



# Global Journal of Arts and Humanities (ISSN:2637-4765)



## On the Relationship between Art and Religion

Wei Guolong

School of Humanities, Tiangong University.

### ABSTRACT

Social science believes that religion is a cultural phenomenon that has emerged in the development of human society to a certain historical stage, an illusory reflection of the objective world, and a social ideology. Primitive religions, also known as tribal religions, refers to the religions of the ancient times and the religions of uncivilized society, such as nature worship, elf worship, totem worship, witch cult, etc. Art refers to a social ideology that uses images to reflect reality but is more typical than reality, including literature, calligraphy, painting, sculpture, architecture, music, dance, drama, film, and Chinese Quyi. There is a close relationship between art and religion, and their production and development are closely linked.

**Keywords:** Art; Religion; Connection

### \*Correspondence to Author:

Wei Guolong

School of Humanities, Tiangong University.

### How to cite this article:

Wei Guolong. On the Relationship between Art and Religion. Global Journal of Arts and Humanities, 2020; 5:1

 eSciPub  
eSciPub LLC, Houston, TX USA.  
Website: <https://escipub.com/>

Religion is a cultural phenomenon that has emerged to a certain historical stage in the development of human society and belongs to social ideology. It is characterized by the existence of supernatural and mysterious forces or entities outside the real world, which have absolute authority over all things, dominate natural evolution, and determine the fate of the world, which makes people fear and worship the mystery, and extends the belief and cognition and ritual activities. The belief system and social group constituted by religion is an important part of human ideology, culture and social form.

Art is a social ideology that uses images to reflect reality but is more typical than reality. It is creative, unique and beautiful in shape. Art is a way for people to grasp the real world. Art activities are spiritual practical activities in which people grasp objective objects in an intuitive and holistic way and create an artistic image in the form of symbolic symbols on this basis. It finally appears in the form of artwork, which has not only the artist's understanding and reflection of the objective world, but also the subjective factors such as the artist's own emotions, ideals, and values. It is a spiritual product. The difference between art and other ideologies is its aesthetic value, which is its most important and basic feature.

### **1. Inner Connection between Religion and Art**

In the 5,000-year history of Chinese civilization, religion has been carrying many functions since it came into being. The original function of religion is to obtain hope and relief from the emotional side through prayer and sacrifice to eliminate suffering. For example, early rock paintings in ancient China began in the late Paleolithic period and the early Neolithic period. They belonged to the budding period of Chinese painting art and were the beginning of the history of painting in China. It is said that there are 40,000 years of history, and the modern primitive tribes are still

there is production. My country's vast territory, diverse terrain, coupled with the inconvenience of ancient transportation, the information blockage between tribal groups in ancient times, and the difference in living habits, the theme, content, and production methods of rock paintings in various regions are quite different. Represented by the southwest rock paintings, the performance content is mainly based on local farming life and religious activities. The rock paintings record their production and lifestyle. The large number of animal patterns appearing in the rock paintings look like a sheep or a cow from the surface. However, we can not only observe its appearance, because what they want to express is not only the pattern itself, but its moral meaning, such as praying for the prosperity of the livestock, the weather, the totem worship and so on. They tried to express an ideal with animal images and convey their beautiful wishes to the gods.

After a long period of time, religion has gradually formed a complete system while human society continues to develop. Religion in modern society often has its own set of social value systems and moral standards. He will guide people to develop in a good direction. People with faith will live a life full of hope, and religion will also influence and delight the public through many art forms.

We know that human production practice and social life are the foundation of art, so even if art and religion are always complementary and inseparable, it does not mean that art is the product of religious development.

### **2. The Influence of Religion on Art**

Religion and art are closely related with each other. From the origin, they blend with each other and are difficult to separate from each other. In the later development, religion strongly needs to convey religious teachings in the form of art. In this process, art has been expanded and developed, and many influential works of art have appeared. During the medieval period in Europe,

art was dominated by Christian theology, and many forms such as mosaics, sculptures, and architecture appeared. Some scholars believe that the classical culture of this period was destroyed, so they called this stage the "dark middle ages", but the Hagia Sophia, Pisa Cathedral, Notre Dame Cathedral that still stands now do reflect the richness of human civilization. Although they appeared for religious service, they also expanded the development space of art from different levels.

The influence of religion on art is not only manifested in the art about religious themes and content, but also deeply affects the artist's aesthetic concept. The prosperity of Chinese literati painting in the Song and Yuan Dynasties has nothing to do with the further theoretical communication of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism during this period. The high quality, tranquility, and tranquility pursued by Chinese literati are deeply influenced by Zen and Taoism. Even if the painter's work does not express religious content, the spirit and the spirit of Zen and Tao are permeated in the interest and artistic conception of landscape painting. For example: Ni Zan, one of the four families in Yuan Dynasty, created many works such as "Xi Shan Tu", "Songlin Ting Zi Tu" and "Yuzhuang Qiu Ji Tu", and said that the so-called painters painted carelessly without nice brush strokes, just to amuse themselves. The works express the ethereal mood and the quiet interest.

### **3. The Influence of Art on Religion**

No matter the beginning of art or the development of art today, its formality is an important part of religious ceremony. In the early days of artistic origin, the combination of singing and dancing music became a process of witchcraft ritual and an external expression, which was based on the utility of survival. Original song and dance, performances, paintings, sculptures, etc. were more of a witchcraft or religious activity at

the time. The ancient totem song and dance is a fanatical witchcraft etiquette activity, but only later, this totem song and dance evolved into songs, dance, poetry, music, painting, drama and so on. The ritual psychology of a civilized society still does not retreat, and wherever there is ritual, there is basically art participation. From the perspective of music, there are religious songs and religious music used in various religious ceremonies and religious activities. Such as Taoist Zhai Suan Yue Music, Buddhist Chang Jing Music and so on. Christianity is largely a way of isolating the two sides of the human and god with a ceremonial norm system, causing strangeness and mystery on the other side, in order to obtain the yearning and observance of the world on the other side. This ceremonial norm system cannot be separated from the quiet chorus of multi-parts, the grand volume of the organ, nor the progress of the mass and the verses of the day class. Religious activities are artistic activities, ritual artistic activities with religious utility.

In terms of music, both Eastern and Western religions use it to spread the solemn and mysterious religious atmosphere and stimulate the religious feelings of believers. Buddhist chanting has a distinctive musical character, and it requires percussion when doing things. Christianity has choirs, and there is Mass, Requiem and so on.

In short, the blending relationship between art and religion can only be estranged with the invention and progress of human science and technology. That is, as religion's influence on people is gradually weakened, art has rid itself of its status as a religious accessory, and is independently and freely dominated by aesthetic activities, which has a positive effect on human spiritual life. Despite this, religious culture still exerts a certain influence and influence on art creation and other fields today.

## References

1. Jiang Shuzhuo, Religious Art [M] Culture and Art Press, 2005
2. Peng Jixiang, Introduction of Art, Peking University Press
3. Zhu Guangqian, History of Western Aesthetics, People's Literature Publishing House, 2002
4. Wang Zhongyao, Eastern and Western Religious Aesthetics and Art [M] China Bookstore, 2009
5. Li Zehou, The Process of Beauty [M] Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press

