

Analytical Research of the Art Works of Vincent Van Gogh in Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism

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Abstract: *As a practice of research on art theory, art criticism is an important basis for art theory to sort out and summarize. This paper aims to analyze Barbara Kruger's art works on the basis of the analytical theories of feminist art criticism and Marxist art criticism in conceptual form art criticism. By reviewing the background of Barbara Kruger's artistic works, this paper summarizes and analyzes the creative styles of her works, and then interprets the conceptual form of her works, and ultimately, rediscovers the artistic creation influence and aesthetic value in Barbara Kruger's artistic works, in order to have a deeper understanding and reflection on conceptual form art criticism.*

Keywords: *Barbara Kruger, Conceptual form art criticism, Feminist art criticism, Marxist art criticism*

1. Introduction

Since the 20th century, with the development of industrial civilization at that time, the rapid rise of industrial civilization led to a rapid improvement in the social status quo and people's living standards at that time. Although people's material lives are constantly improving, their spiritual lives have not made significant progress. People's psychology has always been accompanied by the contradictions of capitalism, and the problems of nature and science have begun to stand in a new Angle: they have begun to pay attention to people's inner world, and Freud's psychoanalysis is also budding in such an environment.

Freud's research in the field of psychoanalysis opened up a new way to explain our spiritual world, and also opened up a new way for the interpretation of art and art criticism.

The basic viewpoints of psychoanalytic theory mainly stand in two aspects: on the one hand is pansexuality. Freud is a typical pansexuality theorist, and his Pansexualism meant that in addition to reproductive activities, sex also has other forms of expression such as lips, breasts, skin, etc. All of these are not reproductive organs but can also produce pleasure. In other words, Freud believed that there was an underlying capacity behind sex, and that this underlying capacity drove people to seek pleasure, which was defined as "Ribido."^[1] From Freud's point of view, many activities that appear on the surface to be non-sexual are manifestations of sex. On the other hand, it is unconscious theory, which is also the core theory of relative center. Freud regarded unconscious phenomena and content as the main content of his research. He divides human psychology into three situations: consciousness, pre-consciousness and unconsciousness, and puts the unconsciousness in the central position. Among them, the first is the instinctive consciousness activity of humans, and the second is the psychological activities of people who're depressed, which is contrary to moral and ethical principles. In short, Freud believed that unconscious mental activities are more important than conscious mental activities, and in the human mental and spiritual world, the unconsciousness always stands at the center of the spiritual world.

The art criticism of psychoanalysis makes the writer go beyond the obvious and go deep into a field of the unconscious, and the art criticism of psychoanalysis requires him to understand both psychoanalysis and art, so that he can analyze another level of content that is almost impossible not to take into account. The theory of psychoanalysis is actually based on the two major theories of consciousness and pansexuality. Freud believed that human psychology and spiritual content themselves come from people's sub-consciousness, that is, what is buried in a person's conscious state is their unconscious activity and people always want to explore the unconscious content from the perspective of consciousness.^[2]

2. The Value Analysis of Psychoanalytic Art Criticism

The proposal and development of the unconscious theory in Freud's psychoanalysis is actually the development of artistic works to a certain extent. Choosing unconscious promotion in a conscious state allows artists to achieve the best spontaneous state in artistic creation, and to transform and enhance the most primitive kinetic energy to a new level. The stimulation of this unconscious state allows artistic works to be truly liberated, even if it is chaotic or erroneous, it is actually spontaneously formed and produced in an unconscious state, and this is the principle behind the production of artistic works.

3. Vincent van Gogh's Life Introduction and Art Style

3.1 Vincent van Gogh's brief introduction and the background of his era

In the second half of the 19th century, the social and economic prosperity and the social and economic changes achieved by the industrial revolution as well as the development of natural science promoted a new upsurge of artistic exploration by artists throughout Europe. The spirit of painting of some realist painters facing modern life deeply influenced the painting ideas of impressionist painters, so they focused their eyes on the colorful colors under the natural sunlight, and explored a new color language on the basis of science.

