



# Inheritance and Development of Sketch Teaching Curriculum System for Fine Arts Majors in Chinese Higher Education (1910-1920)

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## Abstract

The construction of sketch course in China's higher fine arts education (fine arts major) has roughly three stages of development. The first stage was the introduction stage, which lasted from the beginning of the 20th century to around the founding of the People's Republic of China, mainly for overseas students to directly introduce the teaching methods of European academic schools into domestic use. The second stage is from the founding of the People's Republic of China to the 1960s and 1970s, through the Soviet Union government students, the Soviet Union's Skitchkov sketch teaching system was introduced into China and became the mainstream sketch teaching system in China; The third stage is the 20th century after 80 years, that is, after the second national sketch teaching seminar established the principle of a hundred flowers blooming, individualized teaching to the present period.

## Keywords

Chinese sketch course, Academy of Fine Arts, fine arts education, inheritance and development

## 1. Introduction

As we all know, sketch course is a basic course for fine arts majors in colleges and universities. The sketch course, which has always been considered by most people in the industry as the basis of all modeling, plays an important role in major art colleges, both at home and abroad, especially in traditional art colleges. Sketch into the development of higher education in China has been nearly a century, hundred years of development is gradual and steady, but in this, there are various problems, but also difficult twists and turns to move forward. After several generations of inheritance, it has now become an "ancient" course with a thick history. Based on the relevant historical materials, literature monographs and the actual investigation of major art colleges, the author carefully combs the development of sketch course in China's higher art education, and concludes that its introduction and development in China roughly went through three stages, of which the second stage has a far-reaching impact; However, in the present period, the teaching system of fine arts colleges in various regions of China is not the same due to their own educational conditions and abilities, but the good thing is that they are actively innovating.

## 2. Construction and development of sketch courses in Chinese higher art colleges from the early 20th century to before and after the founding of the People's Republic of China

At the beginning of the 20th century, with the demise of the imperial system, intellectuals in China were keenly aware that a new era had arrived, and their thoughts became more active than ever. Influenced by the spread of

western learning to the east and the New Culture Movement, an upsurge of learning advanced western technology, culture and art arose in China. Intellectuals in the art education sector actively participated in the new art education and explored the establishment of modern art schools. During this period, national, provincial, municipal or private art schools established without exception offered western painting courses. At that time, there were three main channels for hiring western painting teachers: first, western painting students who studied in Japan (Cui Zhijin & Yuan Jingxiong, 2019). Kyoto Fine Arts School at the beginning of the century and returned to China; Second, graduates from fine arts institutes such as the Paris Academy of Fine Arts who will go to France to study part-time and work-study; The third is to hire western painting teachers from Japan, Russia, Czech Republic, France and other countries.

## 2.1 Sketch course teaching in Shanghai Academy of Fine Arts

In November 1912, China young painters Liu Haisu (Huang Houming & Wang Dongmin, 2014), Wu Shiguang and Zhang Yuguang founded the private Shanghai Academy of Fine Arts, and Liu Haisu, who was only 17 years old, was the first president. It was renamed Shanghai Fine Arts School in 1920 and Shanghai Fine Arts College in 1930. This is the first private fine arts college with a new school model in China. As the earliest private art school established in China, Shanghai Academy of Fine Arts mainly refers to the curriculum of Tokyo Fine Arts School (Liu Yang, 2010). In the initial stage, due to the small scale of the school and limited by many conditions such as school buildings, teachers and teaching AIDS, the curriculum has experienced a gradual process from simple to complex and from easy to difficult. In the autumn of 1914, its teaching focus gradually increased from the imitation of western paintings to the teaching of sketching, and the school has set up two levels of courses: regular courses and junior college courses. Among them, the professional courses offered by Zhengke include pencil sketch, watercolor sketch, funny painting, advertising painting, oil painting and so on. In 1918, in addition to professional courses such as copying and sketching, the curriculum of Shanghai Fine Arts College added science and humanities courses such as perspective, zoology and botany, and art history, which indicated that the school's training objectives had changed greatly, that is, from simply cultivating practical art talents to paying equal attention to cultivating practical art and pure art talents, and a basically reasonable and gradual curriculum system was initially formed.

