The Impact of Buddhist Art onThe Evolution of Painting Techniques In The Jin Dynasty of China

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the impact of Buddhist art on the evolution of painting techniques during the Jin Dynasty of China through a comprehensive exploration of historical materials and case studies. The introduction of Buddhist art into China is traced, with particular focus on the defining features of the early Gandhara and Mathura styles of Buddhist art. The Gandhara style is marked by its Greco-Buddhist influence, featuring naturalistic depictions, intricate drapery, and expressive three-dimensionality, while the Mathura style emphasizes indigenous Indian artistic traditions, characterized by robust forms and symbolic iconography. These styles played a pivotal role in inspiring innovations in Chinese painting techniques. The diversity of local Chinese painting traditions prior to Buddhism's arrival, such as expressive figure painting, imaginative landscape composition, and traditional techniques like line drawing and color application, is explored. The introduction of Buddhist themes catalyzed innovations in painting, including storytelling composition, enriched line textures, and symbolic color schemes. Using observation, case studies, and comparative methods, representative Jin Dynasty paintings are analyzed to reveal how Buddhist art reshaped painting practices. The findings highlight that Buddhist art was a transformative force, integrating foreign artistic elements with local traditions, thereby marking a key turning point in the development of Chinese painting techniques during the Jin Dynasty.

INTRODUCTION

The Jin Dynasty (265-420 CE) was a period of cultural integration and transformation, with Buddhism spreading widely and influencing thought, lifestyle, and artistic expression. Painting, at a developmental crossroads, evolved by incorporating new elements, particularly from Buddhist art.

Buddhist art introduced intricate iconography, innovative spatial depth, and rich symbolism, reshaping Jin Dynasty painting. Detailed depictions of Buddha and Bodhisattvas emphasized posture, expression, and attire. Perspective techniques created immersive compositions, moving beyond earlier flat designs. Symbolic colors, like gold for divinity and blue for profundity, expanded artistic vocabulary,

fostering innovation in technique and style.

Before Buddhism, Chinese painting emphasized "charm" (qi yun) in figures through rhythmic line work, while landscapes used emptiness and form to evoke emotion. Techniques like "iron-wire lines" for precise outlines and monochrome washes for atmosphere were foundational. These traditions provided a base for integrating Buddhist elements.

Ashiwa (2013) contextualizes Buddhism's role in shaping cultural values and artistic expression, illustrating its integration into local traditions. This supports the argument that Buddhist influences played a transformative role in Jin Dynasty painting.

Although there is a considerable amount of research on the history of Chinese painting and Buddhist art, there are still many areas that need to be further explored in the specific field of the influence of Buddhist art in the Jin Dynasty on the evolution of painting techniques (Jun, 2022). Previous studies have mainly focused on the expression and influence of Buddhist art in other dynasties, such as the flourishing period of Buddhist murals in the Tang Dynasty (Ding, 2008). However, there is a lack of systematic and detailed analysis of the unique and crucial role played by Buddhist art in the early stage of the transformation of painting techniques in the Jin Dynasty. For example, after the introduction of Buddhist art, what changes did the painting techniques of the Jin Dynasty undergo?

This study explores how Buddhist art transformed Jin Dynasty painting techniques, focusing on lines, color coordination, and composition. It examines how these elements evolved under Buddhist influence. Key aspects include the introduction of mineral-based pigments like lapis lazuli and cinnabar, enriching the color palette. Buddhist concepts of impermanence and transcendence inspired dynamic compositions and symbolic imagery. Visual narratives from sutras and mandalas introduced storytelling techniques, spatial depth, and hierarchy, reshaping artistic layouts and themes.

Beyond these specific influences, the study highlights the broader impact of this evolution. By integrating Buddhist art, Jin painters expanded their technical repertoire, paving the way for later artistic developments in the Sui and Tang dynasties. This cultural exchange also underscores Buddhist art's role in fostering intercultural interactions in the global history of art.

The specific styling elements in Buddhist art, such as the facial features, body posture, and clothing textures of Buddha statues, have had the most significant impact on the line drawing techniques of Jin Dynasty paintings. How is this influence reflected in the thickness, density, curvature, and expressiveness of lines in Jin Dynasty paintings?

