



Artistic Characteristics of Fresco from the Perspective of Time-Space Construction

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Received 16 September 2013; accepted 12 December 2013

Abstract

The time-space construction characteristic of fresco embodies the human's idea of reflecting infinite spiritual strength in finite individuals. The time-space of fresco includes not only the traditional three dimensions of space: length, width and height, but also the time factor, and the introduction of the latter renders a kind of multidimensional characteristic for the time-space of fresco. The fresco composition is featured in multiple centers, rendering macroscopic, grand and grandiose sense of fresco. The visual perception and psychological feelings given to the people by the fresco widely differ from those of ordinary easel paintings. The time-space construction of fresco can be divided into three main classes: realistic and logical construction; super-realistic and non-logical construction; interactional construction of fresco in harmony with the environment. The time-space of fresco sources from the spiritual time-space created by artists.

Key words: Fresco; Time-space; Freedom; Spirituality

QIN Demei (2013). Artistic Characteristics of Fresco from the Perspective of Time-Space Construction. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 9(6), 103-111. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/ccc/article/view/j.ccc.1923670020130906.3824>
 DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/j.ccc.1923670020130906.3824>

INTRODUCTION

The human is always in a status of exploring the universe unceasingly, the process of which is not only one of the human discovering and realizing themselves, but also

one of the human transcending themselves. Such kind of transcendence is one of transcending the existence of oneself and materials, namely, to achieve the freedom of spirit. The human's freedom of spirit can be reflected in the form of rich imagination. The French aesthetician Mikel Dufrene said that "The world is envisioned, and it always is deemed as a possible one perceived. In order to closely connect to the perceived object, only the imagination can be used to separate the object from its natural background and connect it with certain status of inner world" (Ban, 1999, p.325). The exercising of imagination makes the human's inner world detached from everything and from the space and time of movement of things. The world created through imagination is one with eternal space and time, wherein the arts acts as a carrier of such creation by imagination. As for the drawing, the transcendence against realistic time-space is more reflected in fresco. The time-space of fresco (in comparison with ordinary easel paintings) embodies the characteristics of freedom and immutability. The time-space of fresco is the extension of imagination of the artist, "to organically organize the observed, imaged, dreamed, macroscopic, microcosmic, real, visual, tangible and intangible things as required by the subject, and be possible to arrange the ancient, modern, eastern, western, overhead and overground things of different space and time in one image as required" (Zhao, 1999, p.9). The time-space of fresco is spiritual time-space created by artists, the field for imagination to gallop without limitations of reality.

1. TIME AND SPACE OF FRESCO

In general, the easel painting doesn't express time factor, and the space in easel painting indicates the three dimensions perceived by us: length, width and height. While in fresco painting, the introduction of time factor renders the time and space of fresco with

multi-dimensional characteristic, and the time may be a combination of the past, the present and the future, and a continuum of time where the incident happens as well. The space of fresco may not only involve the three traditional dimensions of easel painting, but also combines the spiritual space of painters, either the space in reality that seem to impossibly appear simultaneously or the unreal space like imagined space and dreamed space.



Figure1
The School of Athens, Raphael Santi



Figure 2
Madonna Della Seggiola



Figure3
The Night Revels of Han Xizai, Gu Hongzhong

The sense of time and space is the unique trait of fresco, and the main characteristic of fresco differing from the easel painting. It can be observed by comparing the fresco *The School of Athens* (Figure 1) and the oil painting *Madonna Della Seggiola* (Figure 2) (works of Raphael, a great master of Italian Renaissance) that the time and space of fresco is not the concretion of a moment for a scene of life, but a recombination of space and time by the painter. In this fresco, cultural celebrities in different periods of ancient Greek are present in front of our eyes, and the picture is a combination of different time periods. Also, the Chinese scroll painting *The Night Revels of Han Xizai* (Figure 3), with the picture being a continuum of time and a extension of space, includes and presents the revels of Han Xizai for several days and nights in the picture, rendering the fluidity for time and space. The time-space of fresco is spiritual time-space created by artists, and here the time and space of fresco are “neither the concept of subjectivity and reason nor the properties of objective things nor the transcendental sensible intuition of cognition; the time-space here is emotional, namely, its continuity, pause and transition, as well as its existence and extinction, are connected with the emotion. Such emotion includes not only the human’s conquest and transcendence against the existing material world but also the human’s free feeling and free imaging” (Li, 1999, p.270). The multi-dimensional time-space of fresco is an emotional one, cohering the mind and wisdom.