In May 1918, 23-year-old Liu Haisu became the principal. Influenced by Cai Yuanpei's thought of "aesthetic education" (Zhang Yan, 2007), Liu Haisu, who advocated reform and innovation, made great changes in teaching, that is, replacing the model of paying equal attention to imitation and sketching with a new model of sketching teaching. In July, 1919, the school introduced undergraduate courses through Fine Arts magazine, including 13 courses: ethics, perspective, anatomy, art history, aesthetics, geometric painting, projection painting, pencil drawing, pen drawing, watercolor painting, oil painting, charcoal painting and pattern painting. These courses involve the basic theoretical knowledge of fine arts and the basic skills of western painting, and almost cover the main knowledge and skills of western painting specialty. Liu Haisu, the headmaster, made this statement: "Realism is the main part of teaching, while imitation is the auxiliary part". Obviously, the curriculum of Shanghai Fine Arts College was very close to that of the Western Orthodox Academy of Fine Arts, showing a naturalistic tendency of realism (Yang Liu, 2017).

**Table 1. Summary of Western Painting Courses in Shanghai Fine Arts College from 1913 to 1922**

Times	Educational system	Major subject courses
1913	one year	All kinds of western-style pictures and photography, etc.
1915	two years	Realistic plaster, pen sketch, still life, oil painting, etc.
1918	Undergraduate course for three years	Perspective, imitation, human body sketch, instrumental painting, etc
1919	three years	Perspective, geometry, anatomy, projection painting, charcoal painting, oil painting
1922	three years	Western painting, perspective, geometry, artistic anatomy, projection painting, charcoal painting, oil painting.

## 2.2 Sketch course teaching in Beijing Academy of Fine Arts

Beijing Fine Arts School, founded in April, 1918, set up the secondary department first and set up the Chinese painting department and the pattern department in parallel because of the hasty preparation time, insufficient teach-

ers and narrow school buildings (Chen Jichun & Yuan Baolin, 2013). In 1919, Beijing Academy of Fine Arts began to set up a higher department, which was divided into Chinese painting, western painting and pattern, and the following year added a pattern teacher's department. At this point, the school has initially established a relatively complete discipline system of modern art education (Fan Jingzhong, 1998).

**Table 2. Western Painting Curriculum of Beijing Fine Arts School (1918)**

Preparatory course	Instrument painting (geometric painting, projection painting, perspective painting: 4 class hours per week), etc.
Undergraduate course (first academic year)	Anatomy (art application, human anatomy: 2 class hours per week), etc.
Undergraduate course (second academic year)	Anatomy (art application, human anatomy: 2 class hours per week), etc.
Undergraduate course (third academic year)	Oil painting graduation creation, etc.: 31 class hours per week.

Influenced by the spread of Western learning to the east, the curriculum of Beijing Fine Arts School embodies the teaching concept of being compatible with China and the West and learning from the strengths of others. The courses offered by the Chinese Painting Department include Western painting, new drawing plans, anatomy, pattern method, aesthetics, history of aesthetics, foreign languages and other courses. In addition to drawing, color, oil painting, pattern method, anatomy and other courses, Chinese painting is also included in the compulsory courses. This combination of Chinese and Western curriculum will benefit students for life.

In 1927, Lin Fengmian, who returned from France, became the president of the National Beijing Fine Arts School and invited Qi Baishi to teach Chinese painting (Liu Beiyi, 2018). However, this news was known by those conformist literati painting teachers in the late Qing Dynasty, and they were greatly dissatisfied. Nevertheless, the new trend of Western learning to the east after all blew to Beijing, the National Beijing Fine Arts School immediately set up the department of Western painting. In 1919, at the academic lecture conference of the Ministry of Education, Zheng Jin made a speech entitled "The School of Western Painting", systematically introducing the classical school of Western painting, romantic school, Impressionism, Cubism, Futurism and other art schools, showing the position of great importance to Western painting. In order to teach students to be familiar with the structure of the human body, Zheng Jin combined with the experience of learning Western painting in Japan, introduced anatomy as a compulsory course in the teaching of Chinese painting and Western painting, guided students to grasp the proportion and structure of the human body from the perspective of anatomy, and then cultivated students' accurate modeling ability (Jin Hwan Yi, 2013; Huang Houming & Wang Dongmin, 2014).