From the perspective of composition, how did unique forms of composition such as Buddhist sutra paintings and mandala paintings promote the evolution of Jin Dynasty painting in terms of picture layout, spatial creation, and handling of primary and secondary relationships? Through this study, the main findings are expected to be as follows:

Regarding line techniques, the research aims to explore how Buddhist art influenced painting lines, particularly its impact on line drawing techniques. It's anticipated that Jin Dynasty lines will become more diverse, blending the smooth, rhythmic style of Buddhist art with the rigid local lines. Lines depicting characters will become more vivid and delicate, enhancing both decorative and expressive qualities. For example, in Buddhist-themed paintings, the lines of characters' clothing will retain local simplicity while incorporating Buddhist sculpture techniques, making figures appear more three-dimensional and dynamic (Wang, 2012). This finding will clarify how Buddhist art affected the thickness, density, curvature, and expressiveness of Jin Dynasty lines.

In terms of color techniques, the integration of Buddhist art is expected to diversify and add symbolism to Jin Dynasty color schemes. High-purity colors like stone green and cinnabar, typical of Buddhist murals, will alter the local, more subdued palette (Ren & Wang, 2021). Colors will also reflect Buddhist symbolism (e.g., gold for Buddha's radiance, white for purity) while integrating with local

aesthetics, creating a distinctive Jin Dynasty palette. This aligns with the research objective of exploring Buddhist influence on painting colors and clarifies its specific impact.

For composition techniques, Buddhist art's complex layouts are expected to inspire Jin Dynasty paintings to move beyond simple symmetrical designs. The influence of Buddhist scripture paintings and mandalas will encourage deeper spatial creation and multi-level expressions. For instance, paintings depicting Buddhist scenes will adopt composition techniques similar to the "Three Distances Method," arranging close-ups, middle shots, and long shots to create a richer visual effect and stronger narrative. This hypothesis addresses how Buddhist compositions influenced Jin Dynasty layouts and thematic focus (Kieschnick, 2003).

Overall, the findings suggest Buddhist art catalyzed the evolution of Jin Dynasty painting techniques, introducing new technical elements and fostering innovation. This laid a foundation for later Chinese painting developments, marking a new chapter in the integration of diverse artistic techniques .

This study aims to analyze Jin Dynasty paintings, historical records, and archaeological findings to trace the evolution of painting techniques under Buddhist influence. It examines how Buddhist elements—form, color, and composition—were selectively absorbed, integrated, and transformed into Jin Dynasty innovations (Fan, 2003). For instance, it explores how Buddhist statue line techniques enhanced figure painting expressiveness, how Buddhist mural color patterns influenced Jin color blending, and how the structured compositions of sutra paintings shaped Jin Dynasty layouts.

Academically, this research fills a key gap in understanding Jin Dynasty painting techniques, contributing to a more systematic history of Chinese painting (Lou, 2006). By reassessing Buddhist art's role, it enriches Chinese art history by revealing complex evolutionary dynamics. Practically, studying Buddhist influence on Jin painting offers valuable insights for contemporary artists. By learning from Jin painters' integration of foreign and local traditions, modern artists can explore new creative paths, fostering innovation in Chinese painting within a globalized cultural landscape (Ding, 2008).

This study strictly limits the time frame to the Jin Dynasty, covering the core areas ruled by the Jin Dynasty and the surrounding areas influenced by its cultural radiation. The research focuses on various representative paintings of the Jin Dynasty, including but not limited to murals, a small number of surviving scroll paintings or related literature records, and archaeological discoveries related to painting. The research mainly focuses on the level of painting techniques, examining in detail the use of lines in Jin Dynasty painting under the influence of Buddhist art, such as the thickness, density, and curvature of lines, the expansion of expressive power, color coordination, the increase of color types, the innovation of color contrast and harmony relationships, and the evolution characteristics and internal laws of composition forms, such as spatial layout, primary and secondary relationships, symmetry and balance processing. At the same time, it will also be compared vertically with the painting works of the prosperous Chinese dynasties of Buddhism to better explain the influence of Buddhism on painting techniques.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Current Research Status of Jin Dynasty Painting Art