The time-space of fresco is made from expressing the image that the painter himself observes at a point outside the picture, to presenting his feelings from the observation, and then to becoming a spiritual abstract detached from reality. Wherein, it is not only the expression of artistic concept of artists but also the guiding artistic expression of the era where the artists live in. The conversion of time-space of fresco is closely connected to the development of science & technology, philosophy, and psychology. The fresco is unique in form and transcendental in spirit, regardless of serving as the works of artists and serving as the popular products of public art.

2. TIME-SPACE CONSTRUCTION OF FRESCO

The construction refers to “the mechanism of formation and evolution of schema or structure in the human’s cognitive process” (Feng & Xu, 2000, p.574). The time-space construction of fresco means the mechanism of making picture with time and space as the basic elements of forming and evolving the schema or structure.

The time-space construction of fresco can be divided into three main classes: realistic and logical construction; super-realistic and non-logical construction; interactional construction of fresco in harmony with the environment. The realistic and logical time-space construction and the

super-realistic and non-logical time-space construction give an explanation for the space and time of picture, while the interactional construction of fresco in harmony with the environment does not only embody the meanings of the first two, but also embody the meaning of interactional time-space produced by the relationship between fresco and the environment.

2.1 Realistic and Logical Construction

The realistic and logical time-space construction is



Figure 4
Genesis, Michelangelo

2.1.1 Construct a Picture Dominated by Time

Construct a picture with time as the clue, and such picture can be either a combination of historical time, the generating process of an incident or a time combination in possession of symbolic meaning. The *Genesis* of Michelangelo (Figure 4) embodies a combination of a span of time in the picture. Michelangelo presents all the seven days where the God creates the world in one picture as described in *The Bible* concerning the story of the God creating the world, which shows the continuation of a span of time and renders a picture with feelings of grandeur and magnificence. Michelangelo's psychology rich in rebellious spirit and in pursuit of detachment from the earthly world is incisively and vividly expressed in *Genesis*. At the same time, the picture also implies the artist's idea of seeking freedom of spirit with works. The entire ceiling frescoes truly express the power of human rather than express the story of God. The time-space construction of fresco embodies the characteristic of motility of things, by virtue of which the abundant cultural connotation is reflected. In the picture of Chinese Dunhuang fresco *Prince Mahāsattva Sacrificed His Body to Feed the Tiger* (Figure 5), the unfolding of incident makes the viewpoint moving, producing multiple centers of the picture. The composition of picture is arranged in accordance with such a story line: The Prince and his two brothers go out for a travel/The Prince sees a tiger and seven little tigers below a cliff that are nearly starving to death/The Prince's heart melts with pity/He leaps from the cliff/The tiger is too weak to eat him/The Prince cuts his arm with stone/The tiger gains strength after licking the blood and eats the Prince/The Prince becomes an

base on the objective reality, and acts by enumerating, juxtaposing and combining the time and space on the basis of objective existence to render them with continuity and tractility. The realistic and logical time-space view emphasizes the high-level overview, presenting the continuous or a large-span time and space in picture simultaneously so as to express rich content, and some pictures may possess the connotation of symbolizing and implying time and space.



Figure 5
Prince Mahāsattva Sacrificed His Body to Feed the Tiger, Dunhuang fresco

immortal. The incident of the Prince sacrificing his body to feed the tiger is tactfully arranged in the picture, showing the unfolding process of incident and reflecting the continuity of time. The Dunhuang fresco first rose in the Northern and Southern Dynasties where the Central China was in great chaos and the masses lived in misery, while the Buddhism advocated the idea of leaving the cycle of reincarnation and obtaining the Buddha-hood for many generations by virtue of Ksanti, which was accepted by the masses. Hence, most of the frescoes involve the Jatakas tales for preaching. Along with the development of dynasties, the features of Dunhuang fresco changed and richened the subjects, with a large number of Buddhist paintings appearing, such as Amitabha Sutra, Yakushi Sutra, Vimalakirti-nirdesa-sutra, Pure Land, and other scenes, but it remained unchanged that the Dunhuang fresco provided the masses with illusory thought and pursuit. Also as for the Dunhuang fresco accommodates stories and plots as many as possible in one small picture, providing the masses with more wishes and hopes for purpose of letting the masses to seek spiritual peace and comfort.

