



PROPOSAL OF A MODERNIZED WORK THROUGH ANALYSIS OF THE SENSE OF WELL-BEING IN THE LANDSCAPE PAINTINGS OF CHINESE WRITERS “SHEN ZHOU” AND “SHI TAO”¹

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Abstract

This study explores the potential value of promoting psychological health by analyzing individual well-being through traditional Chinese landscape paintings. Chinese landscape paintings incorporate the natural view and humanistic spirit of the major philosophical ideas of Confucianism, Taoism, and Zen Buddhism in the East. In particular, the landscape paintings of “Shen Zhou(沈周)” and “Shi tao(石濤)” convey a feeling of peace and leisure. We explore how works can evoke sense of well-being with the emotional needs of modern people. The research methods include various literature studies, surveys, statistical analyses of Chinese people, and commentary on works created by the researcher by reapplying the sense of well-being in Chinese landscape paintings to modern design. This study finds that the sense of well-being in landscape paintings has a significant effect on improved psychological stability among modern people, thus identifying an opportunity to recognize the value and meaning of traditional art in modern people’s lives. In addition, this study links the modernization and commercialization of traditional works through the researcher’s individual creative works. Furthermore, the researcher reveals the characteristic elements of traditional Chinese landscape paintings and combines them with modern landscape painting techniques. Accordingly, various research-related and creative activities using landscape painting can be conducted that design and provide creative products to promote psychological well-being and vitality among busy modern people.

Keywords

Chinese Literati Landscape Painting, Point Scene Characters, Sense of Peace, Shen Zhou, Shi Tao

Introduction

In the history of Chinese painting, landscape painting is expressed that transmits historical civilization and is a concrete embodiment of national ideology and culture (Li, 2012). Traditional landscape paintings are unique and have undergone various developmental stages over the course of each dynasty and generation. Furthermore, landscape paintings contain various humanistic and philosophical ideas (ma, 2014). Natural landscapes such as deep mountain valleys, Cheonggye Byeok-gan, and waterfalls and streams are the most common subjects of these paintings (Jiang, 2011). In traditional Chinese culture, painting landscapes is an expressive technique that embodies natural beauty and is one of the best ways to express an artist’s emotions (Park, 2017). As a medium through which one can express their beliefs about life, landscape painting has naturally gained attention among traditional intellectuals in China (Sun, 2016). Landscape painters start from their own feelings, engage with nature, and depict natural beauty that matches their subjective perspective. While they were expressing, they realize the state of “unification of the object and myself” while painting (Chen, 2010).

¹This study is based on the author's Ph.D. dissertation

Many formats of art and culture signaled their potential application for a pragmatic purpose related effects on wellbeing and mental health (Binnie, 2010; Roberts et al., 2011; Karnik et al., 2014; Hansen et al., 2015; Ho et al., 2015; Bennington et al., 2016; Davies et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2020). And a 2019 World Health Organization review, included, for example, results from more than 900 publications (Fancourt and Finn, 2019) suggesting that engaging with various artistic or cultural activities can lead to meaningful impacts both in regards maintaining physical and mental wellbeing and in support of a wide range of psychological issues. However, research on the correlation between oriental painting and well-being is rare (Ma, 2014; Sun, 2016). According to Li Keran (李可染), “Landscapes and paintings give people the greatest relaxation, conceive wisdom, and provide sublime revelations to the human mind” (Ma, 2014). Sun (2016) stated that the beautiful and quiet nature of traditional landscape paintings, free and peaceful scenery, and everlasting emotions have the positive effects of relaxing people’s minds and purifying their hearts. In this context, this study studies Chinese landscape paintings and the audience’s sense of well-being.

First, this study analyzes the typical characteristics of landscape paintings based on the works of two of China’s representative literary painters, Shen Zhou(沈周) and Shi Tao(石濤), who used visual methods to explore the humanistic connotations of Chinese landscape paintings. “Shen Zhou” and “Shi Tao” are selected for this study because they are great representatives of typical and unified Chinese literati painters (Gao, 2022). Nevertheless, they show some clear differences and thus can be considered appropriate for analyzing the characteristics of Chinese landscape paintings. Second, using questionnaires and statistical analysis, we explore the psychological impact of the sense of well-being in landscape paintings on modern people. This quantitative research aims to increase representativeness and reliability through quantitative research. Third, this study aims to open a new horizon in this field by directly creating landscape paintings that combine traditional landscape paintings with modern figures.