The Jin Dynasty played a pivotal role in Chinese painting, bridging past traditions and future developments. Scholars have extensively studied its artistic achievements, particularly Gu Kaizhi. In *Research on Gu Kaizhi*, Li F. analyzed his painting style, highlighting his use of "high ancient hairspring" lines—fine, smooth, and rhythmic like "spring silkworms spinning silk." His *The Admonitions of Women's History* (Figure 1) exemplifies Jin figure painting's refined line work and expressive detail, notably in eye contact and clothing texture. Research also suggests Wei Xie influenced Gu Kaizhi's artistic style, contributing to the diversification of Jin Dynasty painting themes (Zhao, 2024).

Figure 1. The Admonitions of Women's History
(Source: https://britishmuseum.org.cn/exhibition.aspx?id=135, 1903)

Beyond figures and landscapes, Buddhist themes gained prominence in Jin paintings. Archaeological findings, such as Wei and Jin tomb murals in Jiuquan, Gansu (Figure 2), depict celestial beings and Buddhist pagodas (Liu et al., 2022). Though technically simple, these works reveal Buddhism's increasing role in enriching Jin painting subjects.

Figure 2. Queen Mother of the West
(Source: http://vr.dhbwg.org.cn/200/10/dhszbwg.html,220-316BCE)

The evolution of Jin painting techniques has also been a key research focus. Zhang Yanyuan's *Records of Famous Paintings of Various Dynasties* notes that Jin painters inherited Han traditions while pioneering new approaches. They emphasized character "charm" over mere appearance and explored variations in line thickness and rhythm, laying the groundwork for future artistic innovations.

Research achievements related to Buddhist art

Buddhism was widely spread during the Jin Dynasty, and Buddhist art also flourished during this period. In terms of the transmission path of Buddhism, some studies have pointed out that the Silk Road played a key role in the process of Buddhism's introduction to China and its spread to the mainland. With the trade and cultural exchanges between the Western Regions and the Central Plains, Buddhist art gradually spread from the Western Regions to the Central Plains, and Dunhuang and other places along the way became important dissemination nodes and creative centers for Buddhist art. For example, the early cave murals in the Mogao Grottoes of Dunhuang(Figure 3) show the style evolution of Buddhist art in the process of dissemination. The murals with obvious Western style gradually integrate into the Central Plains cultural elements, reflecting the integration and development of Buddhist art in different regions (Xing, 2013).

Figure 3. Mogao Grottoes of Dunhuang
(Source: https://ip.e-dunhuang.com/special.html?value=%E8%88%9E%E8%B9%88, 366BCE))

Figure 4. Murals of the Ajanta Caves in India
(Source: https://www.163.com/dy/article/GRCLQ33N0521JF6I.html,1BCE)

Many scholars have conducted in-depth research on the forms and characteristics of Buddhist art. In the composition of Buddhist murals, taking the Ajanta Caves(Figure 4) in India as an example, they often adopt a center symmetric composition, with the image of Buddha or Bodhisattva as the center, surrounded by numerous disciples, flying beings, and worshippers (Huang, 2010). The picture is rich in layers and has a strong sense of religious ceremony. This composition form had a significant impact on the composition of Buddhist paintings in the Jin Dynasty. In terms of Buddhist sculpture style, the Gandhara art style Buddha statues in India have the characteristics of Hellenistic sculpture, with strong three-dimensional facial features and symmetrical body proportions. This style of sculpture is also reflected in Buddhist statues of the Jin Dynasty and gradually combined with local aesthetics, forming a Buddhist sculpture style with Jin Dynasty characteristics (Huang, 2010). The symbolic meanings of colors in Buddhist art are also very rich, such as gold symbolizing the sanctity and radiance of Buddha, blue symbolizing tranquility and profundity, etc. These color symbolic meanings were widely used in Buddhist painting in the Jin Dynasty, influencing the color selection and matching of Jin Dynasty painting.