### 2.3 Sketch course teaching in Hangzhou National Art Academy

With the support of CAI Yuanpei, the dean of the Graduate School, Lin Fengmian, a French oil painter with the ideal of transforming society through fine arts, founded the National Art Institute in Hangzhou (Yu Qin, 2011). The school has separate departments of painting, sculpture, painting and music. In order to ease the contradiction and conflict between Chinese and Western painting teaching ideas, Lin Fengmian put forward the teaching idea of embracing both Chinese and Western painting and paying attention to individuality. In terms of curriculum setting, in addition to offering professional courses, theoretical courses, cultural courses and physical education courses of general fine arts schools, we also attach great importance to highlighting the characteristics of the school. First, the painting department includes both Chinese painting and Western painting. Students majoring in painting should take Western painting courses such as drawing, color, and oil painting, as well as Chinese painting related courses such as copying and line drawing, calligraphy, seal cutting, and poetry. On this basis, he tried to break down the invisible wall between Chinese and Western painting, in order to learn from each other and be inclusive, and promote the reform and innovation of Chinese painting and the process of nationalization of oil painting (Huang Houming & Wang Dongmin, 2013). Provost Lin Wenzheng (Zheng Dynasty, 1992) pointed out in the School's Art Education Outline: If we want to adapt the decadent Chinese painting to the needs of social consciousness and find a new way, then the study of Chinese painting should not ignore the contribution of western painting; At the same time, if we want individuals to come to the Jialing River, painting dozens of watercolor night scenery on both sides

of the Jialing River, opening up a new world of depicting Chongqing at night, so that Xu Beihong's sketching concept of "or explore the wonders of nature, or explore the truth of life" runs through his painting learning and creation.

### **3. The construction and teaching methods of sketch courses in Chinese fine arts colleges from the founding of the People's Republic of China to the 1960s**

The sketch teaching system of Czischakov in the Soviet Union, while inheriting the excellent European sketch teaching tradition, draws valuable experience from Russian classical sketch masters, combines a series of teaching practice and thinking, and leads the sketch teaching to an open realm. It creatively defines sketch as "judgment and reasoning" which is a "thinking process" of cognition objective form, and sets up a set of scientific experimental methods for this purpose, so as to get a scientific sketch teaching system. Under the influence of this system, a large number of outstanding painters were created, contributing to the unprecedented prosperity in the art history of Russia and the Soviet Union in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and its influence also spread to many countries, including China (Cui Yingying, 2020).

#### **3.1 The Cheschakov sketch teaching method was introduced from the Soviet Union in the early days of the founding of New China**

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In the early days of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the introduction of Cheschakov's sketch teaching method from the Soviet Union has a positive significance, which makes the basic teaching of sketch in China's higher art education move from disorder to order, and forms a set of gradual teaching methods, which plays a certain role in cultivating new forces of art. The Central Academy of Fine Arts, Central Academy of Arts and Crafts, Lu Xun Academy of Fine Arts and other northern art colleges have been deeply influenced by this. Cheschakov sketched perspectives, structural anatomy, optics, vision, physiology and other scientific knowledge as a means to verify cognitive thinking and improve cognitive ability. In this way, for sketching practice, the surface image of sketching, that is, the representation of three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional plane, is only a record of the understanding and understanding of the existence form of objective material, which makes the purpose of basic sketching clear and concise, and is conducive to the introduction and start of beginners (Qian Wei, 2008). Later reflection, the teaching system in practice exposed a lot of problems, mainly only pay attention to the basic training, ignore the cultivation of students' intuitive feeling ability, focus on the surface of the real imitation of the image, lack of grasp of the intrinsic nature: more important is to form a single model of sketch teaching.

