu Daozi to decorate a palace wall. When it was done, the Emperor admired the scene. The painter drew the Emperor's attention to a cave and when he clapped his hands the entrance of the cave opened. The painter entered but before Emperor could move the entrance closed and the painting vanished, along with the artist.
- In another story, a painter wouldn't draw the eye of a dragon he had painted for fear it would fly out of the painting. The writer then cites a story representative of Western painting in which a master blacksmith Quinten Metsys fell in love with a painter's daughter. To be accepted as a son-in-law Quinten painted a fly on the painter's latest panel. When the painter tried to swat it away he realised the truth - Quinten was taken on as an apprentice and married his beloved.
- These stories reveal what each form tries to achieve. The Europeans want a perfect illusionistic likeness while in Asia it is the essence of inner life and spirit. In the Chinese story only the artist knows the way within and he reaches his goal beyond material appearance. Unlike a Western figurative painting a classical Chinese landscape does not reproduce an actual view and one can enter it from any point and travel in it. It requires the active participation of the viewer both physically and mentally. Man becomes a means of expression of communication or 'the eye of the landscape'

Short video on the chapter



The anecdotes :

- The author shares the anecdote of Wu Daozi, a painter who disappeared into his own painting. The emperor who had commissioned the painting could only appreciate the outer, overt appearance. It was the painter who could envision an entire new world within the landscape and reached the ultimate goal of any artist by becoming one with his own creation.
- The author further shares the anecdote about the western artist, Quinten Metsys who drew a fly so realistically on another painter's panel that the latter tried to swat it away before he realised it was only a likeness.
- The two anecdotes show that the eastern artist is painting a vision unique to his own perception while the western artist wishes to represent reality on his canvas with almost mirror-like precision.
- For a long time, eastern art was considered 'art brut', the art of the uncivilized, untrained artist. These men and women had no formal training in art even though they produced artistically enriching creations. Jean Debuffet was one of the global pioneers in such art. Eastern art was not seen as the mainstream art for a long time, but this periphery style has finally begun to be given due credit due to people like Nek Chand. Nek Chand took Indian art to the global arena via the Rock Garden in Chandigarh. His raw vision received accolades all over the world and our artists were finally given recognition.

Creative word usages in the chapter

1. **essence**

- (i) Their repetitive structure must have taught the people around the great composer the essence of music.
- (ii) Part of the answer is in the proposition; but the essence is in the meaning.
- (iii) The implications of these schools of thought are of practical essence for the teacher.
- (iv) They had added vanilla essence to the pudding.

Answer

- (i) the most important quality of something that makes it what it is.
- (ii) the main part.
- (iii) practical importance.
- (iv) liquid taken from vanilla that contains its smell and taste in very strong form.

2. (i) The masks from Bawa village in Mali look like long panels of decorated wood.
(ii) Judge H. Hobart Grooms told the jury panel he had heard the reports.
(iii) The panel is laying the groundwork for an international treaty.
(iv) The glass panels of the window were broken.
(v) Through the many round tables, workshops and panel discussions, a consensus was reached.
(vi) The sink in the hinged panel above the bunk drains into the head.

Answer

2. Panel

- (i) boards of decorated wood
(ii) group of men selected to give unanimous verdict on a legal case.
(iii) group of experts.
(iv) window panes.
(v) group discussions.
(vi) a flat board fixed with a hinge.

Meaning of difficult words in the chapter

Notice these expressions in the text. Infer their meaning from the context.

Anecdote
illusionistic likeness
delicate realism
conceptual space
figurative painting

Answer

anecdote : From the text, the meaning of anecdote can be inferred as a short account of a particular incident or event, especially of an interesting or exciting nature.

delicate realism : It refers to the alluring quality of the art which makes it seem real. It is an interest in or concern for the actual or real as opposed to abstract.

illusionistic likeness : It refers to an adjective of the technique of using pictorial methods in order to deceive the eye. The reference is to an illusion created by the semblance of something.

figurative painting : A figurative painting refers to the metaphoric representation of a piece of art, through the eyes of the creator's imagination.

conceptual space : It refers to relation with the abstract than the factual representation. This is the incalculable dimension of the understanding of concepts.

Textbook questions

1. (i) Contrast the Chinese view of art with the European view with examples.
- (ii) Explain the concept of shanshui.

Answer

(i) The Chinese paintings are based on imaginative, inner or spiritual approach whereas the European paintings reproduce an actual view, of an external or real object. The paintings of Wu Daozi and other painters of Europe illustrate the difference. (ii) Shanshui, meaning "mountain-water", refers to a style of Chinese painting that involves natural landscapes, the landscape which is an inner one, a spiritual and conceptual space. It represents the two complementary poles ('yin' and 'yang') reflecting the Daoist view of the universe.

2.(i)What do you understand by the terms 'outsider art' and 'art brut' or 'raw art'?

(ii) Who was the "untutored genius who created a paradise" and what is the nature of his contribution to art?

Answer

'Outsiders art' refers to those art who have no right to be artists as they have recieved no formal training yet show talent and artistic insight. 'Art brut' or 'raw art' are the works of art in their raw state as regards cultural and artistic influences.

(ii) The "untutored genius" who created "paradise" was Nek Chand, an 80- year old creator-director who made the world famous rock garden at Chandigarh. His was an 'outsider art' in which he sculpted with stone and recycled materials. He used anything and everything from a tin to a sink to a broken down car to form an artistic piece. One of his famous creations are 'Women by the Waterfall'.

Discuss the following statements

1. "The Emperor may rule over the territory he has conquered, but only the artist knows the way within."

Answer This sentence explains the fact that even though an Emperor might rule an entire kingdom and have power over his conquered territory, only an artist would be able to go beyond any material appearance. He knows both the path and the method of the mysterious work of the universe. True meaning of his work can be seen only by means known to him, irrespective of how powerful an emperor is.

2. "The landscape is an inner one, a spiritual and conceptual space."

Answer This phrase explains The Chinese art from where a Chinese painter wants you to enter his mind rather than borrow his eyes. This is a physical as well as a mental participation. It is a landscape created by the artist to travel up and down, and back again, through the viewer's eyes. The landscape is not 'real' and can be reached from any point.

Thinking about the Language

1. Find out the correlates of Yin and Yang in other cultures.

Answer The Indian culture lays stress on Nature and God. Nature is the 'yen' or female part whereas God the creator, is the male part. This concept also known as 'Maya' or Brahma' The combination of two creates the whole world, all it objects and also inhabitants.

2. What is the language spoken in Flanders?

Answer 'French 'language is spoken in Flanders which is a region in Belgium.

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