Localization and Adaptation of Gandhara and Ajanta Art Influences

Many scholars have explored the forms and characteristics of Buddhist art. The Gandhara style, with its Greco-Buddhist influence, features naturalistic depictions, intricate drapery, and expressive three-dimensionality (Marshall, 2000). In Jin Dynasty painting, the naturalistic approach to depicting

human figures in Gandhara art was adopted. For example, when depicting the facial features of Buddha or Bodhisattva figures in Jin Dynasty paintings, artists borrowed the realistic techniques from Gandhara art, such as the detailed rendering of eyes, nose, and mouth. However, the Jin Dynasty painters adapted these features to fit local aesthetic preferences. In Gandhara art, the facial features often had a more Hellenistic look, with sharp angles and strong contrasts(Figure 5). In Jin Dynasty paintings, these features were softened, and the expressions were made to conform more to the gentle and serene expressions favored in Chinese culture (Lou, 2006).

Figure 5. Gandhara Buddha statue
(Source: https://www.163.com/dy/article/D115513J0523864R.html,2017))

The Ajanta Caves in India, known for their center-symmetric composition in murals, with the Buddha or Bodhisattva at the center surrounded by disciples, flying beings, and worshippers, influenced Jin Dynasty painting composition (Singh, 2014). In Jin Dynasty Buddhist paintings, a similar hierarchical composition was adopted, but with local adaptations. For example, the mural in Mogao Grottoes(Figure 6), while the central Buddha figure was emphasized, the surrounding figures were arranged in a way that also incorporated elements of Chinese traditional spatial concepts. The Chinese artists placed more importance on the balance and harmony between the figures, and the composition was made to feel more open and less densely packed compared to the Ajanta murals, to better suit the Chinese aesthetic sense of spaciousness and tranquility (Bao, 2023).
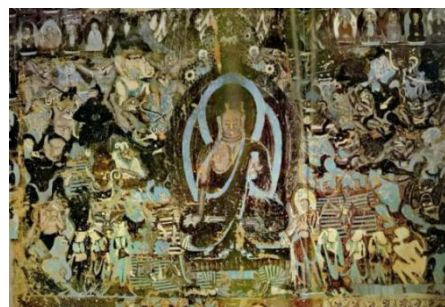
Figure 6. Mogao Grottoes 254th Cave
(Source: https://ip.e-dunhuang.com/,366BCE)

Symbolism and Adaptation

The symbolic meanings of colors in Buddhist art, such as gold symbolizing the sanctity and radiance of Buddha, and blue symbolizing tranquility and profundity, were widely adopted in Jin Dynasty Buddhist painting. However, the Jin Dynasty painters also integrated these symbolic meanings with local color-related cultural connotations. In Chinese traditional culture, red was already a symbol of good luck

and celebration. In Jin Dynasty paintings, when using red in Buddhist-themed works, it not only carried the Buddhist meaning of compassion but also retained its positive connotations from Chinese culture, creating a unique blend of religious and local symbolic color use (Lou, 2006).

Research on Cross-cultural Art Exchange and Integration

During the Jin Dynasty, there were fruitful achievements in artistic exchanges and research between China and regions such as the Western Regions. Scholar Chen Yinke mentioned in his works that cultural envoys from the Western Regions had frequent cultural exchanges with the Central Plains region, bringing Buddhist art and other Western art forms and cultural concepts. These exchanges promote the mutual absorption and reference of artistic elements from different cultural backgrounds. For example, in terms of music and dance, after the introduction of Hu music and dance from the Western Regions to the Central Plains, they merged with the music and dance of the Central Plains, creating new forms of art. This cultural fusion phenomenon also exists in the field of painting (Ren &Wang, 2021).

From the perspective of theoretical and case studies on the mutual absorption and reference of artistic elements in different cultural backgrounds, some studies have taken the evolution of Japanese painting art in the process of absorbing Chinese and Western painting art as an example to illustrate the importance of cultural integration for artistic development. Japanese painting absorbed a large amount of techniques and styles from Chinese Tang Dynasty painting in the early days, and later integrated the perspective and color theories of Western painting, forming a unique Japanese painting style. This case of cross-cultural artistic exchange and integration provides useful reference for understanding the fusion of Buddhist art and local painting techniques in the Jin Dynasty (Fan, 2003). The integration of Buddhist art and local painting in the Jin Dynasty was also based on the collision and exchange of different cultural backgrounds. Through absorption and innovation, a painting art style with Jin Dynasty characteristics was formed, injecting new vitality into the development of Chinese painting art.