The entire painting *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* of Paul Gauguin embodies the allegorical time and space. Coincidentally, Hawking in 20th century also put forward the thought of "Where did the universe come from, and where is it going?" It becomes a question thought by the human all the time from ancient to modern times that how to "endow the brief existence occupied by individuals with intensive meanings and gain eternity and immortality" in such a

fleeting and short life (Li, 1999, p.270). From Confucius's "The Master standing by a stream, said, "It passes on just like this, not ceasing day or night!" to Hawking's black holes nowadays, the consciousness of questioning that how to seek infinite significance of life within finite time and space and to achieve eternal always puzzles the people from generation to generation. Gauguin's picture applies the romantic symbolism, symbolizing the process of one's life with different stages of the people. The religious statue in the left-rear section of picture implies the confusion of Gauguin on faith. Gauguin was always seeking for the meaning of life throughout his lifetime, and went to the primitive and beautiful Tahiti Island later in his life, where he found plain and savageness of human nature yet not found the value of life in his mind at last, and died from depression. Such confusion on faith of Gauguin also reflects the faith collapse of a batch of people of an era. What on earth is the pursuit of life after breaking the traditional aesthetic idea and values?



Figure 6
Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?



Figure 7
Guernica, Picasso



Figure 8
Girl Before a Mirror, Picasso

"In the beginning of the twentieth century, the aesthetics opened a new chapter along with the coming of new era of the movie" (HilleBrecht & Chen, 1989). "Inaugurate a new era pattern of single art stereo-touch with moving image and compound sensory stimuli" (Zhou, 2002). The modernists advocate to adopt "the figure containing general concept of motion to substitute the description of motion process concerning a moment" (HilleBrecht & Chen, 1989). Picasso's paintings embody such a new form of time. *Guernica* (Figure 7) summarizes the disasters of war rather than depict the war scenes, reminding the people of the disasters at any time. In his painting, we can not see the concrete characters and plots, and all the images are "metamorphosis of articles", destroying the natural order, and recombining them to achieve new meanings, which becomes a tenet and can be seen everywhere in Picasso's paintings. Many distorted images in *Guernica* possess symbolic meanings, for instance, the bull represents the fascism, the weeping women represents sadness, the lamp represents the tearful eye, the women holding a torch represents the pursuit of light, etc., in Picasso easel paintings, we hardly see works with symbolic meaning like *Guernica*. If we view *Guernica* and *Girl Before a Mirror* (Figure 8) in the meanwhile, our mental feelings are different. From *Girl Before a Mirror*, we see an adolescent maid admiring herself in the mirror and the picture shows the full body of maid, letting us feel the beauty of an adolescent maid, to which our association on this painting is limited. While from *Guernica*, we can feel that the war is a disaster of the human, wherein involving not only the destruction brought in by the concrete war in Guernica but also the disasters of all wars in human history. Hence, the time-space of picture is the one for disasters of all wars of mankind rather than the one for the war in Guernica. It brings about endless psychological imagination for us.

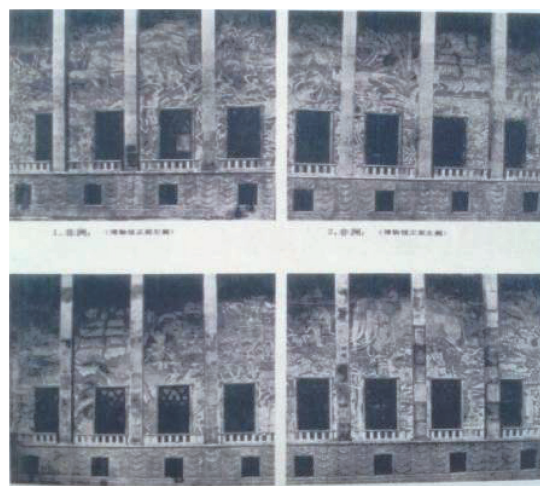


Figure 9
Relief Fresco Wall of Museum of International Folk Art, France



Figure 10
Offer Fruits of Three-plant Trees as Tribute, Han dynasty stone portrait

