

从形似、神似到似神的探索与突破

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我们在评论童雁汝南的肖像画实践和他相关的作品之前，我觉得首先要做的一个事情，就是要辨析一下我们评论视角上的差异，那也就是说，我们是只能仅仅从他本人的“主观”的角度，也就是只能从其自己力图表达的观念和意图的角度来评论他的肖像画实践和其作品呢？还是可以从这个时代的精神生活及其审美原则来把握他在肖像画方面所做出的创新和探索，也就是把他的绘画实践及其作品作为这个时代的精神的现象，或者是作为这个时代审美原则的一种症候，甚至是作为一个绘画事件来加以反思和批评？前一个视角其实是关涉“艺术创作”的视角，后一个视角则是涉及“艺术批评”的视角。毫无疑问，这两个视角的出发点和关注点是不一样的。从“艺术创作”的视角来看，我们的确需要尊重创作者本人的观念和意图，不能对其作过度阐释。但是“艺术批评”的视角，却可以遵循“作者未必然，读者未必不然”的原则来对其绘画实践及其作品进行必要的反思和批判。这些批评和反思所涉及到的内容和相应的对象，可以是创作者本人完全没有意识到的，甚至是可以和其意图相矛盾的。因为任何一个创作者，其实都无法摆脱其所处时代，就绘画实践而言，主要是他所处时代的普遍的视觉机制和审美原则对他的制约和规训，所以这种批评应当是持之有故，言之有理的，不仅仅只是一种牵强附会，或者是凿空立论。但也因为这个原因，从“艺术批评”视角出发的评论，一般是更加关注创作者的创作和其作品与这个时代的精神之间的关系，特别是与作为时代精神形式化表达的“艺术形式、艺术风格以及审美原则和艺术原理”之间的关系。所以，我下面对童雁汝南肖像画实践和他的作品的评论，主要就是从上述两个视角的区分来展开的。换句话说，我主要是沿着“批评”视角对他的肖像画实践和他响应的作品展开分析和思考。

说到这里，我们首先必须要谈的是，既然童雁汝南的绘画实践及其作品是基于肖像绘画这一绘画体裁-题材以及相关主题之上的，那么我们谈论他的创作观念和其相关作品时，就不能离开作为他绘画实践和他最后呈现作品出发点和前提的肖像画，也就是说，我们必须围绕着肖像画这一体裁-题材原本目的，也就是审美原则高度上的“本体目的”来展开对他的绘画实践和他的相关作品的阐释和

评价。虽然有些批评家、有些专家教授可能会说，他只是打了一个幌子，意思是肖像画只是他借用的符号，他是挂羊头卖狗肉。但是我觉得，我们需要从艺术批评的层面上来思考这个问题。那就是，他为什么不是用其他的体裁-题材形式来表达他的创作观念并创作相应的作品呢？所以，这是我们的讨论不能离开的语境：肖像画，作为童雁汝南绘画实践的前提、出发点以及是他最终绘画作品的呈现形式。

肖像画的原本目的，和我们如今去拍摄一张照片的实用目的差不多，一开始是要求外表的像，要求刻画出外在形体的“真实性”以实现我们所说的辨识和认知的功能。所以人们一般认为，好的肖像画无非是“那个人”的外貌体型在二维平面上的“逼真”的立体呈现，肖像画不过是“那个人”的可视外形的“副本”。但是后来我们发现，你把眼睛、鼻子画出来，画得再像，也还似乎是缺点什么？那就是一个人的个性、魅力。而魅力和个性，似乎不单单是只要画得像，就是可以捕捉得到的。所以我们对肖像画的要求，就开始从追求形似提高到追求神似。从形似到神似，这是肖像画发展的线索。这一线索及其其中体现出来的审美原则，是我们不可以忽略的。如果忽略的话，我们对肖像画的理解就是外在的，也就无法真正理解和定位童雁汝南以肖像画作为其绘画实践之体裁-题材的意义和价值，更无法观照到他的创作和这个时代的精神之间的关系，包括大家对一般肖像画绘画实践在现代社会中的功能与意义的误读。比如一般人觉得，摄影出现之后，肖像画就变得没有任何意义和价值了，好像肖像画的意义和价值就在于：对可视对象外形的逼真实现。可是，如今即使是一幅单纯的人像摄影作品，它所追求的，也不仅仅是和它拍摄对象在外形上的一样，而是去努力去捕捉对象的所谓内在的东西，我们通常称之为所谓“神韵”的东西，而这种“神韵”一定是和创作者、拍摄者的思想和观念相契合的，甚至是他们之间相互交流和碰撞的产物，而我们认为这才是好的摄影作品。所以，就是对于摄影作品来说，由于技术上的进步，其实外形上的像与不像已经不是问题了；反而是摆脱外形上的像和不像，才是摄影创作需要去克服和突破的问题。优秀的人像摄影一定是表现出了“那个人”的内在精神气质以及它和创作者的想法其实是相互一致的美的原则。