Theoretical Lenses Underpinning the Analysis

When exploring the cross-cultural art exchange in the Jin Dynasty, three theoretical perspectives offer valuable insights. From a cultural anthropology perspective, the interaction between Buddhist art and Jin Dynasty painting represents cultural diffusion (Kieschnick, 2003). The introduction of Buddhist art led to an exchange of artistic traits. Jin Dynasty painters adapted foreign elements, like Buddha iconography, to local values(Huang Q. 2010). For example, Buddha's facial expressions in Jin paintings combined Buddhist ideals with Chinese concepts of serenity, showing how cultures evolve through contact. In art history, the influence of Buddhist art on Jin Dynasty painting is a significant development. It spurred innovation in techniques such as line drawing and composition. The flowing lines for Buddha's robes and new spatial arrangements in paintings were departures from traditional styles. This places Jin Dynasty painting as a crucial link between earlier and later Chinese art periods. Visual semiotics helps analyze the symbols in Buddhist art and their use in Jin Dynasty paintings. Symbols like the lotus flower, representing purity in Buddhism, added new meaning to Jin paintings. Color symbolism, such as gold for Buddha's radiance, also had dual significance, reflecting both Buddhist and local cultural ideas (Whalen, 2013). This shows how visual signs communicate complex meanings in cross-cultural art exchange.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research method to explore in depth the influence of Buddhist art on the evolution of painting techniques in the Jin Dynasty. Qualitative data describes qualities or characteristics. It is collected using questionnaires, interviews, or observation, and frequently appears in

narrative form (Brucel, 2001). Through the comprehensive application of various specific research methods, including case studies, observations, and vertical comparisons, to comprehensively and meticulously analyze this complex art history phenomenon.

Case Study

This study selects representative Jin Dynasty paintings for in-depth analysis, covering different regions, styles, and themes. Key cases include Gu Kaizhi's *Exemplary Women's Benevolence and Wisdom* and *Ode to the Goddess of Luo*, along with Wei and Jin tomb murals in Jiayuguan, Gansu. Each case will be examined through painting techniques such as line work, color, and composition to explore Buddhist art's influence. For example, in *Ode to the Goddess of Luo*, the study will assess how the Goddess's line depiction integrates Buddhist character charm and posture, and whether its composition reflects Buddhist sutra paintings' spatial concepts (Pan, 2024).

Recognizing potential cultural bias is crucial. As a Chinese researcher, my aesthetic perspective may emphasize elements resonating with Chinese tradition while overlooking aspects more central to Buddhist art. In analyzing *Ode to the Goddess of Luo*, I must remain objective, ensuring interpretations consider both Chinese artistic conventions and the broader Buddhist artistic context.

Observation

Due to the limited availability of Jin Dynasty paintings, this study relies on high-definition images from online sources. While direct observation is not possible, modern imaging technology allows for detailed analysis of painting techniques. Line observation focuses on characteristics such as curvature, straight-curved combinations, and thickness variations, as well as the clarity and smoothness of edges to infer brush control. Color analysis utilizes image software to assess hue, brightness, purity, and transitions between color regions, revealing the painter's techniques. Composition analysis examines structural balance, element positioning, and spatial hierarchy through overlaps and occlusions. Additionally, background details, including depicted scenes and character dynamics, are integrated to understand the connection between artistic choices and technique.

Cultural biases may influence interpretation. Traditional Chinese aesthetics might unconsciously shape perceptions of line morphology, color symbolism, and composition. For instance, when analyzing line curvature and thickness, comparisons with Chinese line-drawing standards may lead to misinterpretations. Similarly, cultural associations with colors might affect judgments about the painter's intent. Awareness of these biases ensures a more objective analysis.

Vertical Comparison

The vertical comparison method is used to analyze the similarities and differences between Jin and Tang Dynasty paintings influenced by Buddhist art, highlighting the uniqueness of Jin Dynasty techniques. The Tang Dynasty, a peak of Buddhist art in China, saw more mature and diverse painting styles. Comparing these dynasties reveals the evolutionary trajectory of painting techniques under Buddhist influence.