Theoretical background

In the history of East Asian painting, landscapes reflect the life attitudes of East Asian scholars and are the result of the projection of Confucianism, Taoism, and Zen Buddhism in classical philosophy (Song, 2008). Landscape painting is an important medium that sublimates Asian people’s views of nature into high-level artistic expression to sensitively reflect the aesthetic consciousness and characteristics of East Asian cultures (Ji, 2010). Accordingly, by analyzing the characteristics of Confucianism, Taoism, and Zen Buddhism that appear in landscape paintings, this chapter aims to identify the effects of landscape paintings on human psychology.

According to Confucianism, the relationship between nature and humanity is closely linked to mutual tolerance. In ancient times, people believed that the energy of heaven and earth condensed into mountains and merged into water and that mountains and water communicated with an individual’s temperament (Xi, 2023). Natural mountains and streams are a source of good fortune for the Confucian spirit, and landscape paintings reflect the values and beliefs of Confucian ethics in the pursuit of aesthetics (Zhu, 2009). Confucius said, “A benevolent person loves mountains, and a wise person loves water.” When Confucius took the landscape and compared it to “benevolence (仁)” and “knowledge (智),” he was trying to intersect humans’ inner qualities by fusing them with the characteristics of mountains and water in the natural world (Xi, 2023). Thus, in Confucian ideology, landscapes are considered an expression of nature and communicate with the inner spirit of humans. Chinese landscape painters fill their paintings with connotations by expressing the realization and pursuit of virtues such as “benevolence” and “knowledge” in Confucianism.

Compared to Confucianism, Taoism’s view of nature is more spiritual and focuses more on mental freedom. The inner spirit of “Tao (道)” is “nature,” and no specific object in the world represents Tao, and it is a vain existence (Zhao, 2020). “Tao, law and nature” are the cultural essence of Taoist thought and a core idea in landscape painting. The nature of Tao refers to “nature,” meaning that one must conform to nature and emphasizing a deep respect for nature (Wang, 2009). Landscape painting is in harmony with nature as achieved through the recreation of beauty based on people’s compliance with nature (Park, 2017). The theory of the “harmony between the outside world and the center of the mind” proposed by Zhang Zhao, a Tang Dynasty painter, is considered a method that must be learned in landscape painting. This ideology emphasizes listening to and experiencing nature and combining natural scenes and feelings to create works rich in expressiveness and connotation. Through this creative method, painters not only express their respect for nature but also convey their understanding and pursuit of the essence of Tao (Ke, 2015). In addition, “chiheo (致虚)” and “correction (守静)” are teachings in landscape painting and reveal the Taoist emphasis on one’s inner state. In a state of emptiness, artists can realize the laws of nature through contemplation and fuse the energy of heaven, earth, mountains, and heaven with the tranquility of the human mind (Han, 2009). In the aesthetics of landscape paintings, frivolous energy is regarded as evil, flattering energy is regarded as flattering the world, and vain and quiet energy is considered noble (Wan, 2014). In Ancient Paintings, Sheikh set “energy and movement” as the highest standard for evaluating landscape paintings and emphasized the importance of the spirit inherent in artistic forms. If painters can transcend the ink-and-ink form and value spiritual features through mental contemplation in creating landscape paintings, they can integrate

landscape painting with the essential laws of nature. Furthermore, they will be able to enter the previous state using materials based on the power of heaven, earth, mountains, and rivers. Thus, it would be possible to transform this into a state of beauty and a wordless conversation (Zhou, 2014).

Zen Buddhism has become one of the three major philosophical theories in the art of Chinese landscape painting (Wan, 2014). Specifically, the mentality and awareness of nature in Zen Buddhism provide a unique aesthetic perspective to traditional landscape paintings (Wang, 2013). The Qing Dynasty landscape painter “Shi Tao” said in his Annotations of Gogwahwasanghwa (苦瓜和尚畫語錄), “The hatcher is Jongsimya (夫畫者: backward minded).” In other words, “painting follows from the human heart.” No dharmas leave the centrifugal dharma, which comes from the idea in Zen Buddhism that “the mind creates all things” (Wang, 2011). The Qing Dynasty painter Shi Tao’s theory of “one flower” emphasizes that “one flower includes all things,” which means that one picture includes all things. Zen Buddhism also symbolizes freedom of mind, which provides an infinitely wide space of imagination for artists to fully demonstrate their subjective creation (司笑寒, 2014). When the Ming Dynasty landscape painter Shen Zhou created the scripture The Ancient Map of Lushan, he realized the essential law between universes during the selection process and drew from his heart (Si, 2014).

