

# *Study on the Art Characteristics of Shanghai Month Brand*

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**Abstract:** Month card in the late Qing Dynasty and early Republic of China after the birth of the community and ordinary people love, became the wall of the common people. With interpersonal communication, the month card has attracted the attention of scholars at home and abroad, researchers emerge in endlessly. The circulation of the month card is bound to have its unique artistic characteristics, mainly reflected in its performance techniques and the significance of a hundred years of inheritance.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Impact of Traditional Culture

#### 1.1.1 The Influence of Chinese Painting

In 1843, Shanghai was forced to be a port of international trade, a large amount of European and American capital was imported into Shanghai, and foreign capital merchants opened factory stores in Shanghai. They hired Chinese painters to design month cards, so the month cards at that time covered a large number of Chinese painting elements, in the subject matter and painting are affected by Chinese painting.

Zhou Muqiao, an early representative, used the traditional Chinese painting method to paint on silk, using ink to outline the characters and other details, and then fill in color. On this basis, the modeling and perspective of western painting are added, which transcends the traditional Chinese painting techniques. Not only in the technique of the use of Chinese painting techniques, in the choice of subjects also used a large number of traditional Chinese painting, for example, in the 1920s the United States Insurance Corporation of a "Tiger Creek" month card advertising painting, is a typical green landscape figure painting. The most common theme of the month card is the female image, which can not be separated from the traditional Chinese painting, and has been popular since the Tang Dynasty, but the Qing Dynasty painting is most closely related to the female painting described in the month card painting. Both in the subject matter, techniques and characters are very similar.

#### 1.1.2 Influence of Folk New Year Pictures

In the early years, there were not only traditional Chinese painters, but also folk painters engaged

in the creation of New year paintings, Su Shimei Yan .” month card advertising painting is developed on the basis of New year paintings.” Su Shimei, History of Modern Chinese Commercial Advertising. Kaifeng: Henan University Press ,2006. The influence of the folk New Year's pictures on the month's cards is manifested in the origin of the New Year's pictures and the month's cards. The calendar and solar terms in the month card are abbreviated in the picture and become the calendar. In the middle is the female-dominated figure. The calendar occupies a very small position in the whole picture, which is the inheritance and innovation of the New year painting. The theme of New year's paintings has been given auspicious good moral, month card painting also inherited this point. For example, Watsons month card advertising painting added hollowed-out auspicious words “Fu “,” rich “,” expensive” and so on. The above can be seen that the month card advertising painting greatly affected by the folk New year painting.

## 1.2 The Influence of Western Culture

Because of the accumulation of capital and dumping of goods to China, the attitude of the Chinese people was disdainful and disdainful at first, but soon because of curiosity, they turned to advocate, and gradually the western culture became the leading culture advocated by the citizens. The month card initially flowed into the country from the West, incorporating the fashion elements and painting techniques of Western commercial culture. They asked Chinese painters to design it, which added more traditional Chinese elements. Reflects the cross-fusion of east-west culture. For example, the advertising posters printed by the daily news of the Library of Congress ,” Daily News “at the top of the picture, the middle is a character, the lower left corner is a shrinking calendar, and the western advertising posters have become the creative source of Chinese month painters. Draw inspiration from it. Today's month card advertising is above the company name, only fashion female image, after innovation, the calendar has been gradually abandoned.

## 2. Performance Techniques of Month Card

Since the month card spread to this day, the performance techniques have been continuously improved. From the beginning of Zhou Muqiao, the traditional Chinese fine brushwork characters are used to draw the outline of the characters with a single line, and then to color them in a flat way. Then depict the character's dynamic and expression. This method of drawing the month card effect is very stiff, such as forced combination of Chinese and Western, goods and advertising, and was eventually eliminated.

In the middle period, Zheng Mantuo, who was engaged in portrait painting in the photo studio, combined the portrait method of charcoal fine powder brush with western watercolor technique, and created the “brush watercolor method “. It is still to use a pen to outline the outline of the character, then dip the brush in the charcoal powder to wipe out the relationship between the features and the light and dark, and finally use the Western watercolor to render the effect layer by layer according to the until completely covered with charcoal powder. This method has better effect, showing the soft temperament of Chinese traditional women, moisturizing and lifelike skin effect.