所以，肖像画的发展可以说，是经历了形似、神似的阶段。但是，我们今天来谈论肖像画，就要再加上现代主义绘画实践，特别是抽象主义绘画实践给肖像

绘画增添的新的因素，以及相应的审美原则进入到现代之后，比如现象学美学产生之后，它对审美对象及其经验的现象学的理解与界定给肖像画绘画实践打开的新的维度。我认为，这就是肖像画在经过了形似、神似阶段后，应该达到一个“似神”的阶段。何为“似神”呢？形似是把每个人的形象，也就是视觉看得见的外表上的每一点都画出来，这是具象的画；神似，如果按照黑格尔的说法，塑形当然只是第一步，更重要的是要把心灵呈现出来，所谓美是理念的感性显现。但是在黑格尔这里，感性和理性、形象和灵魂究其根本来说，终究还是两个东西，需要所谓透过现象看本质。但是“似神”，用胡塞尔的现象学语言来说，就是指“在纯粹现象中以具体的例子为基础，通过具有明证性的步骤发现事物的基本规定性，从而把握本质”，这是一种本质的直观。也就是说，所谓的纯粹现象并不是传统意义上的那些抽象的东西，而是向我们呈现出来的具体形象。“本质直观”则是在丰富的事例和关系中把握本质。所以“似神”的审美原则，对于肖像画来说，就是肖像画画出的“那个人”，不仅仅只是外观上像“那个人”（形似），神态上像“那个人”（神似），而是他不再仅仅只是像“那个人”，无论是形似或是神似，而是同时就是“人本身”（人的理想的这一个的感性实现）；这个“人本身”不是一个抽象的、概念的“人本身”，而是一个具象的、形象的“人本身”，并且是我们从“那个人”的形上、态上直观到的“人本身”。在这个即是“那个人”，又是“人本身”，即“那个人人本身”的身上，完成了一个肖像画家对一个具体人的形象性的、本质性的和创造性的再现，甚至是实现。

所以，从视觉艺术史和审美原则的一般角度描述了上述肖像画发展的简要线索之后，我们就可以对童雁汝南的肖像绘画实践作出一个大致的定位，以及对其涉及到相关的意义和价值的评价了。刚才大家都提到，肖像画里面，模特的形象画出来了还不行，还要画出模特的神态、他的精神面貌和人格。那么如何画出一个人的精神面貌和神态呢？在“神似”阶段，最重要的，是要画出他的眼睛来。黑格尔曾经说过，“如果我们问：整个灵魂究竟在哪一个特殊器官上显现为灵魂？我们马上就可以回答说：在眼睛上；因为灵魂集中在眼睛里，灵魂不仅要通过眼睛去看事物，而且也要通过眼睛才被人看见。”鲁迅先生也说：“要极省俭的画出一个人的特点，最好是画他的眼睛”。所以，从这个视角来解读，我们看到，童雁汝南的肖像画，其所画模特的面部通常是模糊的，眼睛部分是不清晰的，有

些画像甚至只画一只眼睛。所以，他画的眼睛不是我们传统上理解的炯炯有神的眼睛，不是传统上所谓打开内在心灵世界的一扇窗户，他表现的不是黑格尔所讲的眼睛和灵魂的关系。而是经过了现代主义绘画，包括抽象主义、弗洛伊德主义等绘画流派的影响之后，他站在现代立场上对肖像绘画作出的一种新的探索和新的尝试，而这种探索和尝试，可以说是超越了传统肖像绘画对“形似”和“神似”的要求，进入到了一个我认为是“似神”的阶段。所以在我看来，对于站在现代主义之后的童雁汝南的肖像绘画实践，其实可以尝试从如下两个维度进行分析和定位：