Born in 1853 and died in 1890, Vincent Willem van Gogh spent 37 years in a world full of longing and loneliness for him. Although Van Gogh died at a young age, he proved himself and poured all his energy into the world. After all his desires were poured out, he ultimately left his world in despair and loneliness due to his sick body and tired soul. In 1861, Van Gogh embarked on the path of education. He is especially gifted in language learning. However, Van Gogh finally interrupted his studies after seven years. He began an internship at an international art trading company in the following year. After a brief teaching career, Van Gogh became a missionary and began to preach among mining workers. This state lasted until Van Gogh was about 27 years old. Then, he gradually began his artistic career as a painter, and his artistic attainments reached their peak precisely during the last decade of his life. He created nearly 2000 paintings, including over 900 oil paintings and over 1100 sketches. In the early days, the overall tone of Van Gogh's painting style was mainly gray, until he met and was attracted by Impressionism and neo-Impressionism in Paris and began to step into a completely different artistic style: the overall color of his creation began to become bright, and the painting style began to become self-style, which also created his unique personal painting style. During the time Van Gogh stayed in Arles, France, his self-style had become mature. Most of Van Gogh's most famous works of art were produced in the last two years of his life, and during this period, Van Gogh's mental state began to deteriorate and he gradually became deeply descend into mental illness, which indirectly led to Van Gogh's suicide by pistol at the age of 37^[3].

3.2 The formation and evolution of Vincent van Gogh's artistic style

The formation of Van Gogh's artistic style is mainly in three aspects: Firstly, in color, Van Gogh's early works are mainly gray and black, which is also his early color view. The color of the pictures is relatively gray, with strong realistic colors, and simply reproduces the lives of the poor. The early style is unrestrained, just like Van Gogh. Until the later period, Van Gogh's color style began to show strong color contrast, so as to present a relatively strong picture effect, and relative colors often achieve a harmony that reinforces oneself; At the same time, Van Gogh's colors have a certain degree of individuation, obvious personality psychology and indication. Such strong color contrast is used to express people's hearts and express themselves powerfully. For Van Gogh, painting with brushes and colors is to vent the most depressed and painful part of his heart, and even to make himself feel happy and joyful. Van Gogh's subconscious (unconscious) desires are reflected in his works with color, thus forming a distinct artistic style. Secondly, regarding the painting of lines, in the early stages of his studies, Van Gogh's processing of the entire line was relatively rough, rigid, and subjective. Later, due to the breakdown and disorder of Van Gogh's spirit in his later period, this disorder is obviously reflected in his later artistic creation. In the picture, it is not difficult to see that the lines are exaggerated and the shapes of the lines are deliberately exaggerated and deformed by him. All these processing enhanced the strength of strokes and lines, and some spirals and patterns gave people a feeling of vertigo. It can also be said that the mental disorder in Van Gogh's later period greatly stimulated his creative vitality to a certain extent. In this sense, Van Gogh's painting is an abstract representation of the early form of the Symbolist school of painting. Finally, in terms of emotional

expression, the sunflowers, flames, and other objects in his works are all objects that he expressed his emotion. Van Gogh's sunflower occupies a large space, because it is a symbol of Van Gogh's desire after he was disappointed in love and his unconscious desire to get rid of loneliness. It expresses more about the inner spiritual world, which also makes people integrate into Van Gogh's subjective feelings when viewing his works.

4. An Analysis of the Creation Style of Vincent van Gogh's Art Works

4.1 *Starry Night*



Figure 1: Van Gogh's work, "The Starry Night."

In Van Gogh's work "Starry Night", it is not difficult to see that it is an impressionist landscape painting. Firstly, in terms of the composition of the picture, the entire night sky occupies the vast majority of the painting. In addition to the processing of the night sky in a large space, we can see tall poplar trees trembling and leisurely emerging in front of us. Secondly, some small town houses, etc., and small villages in the valley quietly roost under the whole night sky under the protection of a church; In terms of color, the large amount of blue brings people strong sensory stimulation, as well as the bright yellow "stars" that are more prominent in the blue sky, the tall poplar trees show the dark green opposite to the night sky, and the color of the village in the valley is processed between dark tones, leaving a relatively noticeable white tone for the church. In the foreground of the painting, the white poplar trees with alternating tones of dark green and brown also symbolize every night that surrounds the world^[4], as shown in Figure 1.

4.2 *Wheat Field with Crows*



Figure 2: Van Gogh's *The Raven in the Rye*

In Van Gogh's art work "Wheat Field with Crows", the composition of the entire painting unfolds through three forked roads, revealing a wide wheat field. There is almost no center point in the entire picture, but full of scattered crows, which makes the whole picture broader and more divergent. In the processing of color, Van Gogh cleverly used the elements of the three primary colors to present clear and strong senses. The color of the wheat field was chosen to be bright yellow for foreshadowing, and the sky is dominated by blue with black strokes on the edges, echoing the flock of flying crows. The whole sky gave people a dead feeling, and the green path advanced in the wheat field. The picture is

covered with dense brush strokes, and the brush strokes are short and straight and strong, giving people a strong sense of pressure, resistance and unease^[5], as shown in Figure 2.