In the late period, Hangzhou carried out a lot of reform and innovation. He combines the “realism” of western painting with the “freehand brushwork” of Chinese painting, and uses the light and dark modeling technique of western painting to express the whole, depicts the details with the “silk hair method” of Chinese painting, weakens the erasure with charcoal powder, and retains the relationship between light and dark. At the same time, he also introduced the “spray pen” technique into the creation of the month card painting, so that the color of the month card painting is clear and realistic.

### 3. The Significance of the Century-Old Inheritance of the Month Card

#### 3.1 Reference to Historical Materials

When the first month card came out to the founding of New China, the month card advertising painting has experienced a history of more than 100 years. It shows us all kinds of content, calligraphy, art, craft and other artistic methods are integrated together. Month card advertising painting to many industries now have inspiration, to provide historical reference. For example, the study of modern advertising history in China, the month card has a unique advertising form and characteristics, can stand out in modern advertising, and is no longer a simple advertising painting, into the cultural connotation, worthy of our contemporary people to collect, love, research. More and more researchers at home and abroad not only study the techniques and themes of the month card painting, they carry out from different angles, such as “art design history “,” art history” and other Korean scholars to study the Qipao design, female image, graphic symbols in the month card painting, and find and analyze the national characteristics and the significance of the times contained in the pattern, which brings more possibilities for modern design. A Chinese student studied the makeup of women in month cards, and the demand for cosmetics increased, driving the rapid development of cosmetics industry. Month card painting brings different theoretical orientations to academic researchers in different cultural backgrounds and academic contexts.

#### 3.2 Reflect Female Spirit

The victory of the Revolution of 1911 propagated the concept of democracy and equality, impacted the feudal system for thousands of years, the individual consciousness of the people was generally awakened, the independent consciousness of women was paid unprecedented attention, the emancipation of thought, and the fashionable and independent women were also accepted and recognized by the citizens. Month card from the early landscape, historical stories as the subject matter, to later urban modern girl image became the mainstream, its purpose is to guide the girl image to the commodity, strengthen the commodity wide and propaganda. With the change of popular aesthetic and social concept, the female image in each stage changes, and the female image reflects the ideological and cultural factors. In the shape, the female face is clearer and clearer, the facial features are more delicate, big eyes, double eyelids, curly eyelashes, red lips, plus the long hair of fashion curl, such a full female image exudes natural beauty, replacing the traditional female slender and weak, deeply loved by the public. In terms of dress and dress, it is also more bold and open, no longer an ancient conservative and restrained dress. Under the influence of western clothing, the modified cheongsam shows more female figure, strengthens the curve and arc of the body, and has a simple shape. Set off the amorous feelings of women. The popularity of cheongsam is a clear symbol of women's liberation and the awakening of women's independent aesthetic consciousness. [Yang Qun. On Chinese Lady painting and Moon Card Art, Shandong: Qingdao University ,2016. In addition, the attitude of women is very different from that of traditional women, such as sports, sitting and resting, lying on the bed and so on. More and more different images from traditional women are accepted by the public, which shows the change of aesthetic taste of the public.

#### 3.3 Practicability of Commercial Satellite

Month card painting is the product of advertising and publicity of capital dumped goods in Europe and the United States. Initially introduced into Shanghai, Shanghai became a new city with modern commercial nature and began to turn to a free circulation commercial capitalist economy.

People's way of life and consumption have changed. The rapid growth of advertising demand has become an opportunity for the development of month cards, but also promoted the development of the printing industry. Through the combination of New Year's Pictures and Western new printing technology, Chinese painters created more distinctive month-brand advertising paintings. With the development of commodity economy, tobacco companies use monthly cards to publicize, attract customers to buy cigarettes, promote strong publicity, and innovate in form and content, which has brought remarkable commercial effects to tobacco companies. At the same time, monthly card painting has practical value and has become an important part of Chinese art.

#### 4. Conclusion

Shanghai month card painting is a record of the life of an era in the whole Republic of China period. The first month card painting was created according to the form of New year's painting. Later, through the innovation of artists, the painting techniques were changed, and the theme was no longer the traditional landscape and mythological story, but more depiction of urban fashion women, reflecting the spirit of women. The month card painting spread to the whole country with Shanghai as the center, changed the habit of appreciating the traditional New year painting before, and became the symbol of that era. Although this form has disappeared, it still retains some function and artistry, and people regard it as a treasure with artistic value and historical value.

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