2.1.2 Construct a Picture Dominated by Space

The realistic and logical space structure is a combination of a lot of real space instead of a common perspective space, wherein the viewpoint can be moving and in numbers rather than still and single; the realistic and logical space can also be the combination of imaginary space and real space. The *Relief Fresco Wall of Museum of International Folk Art* from France (Figure 9) combines the scenes in different space in reality in one picture including African primeval forest, plains of Southeast Asia, the Mediterranean area, islands, etc., from which we can experience not only the graceful scenery of primeval forest but also the local conditions and customs of Asians, as well as the laboring scenes of the people in South America and Oceania. The picture is a salutatory combination of real space. The picture of Chinese Han dynasty stone portrait *Offer Fruits of Three-plant Trees as Tribute* (Figure 10) is a combination of imaginary space. In the Han dynasty stone portraits, “the living, the dead, the immortal, ghosts and goblins, historical figures, real prospect and mythical fantasies display together in the meanwhile, and the original totem, Confucian doctrine and the human’s divination and superstition are arranged in one place”. “It demonstrates a colorful and dazzling world with great verve” (Li, 1999, p.270). The “beauty of great magnificence” present in Han dynasty stone portraits sources from the profound and abnormally abundant romantic passion and imagination of Han dynasty. Mix the myth-history-reality into one, and embody the human’s victory and optimism spirit of conquering and occupying the outer world with abundant and unsophisticated vigor and strength” (Li, 1999, p.421.). The stone portrait *Offer Fruits of Three-plant Trees as Tribute* can be divided into four levels: the first level is that the immortals offer the Hsi Wang-mu with fruits of Three-plant Trees as tribute,

and among these immortals, some have bird’s tails, some have horse’s head, chicken’s head, etc.. The second level is a scene of playing music. The third level is a scene of kitchen. The Fourth level is a scene of ranged chariots and war-horses. The first level is the world of immortals, while the latter three levels demonstrate the human’s world. The entire picture is a interweaving and juxtaposition of the human and immortals. The real life is attached with wings of imagination: the immortals live with ordinary persons, and the illusion and reality exist together.

2.1.3 Construct a Picture by Combining the Time and Space

Construct a picture simultaneously dominated by the time and space, such as the World Plaza stone relief fresco wall *Window of the World* in Shenzhen with a picture nearly embodying all the achievements of civilization since the start of human civilization from the culture of Babylon, the culture of the ancient Egypt and Rome, the culture of India, China and Japan, etc. to the future cosmic culture possibly imaged by the human. The picture is not only a combination of different space around the world but also a combination of different time from ancient times up to now.

2.2 Super-Realistic, Non-Logical Construction

The super-realistic and non-logical construction refers to the one transcending the reality and without any concrete realities, and thus the picture reveals an inexplicable and uncertain time-space. The super-realistic and non-logical construction will “reveal the inner mood and sense of being of creation subject through various wonderful arrangement and combination of images” (Xie, 1987, p.34). The pictures usually possess atmosphere of dream and fantasy.



Figure 11
Frescoes of Wind Palace, Dali

2.2.1 Construct a Picture With Dreams

Construct a picture with dreams, and the picture is a combination of dreams and reality. In Dali’s *Frescoes of Wind Palace* (Figure 11), we can find new sense of space, which makes us producing a feeling of dream. We can feel a kind of “space fear” and “the environment characteristics after space loses the thingness” (HilleBrecht & Chen, 1989). The picture re-interprets the relationship in-between the subject and the object. Dali made a demonstrative combination of dreams and real articles