Before Buddhist art's introduction, Jin Dynasty painting lines were simple. The modeling concepts in Buddhist statue-making inspired innovations in figure painting, emphasizing line fluency and dynamism. This later influenced Tang artists like Wu Daozi, whose "Orchid Leaf Stroke" enhanced expressiveness and momentum in figure depiction.

Jin Dynasty paintings initially adopted Buddhist colors, such as gold and cinnabar, to convey solemnity. In the Tang Dynasty, Buddhist esteem encouraged richer, more decorative color use, reflecting

visions of the Western Paradise. Compared to the Jin period, Tang paintings featured more refined and vibrant color applications, marking a deepened integration of Buddhist aesthetics.

Jin Dynasty compositions, though simple, began exploring hierarchical arrangements in religious narratives. By the Tang period, as seen in Dunhuang sutra-transformation paintings, compositions became grander and more complex to accommodate intricate storytelling. The Jin Dynasty's early attempts at structured layouts laid the foundation for later developments in Tang painting.

This comparison places Jin Dynasty painting within the broader evolution of Chinese art, revealing Buddhist art's continuous influence across periods. Throughout this process, cultural biases must be considered, as a China-centric perspective may shape perceptions of artistic "progress." Preconceived notions about line refinement or color richness could lead to over- or underemphasizing artistic changes between the two dynasties.

Triangulation

Case Study and Observation Cross-Validation

In analyzing Gu Kaizhi's *Ode to the Goddess of Luo,* Buddhist influences on line work, color, and composition were examined. High-resolution images of the painting further validate these findings by assessing line curvature, thickness variations, and color distribution. For instance, the case study suggests that Gu's lines reflect Buddhist influences in character expression. Observing the agility and fluency of these lines confirms this conclusion, strengthening the argument with visual evidence.

Case Study and Longitudinal Comparison Cross-Validation

By studying Wei and Jin tomb murals, the integration of Buddhist elements in Jin Dynasty painting is analyzed. A vertical comparison with Tang Dynasty works reveals developments in inherited techniques. For example, while Wei and Jin murals initially adopted Buddhist color schemes, Tang paintings refined and enriched them. This validates the case study's findings on Buddhist art's influence and demonstrates its historical evolution.

Observation and Vertical Comparison Cross-Validation

Tang Dynasty Dunhuang sutra paintings exhibit complex, layered compositions compared to the simpler layouts of Jin Dynasty paintings. Observing symmetry, balance, and spatial relationships in both periods provides concrete data supporting this compositional evolution. For instance, the primary-secondary relationships in Dunhuang murals, reflected in character size and placement, align with vertical comparison findings, further clarifying how Buddhist art shaped composition across dynasties.

Data Collection

This study collects data from two key sources to analyze Buddhist art's influence on Jin Dynasty painting techniques.

Image Data Collection

Baidu is the primary tool for sourcing Jin Dynasty painting images. While Baidu provides extensive image sources, its reliability varies. Therefore, careful cross-referencing with museum archives and

academic sources is necessary. Keywords such as *Jin Dynasty murals*, *Gu Kaizhi paintings*, and *Jin Dynasty Buddhist paintings* refine searches. High-resolution images from reputable sources—art institutions, cultural research platforms, and professional art blogs—are prioritized. Metadata, including links, image size, and color mode, is recorded for accurate referencing. Despite Baidu's varied sources, rigorous selection ensures the reliability of visual materials, providing a strong basis for analyzing Jin Dynasty painting techniques.

Literature Collection

China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) is the main platform for gathering academic resources. Search terms like *Jin Dynasty painting techniques* and *Buddhist influences on Jin Dynasty painting* retrieve journal articles, dissertations, and conference papers. Core journal articles offer cutting-edge insights, while master's and doctoral theses provide systematic reviews. Standardized bibliographic details are recorded, and sources are categorized using literature management software for efficient retrieval. This ensures a solid theoretical foundation and historical context for studying Buddhist art's impact on Jin Dynasty paintings.