Therefore, Confucianism, Taoism, and Zen ideology influence the natural view, psychology, and aesthetic sense in Asian cultures. In particular, modern Chinese people are influenced by these ideas, as Chinese society has a historical background of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. Therefore, based on this study’s theoretical framework, we examine landscape paintings that incorporate Confucianism, Taoism, and Zen Buddhism and analyze the psychological influence these landscape paintings have on modern Chinese people (Figure 1).

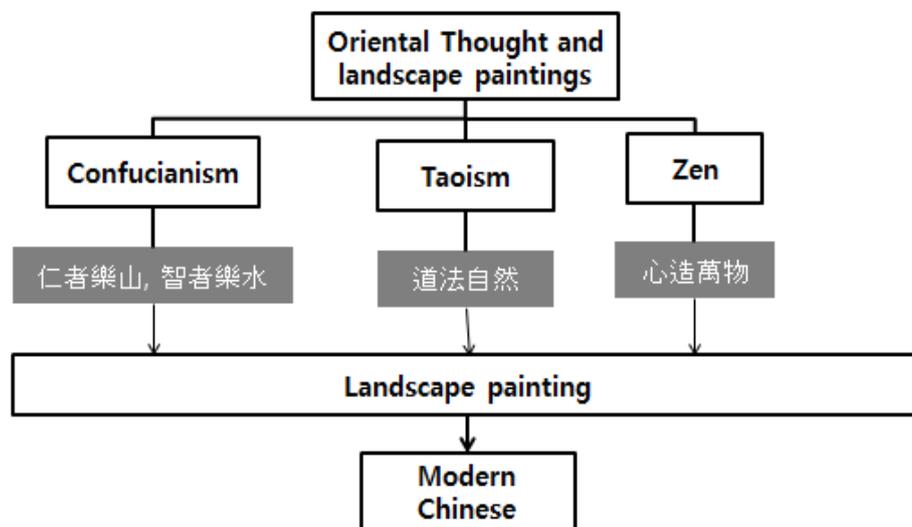


Figure 1. Theoretical framework.

Research method

Research subject

incorporate Confucianism, Taoism, and Zen philosophy, as analyzed from the theoretical background discussed above. The paintings used for the study were primarily based on the literary artists’ painting style and aesthetic taste. Literary painters value the meaning of brushes and ink and the comprehensive cultivation of poetry and calligraphy, revere the aesthetic ideals of harmony and humanity, and pursue truth in life; thus, the artist’s rich spiritual world is contained behind artistic representations (Joo, 2013). Considering the theoretical background, the Chinese literary painters Shen Zhou and Shi Tao were selected for this study. These two painters reflect typicality and unity and are great representatives of the Chinese literary world (Gao, 2022). In addition, each of them occupied a prestigious position in the world of literary painting (Xu, 2020) during China’s history. Shen Zhou was truthful and free, from his personality to his paintings, and his painting style was simple and quiet without lacking momentum (Hua, 2021). As a central figure and pioneer of the Five Cultures School in China, Shen Zhou led the artistic development of Chinese landscape paintings (Zhang, 2023). Shi Tao’s paintings display fewer greeting postures and more individuality, greater emphasis is placed on individual feelings and exchanges with nature, and the painting style is full of “dong (動: movement)” elements (Yang, 2023). Of all the unorthodox and tradition-breaking Chinese painters collectively referred to as individualists in the West during the late 17th century, Shi Tao was the most outstanding (Hay, Jonathan.1989).

In this study, the works of these two writers were analyzed to determine their psychological influence on modern Chinese people. Additionally, the modernized works in this study, produced to utilize landscape paintings, are modern interpretations based on the landscape paintings of these two artists.

Methodology

Survey on the sense of well-being in the landscape paintings. This study used a survey design to collect representative cases through data analysis, targeting individuals in China in their 20s to 50s. The participants worked in various occupations, including freelancers, artists, professional technicians, public officials, business employees, office workers, farmers, and college students. The online survey was conducted in various regions of China including the Tibet Autonomous Region, Sichuan Province, Guangdong Province, Fujian Province, Hunan Province, Hubei Province, Henan Province, Jiangsu Province, and Anhui Province. After confirming the validity and reliability of the data by conducting a pilot test with 20 questionnaires in advance, the formal survey was conducted. We administered a total of 417 questionnaires, of which 25 were confirmed to be invalid, resulting in a response rate of 94% (392 valid questionnaires). The questionnaire was distributed with the Survey Star platform and comprised 20 questions divided into three parts: a background information survey, intuitive picture vocabulary scoring, and intuitive feelings after viewing the picture (Table 1).