5. An Interpretation of Psychoanalytic Art Criticism of Vincent van Gogh's Art Works

5.1 *The psychoanalytic Art criticism of "Starry Night"*

Van Gogh's "Starry Night" was painted in the St. Remy sanatorium. It can be imagined that during this period, Van Gogh's entire spirit had almost collapsed, so that the entire work revealed a gloomy, depressed emotion. It was an illusion beyond anything attempt made by Byzantine or Roman artists to depict the great mysteries of Christianity. A large amount of blue is used in this picture, and the color of the whole picture is mainly blue, as we all know, blue generally represents the color of melancholy. The combination of blue, yellow and black in a large area of the painting gives people a straightforward and powerful feeling in the touch of the brushstrokes. The spire of the white church in the picture points straight towards the direction of the sky, and the bright yellow galaxy in the night sky rotates in this blue force. Perhaps this is the initial manifestation of Van Gogh's subconsciousness (unconsciousness) that he has already been dead in his heart, which is only expressed through painting. In the picture of "Starry Night", the most intuitive thing is Van Gogh's unrestrained brushstrokes. The brushstrokes of stars are like rounds of flames. In other words, these expressions are spontaneous and unconscious actions. What Van Gogh saw is an illusion, and he himself is an illusion of himself and his release of his inner heart. In this painting, it may be the final mental state presented by Van Gogh, belonging to his own unconscious starry sky. It is his intuitive and spontaneous expression of action, without being constrained by rational thought processes or rigorous techniques^[6]. Van Gogh's works of art can become a unique type due to his unconscious, supernatural, and even supernatural experiences, which can be proven with a careful and cautious brushstroke. This kind of brushstroke is like that an artist is racking their brains, accurately copying what he is observing in front of them.

5.2 *The psychoanalytic Art criticism of "Wheat Field with Crows"*

In Van Gogh's "Wheat Field with Crows", the feeling of vast space in the picture, from the black-blue sky to the yellow-colored wheat field, is actually the mental state and spiritual yearning of Van Gogh in his last period to a certain extent. The black-blue sky is full of depression. It represents the torment of illness and pain when Van Gogh was constantly plagued by a mental breakdown at the time. The swaying wheat field even has a kind of abnormal feeling, or a kind of feeling that foreshadows a carefree atmosphere in the paradise world. It seems that van Gogh wants to get rid of the suffering of this world with the crows and enter the world that the heart yearns for. The whole painting of "Wheat Field with Crows" is not only a portrayal of Van Gogh's life, but also an unconscious emotional sustenance. The strong beating strokes in the picture are the expression of Van Gogh's heart, and this form will always live on the work, which can also be said to be the end and starting point of art. From the strong brushstrokes on the whole picture, it can be interpreted that Van Gogh's paranoid and uneasy psychology under the condition of mental disorder at that time. This kind of psychology will unconsciously and spontaneously appear in the picture, which can be said to be the annotation and catharsis of Van Gogh's emotions. To this extent, it is in line with psychoanalysis. From the overall perspective of the picture, Van Gogh was no longer reproducing objective things, environments, etc., but rather spontaneously and unconsciously venting himself. It can even be said that no one can use this method to vent their inner emotions and unconscious expressions when they are not like him whose psychology and physiology both collapsed at the same time. This kind of picture plane exudes tension and ominous omens everywhere, which is a true spiritual and psychological portrayal of Van Gogh in his final moments of life. This work vividly reflects the whole gloomy mood, cathartic emotion, depressed heart, and fearful and uneasy mental state. The crow is the messenger of death, and they are depicted using a strong tone of black and blue in the picture. They both seems to be devouring everything in Van Gogh's heart, devouring all his unconscious desires and beliefs. He was already on the edge of darkness in life, and everything in the picture seems to be telling of Van Gogh's unconscious inner world and spiritual tendencies, which have been completely swallowed up by darkness. "Wheat Field with Crows" is not as famous as Van Gogh's masterpiece "Sunflower", but it must belong to him that this strong brushwork, this iconic method of expression. In fact, for Van Gogh, there is no set series of works, each work is his trademark, and he doesn't even need to break through or prove himself. He does not need to repeat a theme to let the world know him, but to boldly try any theme. Even so, the world also knows him. That's where its charm lies.