Data Analysis Framework

As shown in Table 1, the purpose of this study is to deeply analyze the influence of Buddhist art on the evolution of painting techniques in the Jin Dynasty, and to collect data through a combination of case studies, observations, and comparisons. In the data analysis stage, corresponding analysis strategies were adopted for data from different sources. Through a systematic analysis process, we strive to comprehensively and accurately reveal the role played by Buddhist art in the development of painting techniques in the Jin Dynasty, and explore the underlying internal logic and laws.

Table 1. Data Analysis Framework

Analysis Category	Concrete Step		Segmented Content
Case Study Data Analysis	1. Encode based on the dimensions of painting techniques	2. Identify recurring them and patterns	Line application: variations in thickness, smoothness, and rhyth Color matching: color types, contrast, main tone Composition layout: symmetrica form, element distribution hierarchy
			Analyzing the presentation methods of Buddhist art elements and their integration characteristi with Jin Dynasty painting techniques
Observation Data Analysis	1. Classify and encode observation details and features	2. Extracting them based on background information	Line form features: combination curvature and straightness Color attributes: hue, brightness, purity Composition relationship: eleme symmetry and balance, proportio of primary and secondary elemen
			Analysis of the correlation betwe the creation era, region, and artis style of related works and the details of painting techniques

Comparative Data Analysis	Comparison of Differences and Similariti in Painting Techniques between Jin and Tang Dynasties	Lines: Inheritance and Innovatio Color: Initially accepted in the Ji Dynasty, rich and delicate in the Tang Dynasty Composition: Comparing Development and Changes

ANALYSIS

Analysis of Line Techniques

In the paintings of the Jin Dynasty, taking Gu Kaizhi's *Ode to the Goddess of Luo* as shown in the figure 7, the use of lines exhibits unique stylistic features. From the overall picture, the contour lines of the characters are often drawn with smooth and delicate lines, such as the body posture lines of Luo Shen, which are continuous and graceful, like flowing clouds and water, reflecting the high pursuit of line fluency in the Jin Dynasty. Observing the lines of the clothing pattern, changes in density were used to depict the folds and texture of the clothing. At the turning points of the character's joints and the fluttering corners of the garment, the lines were relatively dense to emphasize dynamism and volume. Compared with traditional painting lines, this exquisite treatment of line density is clearly influenced by Buddhist art. The character modeling in Buddhist art, especially the depiction of Buddha statues' clothing, often creates a sense of three dimensionality and solemnity through the density of lines. In some Buddhist murals, the lines of the Buddha's robe are processed extremely delicately, and the wrinkled texture presents rich layers through the dense arrangement of lines. Jin Dynasty painting absorbed this characteristic and incorporated local painting styles, making the lines more vivid and charming in depicting character images.

Figure 7. Analysis of Line Techniques
(Source: https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=18221911160852684600&wfr=spider& for=pc,2025)

Analysis of Color Techniques

From the perspective of color analysis, it can be found that the murals in the Wei and Jin tombs in Jiayuguan, Gansu have distinct characteristics in their use of color. The screen uses vivid colors such as earth red, ochre, and stone green. The selection of these colors reflects both the local pigment resources and the influence of the Buddhist art color system. In Buddhist art, colors have rich symbolic meanings, such as red symbolizing compassion and passion, and green symbolizing vitality and tranquility. In the murals of Wei and Jin tombs, the combination of these colors is not arbitrary. For example, when depicting character images, earth red may be used to represent the skin color or main color of clothing, while stone green is used to embellish decorative parts, creating a contrasting and harmonious visual effect(Figure 8). Compared with the relatively elegant and simple color style before the Jin Dynasty, this bold use of vivid colors is a significant change. By comparing the colorful and delicate characteristics of Buddhist painting in the Tang Dynasty, it can be seen that Jin Dynasty painting was in an important stage of transitioning from elegant to brilliant color techniques, which was a manifestation of the gradual

integration of Buddhist artistic color concepts into local painting.