| | | |
|-----|--|------------------|
| 1 | Gender | |
| 2 | Age | |
| 3 | Occupation | |
| 4 | Have you ever seen a traditional landscape painting? | |
| 5 | Do you know about traditional landscape painting? | |
| 6 | How do you feel when you look at landscape paintings? | 6-1. interesting |
| | | 6-2. calm |
| | | 6-3. decent |
| | | 6-4. leisure |
| | | 6-5. tension |
| | | 6-6. nervous |
| | | 6-7. sad |
| 7 | Does the presence or absence of characters affect your emotions when viewing a painting? | |
| 7-1 | The presence of figures in landscape paintings fills the image with comfort. | |
| 7-2 | The presence of figures in landscape paintings affects my emotions. | |
| 7-3 | Characters in landscape paintings reminded me of a specific emotion or memory. | |
| 7-4 | The figure in the landscape painting made me feel mentally calm. | |
| 7-5 | Peace of mind and serenity are positive and valuable emotions. | |
| 7-6 | Do you long for the life of characters in landscape paintings? | |

Table 1. Survey questions

Proposal of work through analysis of landscape paintings

Using design software, we extracted, transformed, and reorganized different mountain stones and trees in landscape paintings, then added modern figures and integrated them into the tranquil natural realm of the landscape, applying elements such as new forms, colors, fonts, compositions, and backgrounds. Three design software programs were used in this study design: Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and Procreate. Adobe Illustrator was used to edit the elements and composite the design created from a prototype map using Adobe Photoshop and used Procreate to draw the design elements for the human bookmark on the side of the coffee cup cover.

By combining the habits of modern life, we ultimately created two representative cultural and creative products that people can use in their daily lives: a coffee cup holder and a mouse pad. The images were used to create products that represent modernization and industrialization. The design of the coffee cup holder and mouse pad was based on works created by researcher and survey results in the theoretical background.

Expert FGI method

A focus group interview (FGI) was conducted with experts in formative design, product design, visual design, and academic research. Experts with at least 10 and up to 15 years of practical experience participated in the FGI to analyze the design products. Face-to-face and written interviews were conducted by viewing the researchers' creations and the design of creative cultural products (Table 2).

| Classification | Interview Questions |
|-------------------|---|
| Design elements | Is the expression of the character's form, composition, color, background, and landscape appropriate? |
| Embodied emotions | Does the visual design of landscape paintings indicate serenity? (feeling of refreshment, lightness, freedom) |

Table 2. FGI questions for experts

Results

Results for the survey on well-being in landscape paintings

Survey target. The sample included 238 women and 154 men, accounting for 60.7% and 39.3% of the total, respectively. Participants aged 31–40 years accounted for 41.3%, followed by those aged 41–50 years, accounting for 39.0%. Those aged 20 years accounted for 11.2%, while those between 21 and 30 years old and those over 50 years old accounted for relatively small percentages at 7.7% and 0.8%, respectively. Regarding occupation, office workers were the largest group at 24.7%, followed by farmers at 19.7%, and then freelancers at 13.8%. Students, civil servants, artists, and others were each a relatively small proportion of the sample, at 9.9%, 12.0%, 13.8%, 9.4%, and 10.5%, respectively (Table 3).

| Classification | | People(N) | Percent (%) |
|----------------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| Gender | Male | 154 | 39.3 |
| | Female | 238 | 60.7 |
| Age | <20 | 44 | 11.2 |
| | 21-30 | 30 | 7.7 |
| | 31-40 | 162 | 41.3 |
| | 41-50 | 153 | 39.0 |
| | >50 | 3 | 0.8 |
| Occupation | Student | 41 | 9.9 |
| | Farmer | 77 | 19.7 |
| | Officer | 47 | 12.0 |
| | Employee | 97 | 24.7 |
| | Artist | 37 | 9.4 |
| | Freelancer | 54 | 13.8 |
| | Others | 39 | 10.5 |

Table 3. FGI questions for experts Descriptive statistics of the survey participants (N = 392)

Survey results. We used STATA 14.0 to analyze the data from the survey on the public’s appreciation for landscape paintings. Descriptive statistics, frequency analysis, and t-tests were performed. First, a frequency analysis of the survey results indicated that more than 50% of the survey participants did not have expert knowledge of landscape painting. This indicated that the sample could be used to analyze the effects of landscape paintings on the well-being of modern people in their daily lives, which is the aim of this study. In addition, most of the participants showed appreciation for the landscape paintings of the representative artists used for the study and presented positive emotions (e.g., “very interesting,” “very calm,” “very decent,” and “very leisurely”), which further indicated the possible positive psychological effects of landscape paintings. In particular, approximately 80% of the survey respondents expressed that the landscape paintings conveyed a sense of leisure and well-being. The participants who expressed feeling nervous, anxious, or sad when viewing the landscape paintings, which comprised less than 10% of the sample, were considered to be comfortable with landscape paintings.