in the painting, rendering an absurd, contradictory and stunned picture. The intention in Dali's painting can be traced from words of Martin Heidegger: ".....The time and space can be shortened due to the development of transportation and communication means, the reality and articles in reality become things without any intervals yet sharing the same shape. This will disturb the relationship in-between the reality and object world yet the fear will get a chance to step in" (HilleBrecht & Chen, 1989). The picture will no longer express the authenticity of articles but the surmise in the painter's mind, a super-realistic and non-logical space. The picture of Dali's *Frescoes of Wind Palace* is the expansion of the painter's imagination on a poem. With the love story of east wind and west wind as the origin, Dali expresses the love between him and his wife in the picture. The east wind and west wind are fantastic transformation of Dali and his wife. The fresco covers five walls of one hall, and the picture adopts the scenography in an upward view, wherein the zenithal picture exposes a square firmament, and the Pegasus carries beautiful angels and soars in the sky, with Amphion's lyre lingering and shine with boundless radiance sprinkling the earth and shining the common people. Everything in the picture seems like fairy tale, symbolizing the beauty of love. At the same time, all in the picture are unrealistic, implying the illusory and visionary love.

2.2.2 Construct a Picture With Abstract Symbols

Joan Miró's *The Wall of the Sun* does not depict so much the sun and the moon as the art symbols in Miró's mind. In the painting, all symbols do not possess the objectivity of substance but possess the symbolism of substance. Miró uses the image of microorganism to embody the image of cosmic body in the painting, and the wide difference between large and small in such conception is a kind of manifestation of the painter giving play to his creative ability under free mental state. In the painting, bold lines traverse the picture, rendering the entire picture with childish fantasy. In this way, Miró wants to tell us in the eyes of a child that the mankind is full of wonder on the future universe. The universe is unknowable for the mankind to a large extent, and after the USA succeeded in landing on the moon, the mankind began with studies on the universe more persistently, and at the same time, it also brought about many confusion and puzzles to the mankind. What should the mankind do? This is the atmosphere conveyed in Miró's painting. All the images in Henri Matisse's *Dance* are abstracted into symbols of the picture. Just as the words of Matisse: "Each piece of artwork is an aggregation of symbols" (Flam & Ouyang, 1987, p.221). The complicated and noisy modern industrial society makes the mind of people in nervous status losing the proper calm and peace. In Miró's painting, we find the beauty same as the comfortable easy chairs. The people in picture are no longer those in real

life but the symbol rich in vitality, and changes of these symbols embody the real look of beings under original conditions and the rhythm of life entity in the universe.

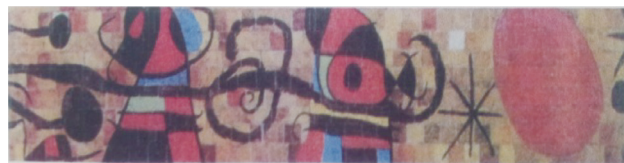


Figure 12
The Wall of the Sun, Miró

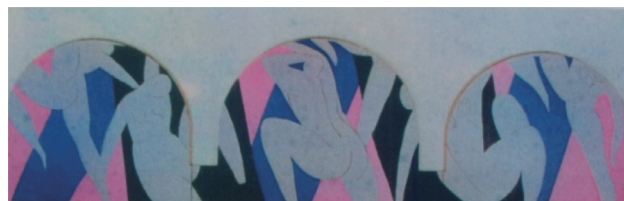


Figure 13
Dance, Matisse

The realistic and logical time-space and the super-realistic and non-logical time-space present characteristics like the lengthening of time, the expansion of space, the generalization of time-space, the cancellation of time-space, etc.. The lengthening of time and the extension of space are the association of creation subject on time and space in an instant, and enlarging the association in an instant will form the lengthening of time and extension of space. For instance, Michelangelo's *Genesis* presents the lengthening of time, while the relief fresco of human museum of France is the extension of space. The pictures of Gauguin's *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* and Gustav Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze* embody a kind of "generalization of time-space", but they do not present us with concrete time and definite space. "It is abstracted into a kind of cosmic consciousness, and the content of picture acts as a commanding philosopher, showing us the living state of mankind and elucidating philosophy thought of life" (Wu, 2000, p.167). The paintings like Miró's *The Wall of the Sun* and *The Wall of the Moon*, Picasso's *Guernica*, and Matisse's *Dance* present a kind of "cancellation of time-space", unavailable for perceiving the time specificity of the past, present and future or the space specificity, and with the picture presenting an eternal time-space.