一是在涉及肖像画这一体裁-题材艺术史发展脉络中，童雁汝南肖像画的意义和价值在于，他当然是传统肖像画的继承者，比如他总是选择固定的画面尺寸（41cm×33cm），固定的正面人像的角度，固定的人物与背景关系，以及将自己置身于画外；但他也是现代主义肖像艺术之后的继承者，所以在他的肖像绘画的实践中，我们可以充分感受到弗朗西斯·培根、佛洛伊德、奥尔巴赫、里希特等现代主义画家的肖像艺术对他的肖像画创作的影响和余绪。他把这些具有确定身份，确定的具体人物的面目画得具有不确定性、模糊性，以及试图呈现面部形象之中的心绪变化与思想轨迹的努力，充分揭示“那个人”和“人自身”之间既一致，又分离的张力，以及现代社会中，人们具名和匿名之间的互换与隐喻，对立和冲突。

二是在中国绘画精神与技法发展的脉络中，童雁汝南的肖像画通过对中国绘画“写意精神”的发挥，突破了西方以呈现自然之像为中心的肖像画传统。他强调的，是对心中之像的把握，追求的是齐白石先生所谓“不似则欺世，太似则媚俗，妙在似与不似之间”的效果。比如对模特面部的刻画，在他果断、急切，并且是粗糙和有力的笔触中，他力图把握和呈现的，是灌注动作和表情的模特面部的瞬间，而不是确定的与清晰的，并且是相对固定的模特面貌的一般特点。所以，他的肖像画，不再是人像照片一般的关于模特对象的“副本”，而是山水画一般的对模特对象的“写意”；不是照片式的肖像画，而是山水式的肖像画。这种肖像画在从一个具象（与模特对象的形似）到抽象（与模特对象的神似），再到一个具象的抽象（与模特对象的似像非像）的转换中，实现了现象学规定的那个美学原则：在具象里面直接达到抽象的呈现（似神），也就是所谓的本质直观。

人们当然是生活在当下，也是生活在传统中，艺术家概莫能外。所以，对于童雁汝南肖像画实践的阐释和解读，必须把他置身于西方肖像画传统和中国山水画传统之中，只有分析清楚他的绘画实践在这两个传统，特别是这些作品所代表的审美原则和艺术风格中的位置，也就是说，一方面是这两个传统对他的约束和限制，另一方面是他对这些约束和限制的突破与超越，我们才能真正理解和最后确定他的绘画实践的真实含义和真正意义。

Exploration and Breakthrough: a likeness of appearance, mien and spirit

Yuan Xin

Before we comment on portrait practice made by Tong Yanrunan and his related works, I think the first thing we should do is to distinguish and analyze the differences our perspectives on comments. Namely, should we only comment on his portrait practice and works from his own “subjective” perspective? Specifically, should we only make a comment considering his efforts on expressing own ideas and intentions? Or can we grasp his innovation and exploration in portrait painting base on the spiritual life and aesthetic principles in this era, regarding his painting practice and works as the spiritual phenomena, or as a symptom of aesthetic principles of this era, or even as a painting event for introspection and criticism? The former is actually the perspective of “artistic creation”, while the latter is that of “artistic criticism”. Undoubtedly, they are different in terms of consideration and attention. From the perspective of “artistic creation”, we need to respect the author’s own ideas and intentions without over-explanation indeed. However, “art criticism” enables us to rethink and criticize his painting practice and works following the principle that “it is possible for readers to understand the author’s intentions from all angles”. The content and objects involved in these criticisms and reflections may be totally unaware by the creator himself or even contradictory to his intentions. Any creator, in fact, cannot get rid of his era. As far as painting practice is concerned, it is mainly the universal visual mechanism and aesthetic principles in his era that restrict and discipline him. Therefore, the criticism should be justified and reasonable, but not only a far-fetched theory, or a hollow theory. But for this reason, comments from the perspective of “art criticism” generally pay more attention to the relationship between the creator’s creations and the spirits at that time, especially the “art form, art style, aesthetic principles and art principles”, which is an expression in form of the spirits at that time. Therefore, the following comments on portrait practice of Tong Yanrunan and his works are mainly based on the above two

different perspectives. In other words, I mainly analyze and think about his portrait practice and works from the perspective of criticism.