| Classification | | Frequency (N) | Percentage (%) |
|--|--------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Relatively low expertise in landscape painting | | 201 | 51.15 |
| Sense of well-being | Interesting | 273 | 69.47 |
| | Calm | 277 | 70.49 |
| | Nice | 273 | 69.47 |
| | Leisure | 314 | 79.89 |
| | Relatively anxious | 16 | 4.07 |
| | Nervous | 20 | 5.09 |
| | Sad | 35 | 8.91 |

Table 4. Frequency analysis

Second, to analyze the differences in the sense of landscape paintings with figures and landscape paintings without figures, a t-test was conducted on the emotional vocabulary of works with and without figures. Differences in vocabulary selection were analyzed (Table 5). The t-test was primarily used to compare whether the means of the two samples were significantly different, comparing the difference between the observed and hypothesized means to infer whether the two samples were from the same survey target. The t-test included differences in gender, age,

and occupation. The results showed a clear difference in the choice of vocabulary used to describe landscape paintings that included people compared with those that did not.

| | Average value works with figures \pm (standard deviation) | Average value of works without figures \pm (standard deviation) | t-value | p-value |
|-------------|---|---|---------|---------|
| Interesting | 4.142 \pm (1.02) | 3.434 \pm (0.90) | 10.29 | <.001 |
| Calm | 4.600 \pm (0.87) | 3.233 \pm (1.02) | 13.75 | <.001 |
| Decent | 4.112 \pm (0.90) | 2.884 \pm (1.25) | 15.69 | <.001 |
| Leisure | 4.205 \pm (0.85) | 2.793 \pm (1.33) | 17.58 | <.001 |
| Tension | 1.741 \pm (0.72) | 2.688 \pm (1.33) | -12.31 | <.001 |
| Nervous | 1.618 \pm (0.68) | 2.705 \pm (1.47) | -13.20 | <.001 |
| Sad | 1.607 \pm (0.75) | 2.833 \pm (1.57) | -13.89 | <.001 |

Table 5. Emotional vocabulary t-test of works with and without figures (N=392)

Significant differences were found between the paintings with people in them and those without for the following attributes: “interesting” ($t = 10.29$, $p < 0.001$), “calm” ($t = 13.75$, $p < 0.001$), “decent” ($t = 15.69$, $p < 0.001$), “leisure” ($t = 17.58$, $p < 0.001$), “tense” ($t = -12.31$, $p < 0.001$), “nervous” ($t = -13.20$, $p < 0.001$), and “sad” ($t = -13.89$, $p < 0.001$).

In addition, the sampling deviation of recognition was analyzed to determine the psychological kinship with figures in landscape paintings. Overall, for the item “the presence of figures in landscape paintings brings comfort to the image,” 229 participants (58.43%) answered “yes” and 27 (6.88%) answered “no” (Table 6).

| Questionnaire | Yes (N /%) | Somewhat (N /%) | No (N /%) |
|--|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| The presence of figures in landscape paintings fills the image with comfort. | 27 (6.8%) | 136 (34.6%) | 229 (58.4%) |
| The presence of figures in landscape paintings affects my emotions. | 87 (22.1%) | 65 (16.5%) | 240 (61.2%) |
| Characters in landscape paintings reminded me of a specific emotion or memory. | 24 (6.1%) | 63 (16.0%) | 305 (77.8%) |
| The figure in the landscape painting made me feel mentally calm. | 17 (4.3%) | 46 (11.7%) | 329 (83.9%) |
| Peace of mind and serenity are positive and valuable emotions. | 25 (6.3%) | 128 (32.6%) | 239 (60.9%) |
| Do you long for the life of characters in landscape paintings? | 12 (3.0%) | 45 (11.4%) | 335 (85.4%) |

Table 6. Perceptions of kinship between characters in landscape paintings and viewers

Specifically, for the item “the presence of figures in landscape paintings affects my emotions,” 240 participants (61.23%) agreed with the statement, whereas 87 (22.19%) said that it was not important. For the item “the figure reminded me of a specific emotion or memory during the contemplation process,” 305 participants (77.81%) agreed with the statement and 24 people (6.12%) replied that it was not important. For “the figure in the landscape painting made me feel mentally calm,” 329 participants (83.94%) agreed with the statement and 17 (4.33%) said it was important. For the item “peace and tranquility of the mind are positive and valuable emotions,” 239 participants (60.98%) agreed and 25 (6.37%) did not think these emotions are not important. In response to the item, “Do you admire the life of a fortune teller and want to go to a big mountain and relax your mind,” 335 participants (85.46%) said that they would go to the mountains to mentally relax, whereas 12 (3.06%) said they would not.