2.3 Interactional Construction of Fresco In Harmony With the Environment

The fresco implies the relationship in-between itself and the environment intentionally or unintentionally since its birth. For instance, the *Bulls* in Lascaux Cave of France, wherein the bulls' bellies coincide with the bulge of wall surface, characterize the relationship in-between fresco and wall surface. Up to today, the adaptability of fresco to shape of walls is extended to the adaptability of fresco to architectural space environment, thus evolving into the interactivity of fresco with the environment. If

the fresco is designed just simply aiming at adaptation to the environment, it will cause the fresco in a passive and obedient status. The design of fresco can be divided into two classes: The one is to become decoration for ornamenting the space after it is finished. This is usually observed after the completion of a building, a residential quarter, or an entertainment venue where there is a blank wall. The fresco will be made on such wall, wherein its design is in a passive status at the very beginning; The other one is that the design of fresco is taken into account from the commencement of designing the environment or the architectural space, consequently, the fresco becomes an important part of space, its existence is not dispensable, and its status plays a direct role in the success of environment. All these two kinds of environment will have an effect on the design of fresco. In case of a good fresco, it will stir our association with the environment once we see it rather than be just deemed as decoration of wall surface. Such association is exactly aroused by the interactional time-space. As said above, the realistic and logical time-space view and the super-realistic and non-logical time-space view imply either the religious truths upheld by the entire culture or the individual image of artists, however, for the picture alone, the time-space construction of frescoes in environment is one of forming a new time-space by combining the picture with its surrounding environment. It has characteristics of the first two aspects, but further emphasizes in forming a new time-space through the combination with environment.

2.3.1 Time-Space of Fresco in Specially-Set Environment

Specially arrange a circular square as the carrier wall surface in a space originally without wall surface, and use the culture of fresco picture itself to render a kind of cultural atmosphere. The World Plaza stone relief fresco wall *Window of the World* in Shenzhen can be taken as a good example. The park of window of the world shows people cultural architectures all around the world, and creates dense atmosphere of world culture for the people. The fresco wall records nearly all the culture and achievements since the start of civilization, which is in full accord with the park's atmosphere. The long columns recording the history in front of fresco wall combine with the fresco to form a cultural corridor. A performance square similar to the earth is located in the middle of circular square, and it is surrounded by the corridor, seeming to be in the spatio-temporal tunnel of vast Milky Way. When arts groups around the world give a performance here, they face not only the Chinese culture but also the crystallization of world civilization for thousands of years. When the music starts, we seem to go back to the glorious ancient times in one moment.

Miró's *The Wall of the Sun* and *The Wall of the Moon*, and the *Berlin Wall* of Germany all are masterpieces of creating cultural atmosphere.



Figure 14
Cat by Lake Alster

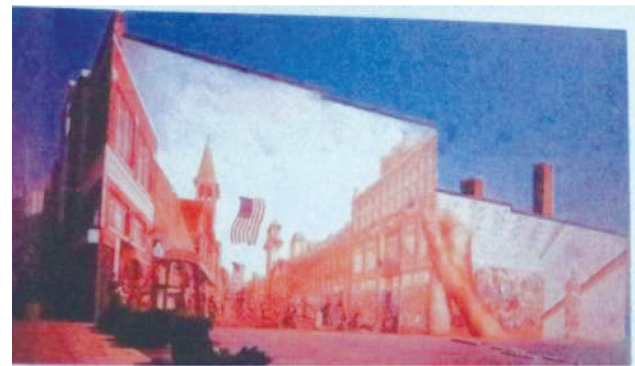


Figure 15
Washington street fresco in the USA

2.3.2 Time-Space of Street Fresco

The human's recuperation cannot be separated from their living environment, and good living environment will cultivate sentiment of the people and beautify the human mind. The rapid development of building industry leaves more development space for fresco, and under such background, the street fresco emerges. The trend of popularization of western art makes the street fresco to present characteristics like vulgarization and interesting. In China, the street fresco is at germination stage of development.