After the reform and opening up, Qi's teaching method was also reformed, and gradually formed the "multi-polarization" of sketch teaching, but the realist sketch teaching system still dominated.

#### **3.2 New ideas brought by sketch teaching seminar**

On December 14, 1962, Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts (China Academy of Art) held a "Sketch Teaching Research Association", and President Pan Tianshou made a speech on "Basic Training of Chinese Painting". It advocates replacing the concept of sketch with white drawing and double hook, denies the suitability of Cheschakov's teaching system for China, and questions the academic teaching method from plaster statue to model (Wang Baoqiang, 2006)). Soon, Shu Chuanxi, who returned from studying in Germany, introduced a different teaching method of structural sketch from Qi's. Then Fang Zengxian introduced a set of modeling methods combining line and surface, which made Pan Tianshou's theory and practice have a new development.

### **4. Construction and development of sketch courses in contemporary art colleges and universities**

On December 6, 1979, the second Symposium on Sketch Teaching in Chinese higher art colleges was held in Hangzhou Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts (China Academy of Art) (Summary of the second National Sketch Teaching Symposium in art colleges, 1980). The symposium was sponsored by Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts

entrusted by the Ministry of Culture, and 96 representatives from more than 40 art colleges and universities across the country attended the meeting. The meeting summarized the sketch teaching in the past 30 years since the founding of the People's Republic of China, and after affirming the achievements of sketch teaching and its contribution to the fine arts cause of New China, pointed out the existing problems and shortcomings: "The first national Sketch teaching Symposium held in Beijing in 1955 promoted the teaching methods of the Soviet Academy of Fine Arts and the sketch teaching system of the 19th century Russian art educator Cheschakov, which has its scientific and systematic method and system, and has played a positive role in promoting the sketch teaching in China. However, under the historical conditions of "one-sided" learning in the Soviet Union at that time, the administrative way to promote this school was not combined with China's sketch teaching experience, resulting in the simplification of Chinese sketch teaching methods and basic sketch style. The delegates at this meeting believed that various schools and different styles of sketch teaching exist objectively, and it is necessary to further emancipate the mind, remove obstacles, and make sketch teaching develop in a diversified and healthy way. We should advocate the diversification of artistic styles and schools, and attach importance to and encourage those who are brave to innovate and make breakthroughs in artistic styles. The delegates agreed: "No matter what kind of sketch teaching method or school is used for sketch teaching, it should solve a series of regular problems of modeling ability." In terms of teaching methods, we should follow the principle of "teaching according to aptitude" and "step by step", which should not only be strict, but also overcome the "nanny" teaching method".

Then came the contact with the West. Sartre's existentialism, Freud's psychoanalysis, Western Marxism, as well as self-expression, stream of consciousness, misty poetry and other theories were introduced into the literary world, which triggered the reflection on the themes, ideas, forms and styles that were used to in the past.

Nowadays, there are obvious differences in the teaching content of sketch teaching of fine arts major in domestic higher art colleges.

The first type is embodied in the teaching method and content of sketch in the oil painting major, which mainly follows the teaching and training methods of western realism. For example, the oil painting major of the Central Academy of Fine Arts has a long teaching period of basic sketching, and the courses of sketch and sketch (large-scale sketch, large-scale plaster, portrait, and human body) are the key compulsory courses from the second to the fourth grade of the undergraduate. The school has been deeply influenced by the realistic sketch of the West and the Soviet Union in history, and many old teachers have studied in the Soviet Union, so it still follows this teaching method. In the second and third years of undergraduate studies, the oil painting major of Sichuan Fine Arts Institute will successively offer traditional sketch courses such as drawing from masters, the depth and expression of sketch, figurative painting and body painting, and photographic realism. In particular, realism is brought to the extreme, which is significantly different from other fine arts colleges. This is not a recommended teaching method, which will affect students' future creative ideas and is not diversified enough. This kind of hyperrealist painting is monotonous, stiff, and "full of printing flavor", which is incompatible with this era (Li Wen, 2012).