Figure 8. Analysis of Color Techniques
*(Source:https://mbd.baidu.com/newspage/data/dtlandingsuper?
nid=dt_4279240299027390062,2025)*

Analysis of Composition Techniques

Taking Gu Kaizhi's *A Picture of Benevolence and Wisdom among Women* as an example which is shown in the figure 9 to analyze composition techniques. In the layout of the picture, the arrangement of characters has a certain sense of order, with the main character as the center and the secondary characters surrounding, forming a clear relationship of primary and secondary. This layout is similar to the composition of Buddhist sutra paintings. Buddhist sutra paintings usually revolve around Buddha or Bodhisattva, surrounded by numerous disciples, flying beings, and worshippers. In the painting, the painter creates a sense of space through the changes in the size, position, and posture of the characters. Although the composition space of Jin Dynasty painting is slightly simpler compared to the more grand and complex spatial creation in Tang Dynasty Buddhist painting, it has already begun to draw on Buddhist composition concepts and attempt to break through the traditional flat layout. For example, when depicting indoor scenes, a certain sense of depth is initially reflected through the occlusion relationship of characters and the arrangement of furniture and other elements. This is an innovation and development of Jin Dynasty painting composition under the influence of Buddhist art, laying the foundation for further evolution of painting composition techniques in later generations.

Figure 9. Composition Techniques
(Source:https://britishmuseum.org.cn/exhibition.aspx?id=135, 1903)

FINDINGS

This study reveals the profound influence of Buddhist art on the evolution of painting techniques in the Jin Dynasty through a comprehensive analysis of Jin Dynasty paintings, Buddhist art elements, and their cultural backgrounds. The core findings of the study include the following aspects:

The Evolution of Line Techniques

Buddhist art introduced a smoother and more rhythmic way of expressing lines, which made the lines in Jin Dynasty painting no longer limited to a single outline, but enhanced their expressive power and decorative value. For example, painters in the Jin Dynasty drew inspiration from the line changes in Buddhist sculpture art when depicting the folds of characters' clothing, making the clothing patterns more three-dimensional and flowing. This fusion not only enhanced the expressive tension of Jin Dynasty painting, but also laid the foundation for line techniques such as "orchid leaf painting" in later Tang Dynasty.

The richness of color system

In terms of color application, the influence of Buddhist art has broken the previous relatively simple and monotonous color matching system, introducing color combinations with more religious symbolic meaning and visual impact. For example, the Jin Dynasty began to use high-purity mineral pigments in painting, such as lapis lazuli blue, cinnabar red, etc. These colors not only enhance the visual tension of the painting, but also carry symbolic meanings of Buddhist art, such as gold representing the radiance of Buddha and blue symbolizing wisdom and profundity. Compared to the simple and elegant style of painting in the Han Dynasty, this color innovation promoted the mature development of color in Buddhist painting in the later Tang Dynasty.

Innovation in composition style

Under the influence of Buddhist art, Jin Dynasty painting broke through the traditional single composition mode and absorbed the spatial processing techniques of Buddhist sutra variation painting and Mandala composition. For example, the main character in the picture begins to occupy the center position, and the surrounding characters are arranged in a hierarchical and narrative order, thus forming a more layered and spatial picture. In the tomb murals and Buddhist themed paintings of the Jin Dynasty, preliminary depth layouts can already be observed, laying the foundation for the more magnificent religious painting space composition of the Tang Dynasty.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the profound impact of Buddhist art on Jin Dynasty painting techniques, influencing line work, color, composition, and narrative structures. Buddhist art introduced greater fluidity and expressiveness to line techniques, as seen in Gu Kaizhi's paintings, where variations in thickness and density enhanced figure depiction. The Buddhist color palette, enriched by lapis lazuli blue and cinnabar red, added vibrancy and symbolic depth, shaping a new visual language. Composition also evolved, incorporating hierarchical spatial arrangements inspired by Buddhist murals, paving the way for more complex structures in later periods. Additionally, Buddhist iconography and storytelling techniques enriched narrative depth, integrating symbolic motifs and sequential narratives.

Overall, Buddhist influence marked a turning point in Chinese painting, bridging earlier traditions with later artistic advancements. Future research could explore regional variations and interdisciplinary approaches to deepen insights into this cultural exchange.

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