Washington street fresco in the USA (Figure 15) is one with picture showing the people an old street a century ago where the street is still busy, the colored flags upstairs are still vivid and the pedestrians in the street still come and go, and without any sign indicating that it is a thing of the past. One hand abruptly stretching out in the lower-left corner of picture holds the entire picture. Such absurd and interesting conception sources from the super-realism. This painting is placed at a crossroad, the deep perspective of street in picture widens the crowded crossroad in reality, and the street in picture and the street in reality correspond with each other, causing a spatial illusion for the people. In the picture of *Cat by Lake Alster*

of Hamburg, Germany (Figure 14), the cat squats on a sill with the window open. It is a very common painting, but as for the scaling up of picture, an interesting time-space is formed in-between this painting and environment. The scale of cat to the pedestrian is basically of 10:1, wherein the cat is no longer an animal in reality, it becomes the

symbol of interest of this city, and the city's humor is vividly portrayed. The characteristics of contemporary European and American street frescoes also reveal the transition of contemporary aesthetics towards popular aesthetics and reception aesthetics.

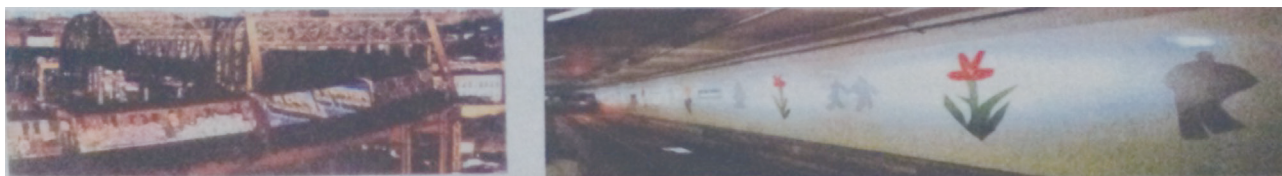


Figure 16
Fresco at the Tokyo station of Namboku of Japanese subway

2.3.3 Time-Space of Flowing Fresco

The time-space of flowing fresco can be divided into two classes: The first is that fresco itself is flowing, and an interactional time-space is produced in-between the flow of fresco and still environment. In case of the train compartment of New York city subway in the USA, the fresco on train body travel along with the train, and the time-space is changing together with the surroundings. The symbiotic time-space in-between frescoes on train body and the environment will vary as the train crosses the grassland and the desert. In modern cities, such frescoes on train body are very promising, and in the near future, we will find that the advertisements on vehicle body have already become interesting ones, possessing not only efficacy of ads but also the aesthetic value. It brings about many flow scenes to our cities. As for the second one, the fresco is fixed while the people viewing them are moving. The moving of people makes the fresco no longer the fixed one, but results in an interactional time-space with viewers. For instance, at the Tokyo station of Namboku of Japanese subway (Figure 16), the fresco on wall surface renders the audiences in train a continuous picture as a result of the rapid travelling of train, making the people relaxed and rest in process of tired travel.

2.3.4 Time-Space of Cave Fresco

The Lascaux Cave fresco of France, Altamir Cave fresco of Spain, and the Dunhuang Mogao Grotto fresco, Maiji Mountain Grotto fresco in Tianshui city, and Kizil Grotto Fresco in Sinkiang of China are all classic models of cave fresco. The encapsulation of cave fresco makes the fresco in inner space to become merged with the environment with a sense of mystery.

Mogao Grotto (Figure 17) was dug out in a bluff 20 km away to the southeast of Dunhuang, inside which there were frescoes with an area more than 50000 m² and more than 2000 painted sculptures, becoming a treasury of oriental art. In caves one by one, the overwhelming cave frescoes and the shrines and Buddha inside the cave together form a mysterious religious atmosphere.