First of all, given that painting practice and works made by Tong Yanrunan are based on portrait painting and related themes, we cannot neglect portraits, the consideration of his painting practice and his final presentation of works, when we talk about his creative ideas and related works. In other words, it is necessary for us to carry out the interpretation and evaluation of his painting practice and works considering the original purpose of portrait painting, that is, the “ontological purpose” in the height of aesthetic principles. Some critics, some experts and professors may say that he just put on a mask, and sails under false colors, meaning that portraits are just symbols he borrowed. But I think we need to think about it from the perspective of art criticism. Why did he not use other genre-theme to express his creative ideas and create corresponding works? Therefore, we cannot discuss without the context: portrait painting, the premise and consideration of Tong Yanrunan’s painting practice as well as the presentation form of his final painting works.

The original purpose of portrait painting is similar to the practical purpose of taking a photograph nowadays. At first, it requires the appearance of image, and the depiction of “authenticity” of the external body, in order to achieve what we call the function of identification and cognition. Therefore, it is generally believed that a good portrait is nothing more than a “realistic” three-dimensional representation of the appearance and body type of “the man” on a two-dimensional plane, and that portrait is only a “copy” of the visual appearance of “the man”. But we found that even if we draw the eyes and nose, and more likeness of the portrait, it seems to be something missing. What miss is exactly one’s personality and charm. Charm and personality may not be captured easily as long as they are portrayed. Therefore, our requirements for portrait painting are improved from pursuing a likeness of appearance to a likeness of mien. The advancing course of a likeness of appearance and that of mien is the clue to the development of portrait painting. The clue and the aesthetic principles embodied in it cannot be ignored. If we neglect it, our

understanding of portrait painting will be external, and we will not really understand and locate the significance and value of Tong's portrait painting as the genre-theme of his painting practice, let alone observe the relationship between his creation and the spirit of this era, including people's misunderstanding of the function and significance of general portrait painting practice in modern society. For example, some people feel that the emergence of photography causes meaninglessness and unworthiness of portraits, as if the significance and value of portraits only lies in: realistic representation of the appearance of visual objects. Nowadays, however, even simple portrait photography pursues not only the likeness in appearance, but also the effort to capture the so-called inner things of the object, which we usually call "charm". The "charm" must be match with the ideas of creator and shooter, and it should be even the product of their interaction and collision, so that we think it is a good photography. Therefore, likeness or unlikeness in appearance of the image is no longer a problem for photographic works due to technological progress; what matters photographic creation is to get rid of, overcome and break through it. Excellent portrait photography must show the inner spiritual temperament of "the man" and the image itself is mutually consistent with the creator's ideas regarding principles of beauty.

Therefore, the development of portrait painting has gone through a course from a likeness of appearance to that of mien. Our discussion of portrait, today, needs to cover modernist painting practice, especially the new elements that have been added to portrait painting from abstract painting practice, and the corresponding aesthetic principles that have entered the modern era. For example, the appearance of phenomenological aesthetics brings objects and their experiences with understanding and definition, which opens a new dimension for portrait painting practice. In my opinion, portrait painting is supposed to reach a state of "resembling spirit" after developing from a likeness of appearance to that of mien. What is "resemble spirit"? A likeness of appearance shows that drawing an image for everyone and every detail of visual appearance should be considered, and it is a concrete painting; a likeness of mien, if as Hegel's view goes, appearance is of course

only the first step, more importantly, shows the soul. It is what said that beauty is the perceptual manifestation of ideas. For Hegel, perception and reason, image and soul are essentially two different things, which is so said seeing through the appearance to perceive the essence. "Resemble spirit", according to Husserl's phenomenological language, refers "to grasp essence by discovering the basic stipulation of things with the evident steps on the basis of concrete examples in pure phenomena", which is an essential intuition. In other words, the so-called pure phenomena are not abstract things in the traditional sense, but concrete images presented to us. "Essential intuition" grasps the essence through affluent cases and relationships. As for portrait painting, therefore, the aesthetic principle of "resemble spirit" implies portraiture of "the man". It is not only a likeness of the appearance of "that man" (a likeness of appearance), but also a likeness of the mien of "that man" (a likeness of mien). He is no longer just a likeness of "that man", but "the man himself" (an ideal perceptual realization). The "man himself" is not an abstract and conceptual, but concrete and figurative, and we can intuitively perceive "the man" from his appearance and mien. In a word, he is both "that man" and "himself". A portrait painter achieves vivid, essential and creative reproduction, even realization of an individual through "the man himself".