Proposed works based on the analysis of characters’ well-being in landscape paintings

The survey indicated that most of the participants felt that figures in landscape paintings could influence their emotions and psychological states, make them feel calm and comfortable, and even evoke specific emotions or memories. Therefore, this study proposes a method to improve people’s psychological stability by modernizing fortune-telling figures in landscape paintings. One aim of this study is to identify strategies for using traditional art to provide a sense of well-being to viewers by modernizing figures in paintings based on the style of Chinese landscape painters “Shen Zhou” and “Shi Tao.” Table 7 presents the researcher’s proposed works based on the painting styles of Shen Zhou and Shi Tao.

| Theme | Shen Zhou | Shi Tao |
|--------------|---|---|
| Reading |  |  |
| Visiting |  |  |
| Sight-seeing |  |  |
| Meeting |  |  |
| Travel |  |  |

Reading. The Shen Zhou-style landscape painting under the reading theme is characterized by the use of brushstrokes, such as the intersection of bushes, combination of leaves and smears dotted with ink, contrast between shadows and lights of flowers and ocher, and the complex arrangement of trees. It represents the spread and vitality of the leaves. Acid ink lines alternate between dryness and moisture, and the colors contrast between cool and warm colors cooling and heating to create a sense of balance. However, in the Shi Tao-style reading-themed landscape painting, the mountain peaks are drawn using the typical lotus leaf and brush strokes for stone, and the solid texture of the rock is expressed using a dry brush, whereas the mountain peaks in the distance are treated with moist brush strokes, with white water flowing below to create clouds. This creates a space of fog and fog, creating a faint beauty.

Visiting. The Shen Zhou-style landscape painting with the theme of “visiting a friend” uses brushes and ink with the breaking method and adds volume to the picture using the technique of grouping dots and moss. The nearby mountains are structurally polished and colored, whereas the distant mountains have relatively strong moisture, creating a contrast between wet and dry conditions. The colors of the mountain are mainly warm mixed with cool tones, and the bright colors of the small bridge add to the atmosphere of the picture. The depiction of trees places importance on layer and order and should not be jumbled, creating a harmonious and lively natural landscape by forming an organized cluster of leaves. Meanwhile, in the Shi Tao-style landscape painting, the outer outline of the mountain is drawn using vertical lines and moist brushstrokes to embody the steep slope and tension of the mountain. The rough texture of the mountain is depicted using the lotus leaf stain technique. The long, thin waterfall is expressed in

Table 7. Proposed landscape paintings in the styles of Shen Zhou and Shi Tao

milky white to give the feeling that the water pouring down from the waterfall valley rises like steam, adding a dynamic feel to the painting. The depiction of pine needles has clear dimensions, from dark to elegant, and at the bottom, the green and ink colors are mixed to make the dimension and texture of the image richer.

Sightseeing. In the painting that adopts Shenzhou’s brush technique, the woman appears to be walking in the mountains with her dog. Her posture is relaxed, with her hands behind her as she looks toward a pavilion in the distance, seemingly intoxicated by the silence and fresh air of the forest. This depiction of the scene adds to the lushness and tranquility of the forest, filling the image with lively, dynamic beauty without losing the peaceful atmosphere. The landscape painting on the same theme in Shidu’s style uses Seokdo’s classical brush technique. The vertical and horizontal lotus leaf techniques are alternated to express the unique appearance of mountain stones, and the waterfall forms a transition line, winding down from the mountain, changing the shape and steepness of the mountain. Although the works differ in style, they both depict a woman and her dog feeling comfortable near a waterfall, indicating that modern people can find true peace and a sense of self in nature.

Meeting. The left side of the landscape paintings with the theme of “gathering” created a peaceful atmosphere by arranging the group of trees vertically and the slope platform horizontally. The painting depicts a woman in a blue skirt at a lake below a pavilion enjoying a peaceful and pleasant autumn afternoon sharing a pot of good tea with an old friend in a white shirt. The picture on the right depicts paradise (武陵桃源). The composition of the screen is divided into near, middle, and distant scenes and depicts a harmonious and quiet scene centered on a sandy island surrounded by landscapes on three sides. In the picture, a modern woman and a woman wearing a qipao are enjoying morning tea on a beach outside a resort. It is the same subject as the other image; however, the different

painting styles create different atmospheres.