6. The Forming Factors and Artistic Value of Vincent van Gogh's Art Works

The formation of Van Gogh's art works is inseparable from his experience and the changes of environmental factors. The struggle Van Gogh made in his early years to find a place to live, his intimate yet distant relationship with his brother Theo, his profound literary and artistic accomplishment, his wild and carefree private life, all above came from mental illnesses inherited from the family. These experiences also became the driving force for van Gogh to enter the field of painting, but they also became the resistance that interfered with his painting, and finally stimulated his unconscious form of creation. People's various growth factors and social background are often the main reasons for their success. When Van Gogh embarked on the road of art, color occupied the most important position in his works. What Van Gogh did most was to express his inner and spiritual world through color. He probably knew how to express his inner spiritual world and how to express his emotions, so that people could feel his strong inner heart and feelings in his art works. People can also see such an emotion from the choice and expression of colors, a contrasting emotion and spirit formed in the collision of colors. This form is the catharsis and release of Van Gogh's unconscious emotions.

Freud said, "The artist also has a tendency to turn inward, almost being the mental patients." He was also forced by a too strong instinctive need; He longed for honor, power, wealth, fame, and the love of women; But he lacked the means to obtain these satisfactions. Thus, like anyone who has desires but cannot be satisfied, he detoured from reality, diverted all his interests and libidos, and constitutes the desires of imaginary life." In fact, everyone's inner world and emotional tendency are very different. Van Gogh, who was increasingly unable to meet the inner desires required and set by the real world, relied on painting to satisfy his spiritual deficiency and his inner world that cannot be understood by the world. In the eyes of some artists, painting can cultivate one's moral character, but in fact, it can heal and release emotions. Just like the representative painter of expressionism, Monk, they are all using the form of painting to express their true inner and spiritual world to the objects who are their family or others. Painting is only a way of expression, which can satisfy the real spiritual world and vent one's truest emotions. It is their pure inner monologue that is convenient for future generations to further explore and expand. Through this painting, a comprehensive three-dimensional interpretation of Van Gogh in the face of death is carried out, so that future generations and scholars can better analyze and read this legendary Dutchman.

7. Conclusion

Van Gogh's life was short and short. In the last few years of his life, he was plagued by mental illness. He ended his own life early. But also because of his early death, mental illness and his extraordinary paintings, he is considered a genius and a madman. In terms of artistic achievement, he is synonymous with genius. In terms of the appeal of his works, his paintings can hit his heart straight down. Just 37 years, fame and wealth are empty, tragic love, suffering. He suffered multiple blows from his career, affection and communication, and was poor all his life. Although the gears of fate did not favor him, it was in the face of the pain of this world. He never gave up his deepest pursuit. He used his life to pursue the hot and good, and the unconscious state is also formed the art in the true sense of liberation, may be complex and chaotic, but its nature is spontaneous formation and unconscious, his pen, have warm warm sunshine, have endless wheat, a vast bright stars, in reality, however, these do not belong to him. The painting became the only window for spoke to the world, about his devotion to art. All these may also become the reason to love Van Gogh, in the eyes of the world he is always so sincere and hot. Although Van Gogh was not widely recognized and successful during his lifetime, his work was widely appreciated after his death. His painting style had a great influence on later artists, and inspired countless people to pursue free expression and unique style.

Van Gogh's works are not only the art of painting, but also a mirror of his inner world. It contains the yearning for love and beauty, and also reveals the pain and struggle in his heart, because such an opportunity can see his heart full of enthusiasm and pain. He spent his life in suffering, a carving knife that made his body look haggard, but made his soul shine. His existence produces the power of art and makes people feel the greatness of the inner world of an ordinary person. Van Gogh once said: "I dream of painting, I draw my dream." This sentence not only summed up his pursuit of art, but also became the voice of everyone with a dream. In today's society, Van Gogh's story is still deeply enlightening. His life inspires the world, no matter how difficult, to bravely pursue their dreams. At the same time, his works also let people appreciate the infinite charm of art. Van Gogh's artistic achievements go beyond the limitations of The Times, and his works are now collected and displayed

in museums and galleries around the world. His name has become a legend in the history of art. His paintings are intoxicating and thought-provoking, giving modern artists more thinking and understanding, and making people can cherish and appreciate the beauty and harmony around them more. I would rather die in passion than live in mediocrity. "The world loved Van Gogh because he used his short life to explain the endless love for life.

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