Although the religion was taken as a tool by feudal rulers to numb the people, yet the ideology of Buddhism's tenet like single-minded purity, doing good deeds, believing in reincarnation, suffering in this life, enjoying in an afterlife, etc. did provide a glimmer of hope and trust to the people in miserable life. At that time lacking of advanced tools and developed techniques, such a large number of artworks in such a huge project seen by us today cannot be completed without supports by such ideology. Maybe when the painters were making fresco, painted sculpture and sculptures, their soul has been detached from the secular. Mogao Grotto frescoes are featured by rude and straightforward modeling, rich and bright colors, and unrestrained and plain lines, and the painted sculptures are vivid in image and beautiful in colors, creating an extraordinary and mysterious sense of beauty. This is the combination of fresco and the environment (painted sculptures, sculptures), resulting in an interactional time-space.



Figure 17
Dunhuang Mogao Grotto fresco

2.3.5 Time-Space of Glass Mosaic Fresco

The light was taken as a method for expressing the distance in-between the God and the people in the Renaissance period, the God in picture was usually

shrouded in mysterious rays of light, and the application of light was deemed as an essential tool for creating mysterious atmosphere of picture. The church is a place where the God closes the people the nearest, and the light of church is the most mysterious. The main substance of making the light mysterious is exactly the glass mosaic fresco. The mosaic glass of Notre Dame de Paris is rich and vivid in color involving bright red, rose pink, medium yellow, jade green, ultramarine, etc., and under sun exposure, the mosaic glass generates gorgeous effect of colored light in church, creating a mysterious atmosphere of the Heaven, rendering a wonderful illusion, and enhancing the religious atmosphere. Notre Dame de Paris belongs to the Gothic architecture, stressing on upright lines and tall and big volume and possessing many windows. Height, light and number are incisively and vividly reflected in Notre Dame de Paris, with a religious mystery present from the appearance to the inside of the whole church, making the people therein unconsciously to feel that the God is with me.

3. SPIRITUALITY OF TIME-SPACE CONSTRUCTION OF FRESCO

The time-space of fresco embodies that the human pursue infinite ideology with finite. The human's existence is finite, while the pursuit of mankind is infinite. Through the art, the human can "make the emotional and finite individual to enter into absolutely infinite and pure self" (Wang, 1994, p.115). The desire of human on exploring the unknown world is always intense, and the studies of physicists on material universe from Newton, Einstein to Hawking make the people to perceive the immensity, infiniteness, and immortality of time and space and the person is just a dust in the vast universe. However, the studies of psychology make the human's self-awareness originally in ignorant status to become clear and distinct, further perceiving the mightiness of self. The human consider themselves as a giant entity possibly causing storm of the universe at any time, infinitely pursue and pursue the infinite within finite individuals.

The time-space of fresco gives a full expression to the free state of thought of artists. As the word "Hop like a fish in the sea, fly like a bird across the sky", the artists' ideas flow freely in time and space, and shuttle freely in the spatio-temporal tunnel. "Include the heaven and earth in the heart, sigh with wind and thunder generated. The article is made from delicate details and the image of object is decided by me." (said by Meng Jiao) The artists usually conduct a radiation to their surrounding world with themselves as the central point, and the expression of world in their works is also the result of free discretion by the authors.

The artists attain the freedom of creation under free mental state. This kind of freedom of creation is exactly

the freedom of self-actualization. "The art is an advancing expression for the human's inner perfect world" (Zhu, 1997, p.197). The artists "create artworks is exactly to create the world" (Kandinsky & Li, 1999, p.289). The artists make their inner world and life value realized in the course of creating arts. Hegel considers: "The human always have a sense of identity for self-validating, and they have to validate themselves—attain personal objective externalization and verify personal identity through objectification of essential force" (Wang, 1994, p.226). Maslow also considers that "most of the people will have a demand and trend of self-actualization" (Goble, 2001, p.59). Such demand and trend of "self-validating" make the artists unsatisfied to ordinary easel painting, and promote them to create many frescoes. This is because that the freedom of time-space construction of fresco brings about more possibilities for the artists to realizing themselves.

The dimension of time-space renders fresco a kind of transcendence. As a finite existence, it has become a pursuit of artists from generation to generation that how the human cognize the immortality and thus to reach the free state of "Now were one to mount the norms of heaven and earth, riding the fluctuations of the six qi, and thus wander in the limitless".

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