Travel. The screen with the Shen Zhou-style landscape painting under the theme of “traveling” has a rich structure depicting a wide rice field. The colors of a rice field are described as light yellow, red clay, or light green and represent the beauty of nature by finding layers in unity. The color of the character’s skirt harmonizes with the color of the tree’s shadow in the upper-right corner of the image, adding a sense of harmony and responsiveness. The willow tree in the background is a reference to the painting style of Shen Zhou’s willow tree. Its branches are powerful and do not lose their iron-like strength while still retaining their round appearance. They are stronger than the grass on the left but softer than the trees on the right. The overall tone of the image is dominated by warm colors, with the color of the rice field being the warmest, followed by the roof of the house, and then the child’s pants, which are accented with cool yellow to create a layered look. However, in the Shido-style landscape painting with the same theme, at the foot of a mountain, a person wearing a navy-blue traditional Chinese cotton jacket and a feather hat is sitting quietly in a boat, about to deliver fish to his aunt’s house. The small boat is surrounded by pine trees and stones, making it feel as if it is cut off from the world and creating a state similar to finding silence in the mountains.

These works show that even landscape paintings with the same theme can have different styles. In this section, through the proposed works, this study aims to realize the audience’s sense of homogeneity with the paintings and psychological well-being. In the next section, we discuss the FGIs conducted with experts to normalize experiencing a sense of well-being through landscape paintings.

The results of the expert FGIs

FGIs were conducted after the researcher created the landscape paintings. Four experts reviewed, discussed, and interviewed the researcher before conducting the FGIs. The results of the FGI with the target group, indicate that what provides emotional comfort and stability in the work is a clear feeling of comfort and stability and a peaceful lightness. The work was evaluated to demonstrate the artist’s individuality and originality in using various expressive techniques. However, some experts expressed opinions that one way to create a more modern or casual feel would be to use a different font or background color in the design (Table 8).

| | | |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Design elements | A | The landscape paintings were divided into six themes, each with a different story, and the shapes of the characters were expressed in various ways to fit the story to enhance enjoyment. In addition to the monotonous colors of traditional landscape paintings, light chromatic colors such as cool tones and warm tones were used to give life to the screen. In particular, when the color of the character’s clothes matches the surrounding colors, the accent color in a small area catches the eye and becomes an element that stimulates curiosity about the character’s story. Looking at the overall composition of the landscape painting, the horizontal and vertical elements are appropriately combined, and the ratio of the margins is set in various ways to add to the enjoyment of viewing the image. The technique of skillfully expressing the styles of the two selected painters in various compositions is outstanding. |
| | B | It was very interesting and original to attempt a collaboration between classical and modern times by replacing figures in landscape paintings with modern figures. Materials that commonly appear in landscape paintings, such as mountains, rocks, trees, water, roads, and sky, are arranged in the composition to suit the situation, and the diversity of the shades and shades of ink, direction of trees, blank space, and brush strength are utilized. In each work, the artist effectively utilizes the themes of landscape painting (e.g., seclusion, travel, gatherings, reading, fishing), thereby enhancing the quality of her painting style as an artist. |
| | C | Although the composition, form, background, and color of the work itself are considered very interesting and ingenious, the dark lighting and vertical arrangement of the work create a sense of tension the moment one enters the exhibition hall rather than a sense of well-being. |
| | D | The positions of the thematic figures in the landscape paintings have strange design elements that are most eye-catching and provide a sense of well-being. Although the work is expressed using composition, color, and background based on the academic analysis and the content, it is impressive that design elements are used to clearly show the researcher’s image and the goal he wanted to achieve. It is believed that it was designed so that the significance of this study can be felt when the research results, which were previously described in writing, are expressed in a work of art. I hope that the design elements that are expressed well in the work will also be expressed well in the written research content. |