Therefore, we can make a general orientation of the portrait painting practice of Tong Yanrunan and evaluate its relevant significance and value based on describing the brief clues of the above-mentioned portrait development from the general perspective of visual art history and aesthetic principles. Just now, we all mentioned that portrait painting requires not only the image of a model, but also the manner, spiritual outlook and personality of the model. So how to draw a person's mental outlook and mien? In the stage of "a likeness of mien", the most important thing is to draw his eyes. As Hegel once said, "If we ask, in what particular organ does the whole soul appear as a soul? We can immediately answer: in the eyes; because the soul is concentrated in the eyes, the soul not only sees things through the eyes, but also through the eyes themselves." Mr. Lu Xun also said, "To draw one's characteristics in a frugal way, it is better to draw his eyes." From this

perspective, faces of portraits made by Tong Yanrunan are usually blurred, and the eyes are not clear. Some portraits even have only one eye. Actually, the eyes he painted are not the shining eyes that we traditionally understand, nor the window that opens the inner world of the mind. He does not represent the relationship between the eyes and the soul that Hegel talks about. He makes a new exploration and attempt on portrait painting from a modern standpoint with the influence of modernist painting, including abstractionism and Freudianism etc. The exploration and attempt, so to speak, surpass the requirements of traditional portrait painting for “a likeness of appearance” and “a likeness of mien”, and enter a stage that I think is “resemble spirit”. Therefore, the portrait painting practice of Tong Yanrunan after modernism can try to be analyzed and located from the following two dimensions:

Firstly, regarding the development context of art history of portrait painting, as a genre-theme, significance and value of Tong Yanrunan’s portrait painting lies in that, of course, he is the successor of traditional portrait painting. For example, he always chooses a fixed picture size (41cm x 33cm), a fixed angle of frontage portrait, a fixed relationship between characters and their backgrounds, and puts himself out of the painting. He is also the successor of the modernist portrait art. We can fully feel the impact of the portrait art of Francis Bacon, Freud, Albach, Richter and other modernist painters from his practice of portrait painting. He draws the faces of these specific figures that have definite identities in uncertainty and ambiguity. He makes efforts to present mood changes and ideological trajectories in facial images, fully revealing the tension, which is both consistent and separate, between “that man” and “the man himself”, as well as exchange and metaphor, opposition and impulse between people’s anonymity and conflict in modern society.

Secondly, regarding the development context of Chinese painting spirits and techniques, portraits made by Tong Yanrunan breaks through the Western tradition of portrait painting, which centers on presenting natural images, by exerting the “freehand spirit” of Chinese painting. He emphasizes catching the image in his heart and pursues the effect of what Mr. Qi Baishi said “non-resemblance means deceives the world, being too resemblant is vulgar, and the wonder exists between

resemblance and non-resemblance". For example, he tries to grasp and present the moments of action and expression through his decisive, eager, rough and powerful strokes when portrays model's face, rather than the definite and clear general characteristics, which is relatively fixed. Therefore, his portrait is no longer a "copy" of the model object as a figure image, but a "freehand" portrait in Chinese landscape painting; it is not a photographic portrait, but a landscape portrait. This kind of portrait realizes the aesthetic principle stipulated by phenomenology in the transformation from a concrete (that is a likeness of model's appearance) to an abstract (that is a likeness of model's mien), and then to a concrete abstraction (between resemblance and non-resemblance), namely, it reaches an abstract (a likeness of spirit) directly, the so-called essential intuition.

Of course, people live in the present, but also live in the tradition, besides artists. Therefore, the interpretation of Tong Yanrunan's portrait practice must be involved in the Western portrait tradition and the Chinese landscape painting tradition. Only by analyzing the position of his painting practice with these two traditions, especially with the aesthetic principles and artistic styles represented by these works, which means these two traditions restrict him while he breaks through and surpasses them, can we truly understand and finally determine the true meaning and real significance of his painting practice.