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Embodying emotions | A | The story of the character is centered on escaping the stuffy city and returning to the mountains or nature, creating a feeling of freedom. The small size of the figure harmonizes with the surrounding environment, and the color of the clothes creates a refreshing feeling even though it is a small area. The parts that express water, roads, and imaginary spaces in the blank space do not feel stuffy, but add freedom and lightness. |
| | B | In the work, the overall naturalness is maintained by depicting the characters as if they were part of nature. A sense of tranquility is maintained by depicting the characters' behavior as statically as possible, and the clothes of the fortune-telling characters are in colors similar to those in the natural surroundings (e.g., trees). This has enhanced the artistry of the work and provided psychological well-being. |
| | C | A sense of peace and well-being is felt in the work, and the harmony of the modern figures and landscapes is thought to be an excellent work for the general viewer, but due to the nature of the ink, it feels heavy and does not feel refreshing or light. |
| | D | By selecting the most appropriate character(s) according to the area and background and including the story, viewers were encouraged to imagine and feel through the characters in the fortune telling, allowing them to feel tranquility in nature. Although it is a color that can be concentrated, it is expressed in a very small area, so as not to spoil the unique style of the landscape painting. I felt strength and vividness in the sense of well-being, and it felt serious rather than light. The majestic landscapes are judged to be well-expressed works because you can feel the characters experiencing a sense of well-being. |

Table 8. Results of focus group interviews on landscape painting creation

A proposal for cultural creative product design

In accordance with opinions regarding the emphasis on the modernization of traditional culture, the researcher produced mousepads and coffee cup holders representing modernization and industrialization based on landscape paintings. Through this, we attempted to find a way to experience a sense of well-being through landscape painting design in our daily lives without having to visit the exhibition with intention.

Mouse pad. The mouse pad was designed by the researcher using a traditional method based on “entering the arithmetic world of the mind.” Considering that most large mousepads on the market are integrated keyboard and mouse pads, the mouse pad is rectangular with a size of 700×300 mm and was conceptually designed to resemble a Chinese landscape painting.



Figure 2. Mouse pad based on the long roll of a landscape painting

The raw materials were prepared as described above. For spatial reconstruction, the researcher used Adobe Photoshop to extract stunning mountains and landscapes from each of the six works. The materials included mountains such as Wonsan, Junggyeong, and Geungyeong, and the shapes of the mountain stones and postures of the figures were ensured to be different for subsequent reorganization and design. The positions of the mountain rock materials and figures were adjusted by reducing and enlarging them according to the perspective. Furthermore, deepening or reducing the acid color created a distant or near-view effect. Since the most important aspect of traditional landscape painting is “energy,” the composition emphasizes the level and blank space of landscape painting to make it look richer. The color balance and curve adjustment tools were used to adjust the overall tone of the image to make it harmonious and unified. Finally, the positions and angles of the characters were adjusted to improve the fluency of the landscape story.

Coffee cup holder. Based on the creation of “Advancing into the world of landscapes of Shi Tao,” a Chinese-style coffee cup holder was designed that is simple, modern, and highlights the landscape. The design is divided into four parts: floor, characters, letters, and bookmark material. A document was created in Adobe Illustrator the size of a general coffee cup holder and designed with Chinese-style



Figure 3. Design of the coffee cup

shading to add a sense of hierarchy. When designing the characters, the researcher chose to combine Chinese calligraphy with traditional mountain stones, based on the themes of the characters. However, to ensure that the design style was not overly traditional, relatively modern language was chosen as the subject text. Additionally, the text size was larger than the cup holder to increase the visual impact. To highlight the poetic atmosphere of the cultural and creative design, notices were used as decorative characters.

To add a fun element to the coffee cup holder, the researcher created a human bookmark shape on the side. The figures in the modern landscape paintings drawn with Procreate have vivid colors. After drinking their coffee, customers can use it as a bookmark, adding a unique decorative feature to the coffee cup holder. This work was actually created with Adobe Photoshop and used as a prototype.

Conclusion

This study analyzed the philosophy of landscape paintings by Chinese writers and found that landscape paintings affect the psychological well-being of modern people. In addition, the quantitative research results show that figures in landscape paintings not only reflect the artist's philosophy of life and aesthetic pursuit but also successfully create a relaxed sense of well-being.

This study explored the possibility of combining the traditional elements of Chinese literati landscape paintings with modern artistic techniques through artistic creation and work proposals. After an in-depth analysis of the classic works of Shen Zhou and Shi Tao, referring to the essence of their art and combining it with modern design ideologies, a new modernized landscape painting with modernized characters was created. These creations not only demonstrate a harmonious fusion between tradition and modernity and nature and artificial works but also provide new perspectives and methods for applying a sense of well-being to contemporary design. Furthermore, extracting key elements from these creations and using them to design modern cultural creative products has injected new creativity and vitality into this field, while also showing how to protect and transmit traditional culture through innovative means and promote traditional culture in modern society.

It also appears that continued research will be needed on the practical use of landscape paintings interpreted as modern designs. If it is proven that this design has elements that can positively affect modern people's sense of well-being, the scope of the study will be expanded to include landscape paintings by literati from more periods and styles, and a more detailed and in-depth comparative study will be conducted among various painters.

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