The second category, anti-traditional sketch teaching. For example, the basic courses of oil painting major of Hubei Academy of Fine Arts include abstract painting, two-way sketch, graphic analysis and painting forms, etc., which is significantly different from the academic teaching method of Central Academy of Fine Arts. It is innovative and reflects the teaching of the close connection between society at present. "Two-way Sketch" (Xie Min & Wei Li, 2010) of Hubei Academy of Fine Arts attaches importance to the unfamiliar "intuitive sketch", guides students to balance the development of sensibility and rationality, truly realizes the thinking transformation and alternate use of the left and right modes of the brain, opens the potential of students' thinking and stimulates their creative ability. Through sketch teaching, students can master another language system—the language of image, which lays a solid foundation for learning oil painting professional courses and future artistic creation. Two-way sketch teaching aims to realize the balanced development of intuitive perception ability and rational analysis ability in sketch teaching. There are two directions in the process of learning: one is the ability of rational analysis; The second is the deep dive of intuitive perception ability. Thus, learners can master the deep rules of sketch modeling, acquire the ability of artistic creation, and explore the personality characteristics of the subject in modeling language expression.

The third category, adapt to the Chinese characteristics of sketch teaching system, "scientism". China Academy of Art is an important academy of fine arts in southern China, and their teaching methods about sketch are more scientific. First, it establishes sketching as the basis for styling training, rather than as a style of presentation. Secondly, it is clear that the content of sketch training is not to present all the objects in accordance with a fixed rou-

tine, but the important thing is to shape the body, to highlight the focus, not to cover everything, not to do rigid mode training, not to do deliberate performance training, not to over-sketch; Finally, for different majors, such as watercolor painting, oil painting, sculpture, Chinese ink painting, etc., the teaching content and training methods of sketch are different. For example, the teaching of sketch in ink painting has a broader selection of materials, and can use pencils and pens, etc., and the expression content does not need to be in light and dark tones, but pays attention to the accurate expression of body contours and key parts. It requires a more casual and natural performance object to achieve "casualness", which is a "Chinese sketch" performance method.

## 5. Conclusions

The development of sketch teaching system in Chinese higher art education can be summarized into three points:

First, realism teaching has always been dominant. There are two reasons: First, Western sketch, no matter the Italian school, French school or German school, all take sketch realism skills and modeling rules as the common ground, but the differences are only differences in expression techniques, styles and aesthetic interests. Cheschkov's sketch teaching method, which originated from the West, is the Russification of European classicism, and it is the integration of French light and dark modeling and Nordic structural modeling to form a complete writing Realistic sketch teaching system. This shows that the source of sketch introduced in China is realism; Secondly, Chinese socialist art emphasizes the true reflection of the breadth and depth of social life, the creation of typical artistic images, and the emphasis on social functions. Xu Beihong (Chen Du, 2023) repeatedly advocated realism. As early as 1926, he advocated: "to remedy the current disadvantages, we must adopt European realism", and in 1930, he proposed: "Advocating intellectual art, thinking of realism as the beginning". In 1935, he again mentioned that "fine art should be based on realism", and in 1932, he wrote "New Seven Methods" (appropriate location, correct proportion, clear black and white, natural movements or gestures, light and harmonious, personality, and spirit) to provide a model for realist painting performance should pay attention to the main points, and his own works are a model of realism.

Seconds, the teaching system of Western sketch and Chinese ink painting, including white painting, coexisted (Ma Jianping, 2017). Chinese ink painting uses one pen, one color and line modeling, which is essentially a special form of sketch. We call it Chinese traditional sketch. The sketch introduced from the West is called Western sketch. Each has its own strengths. For example, from the perspective of modeling methods, the former mainly presents a sense of rhythm with line modeling, while the latter takes into account light and shade to pursue a sense of rhythm. From the perspective of artistic orientation, the former focuses on expression while the latter focuses on representation. From the perspective of space processing, the former produces the background of virtual reality, the latter combines inside and outside, and pays equal attention to structure and light and shadow: from the perspective of the fish degree, the former is scattered perspective, the latter is mainly focused perspective: from the picture presentation, the former is a combination of poetry, painting and printing, and the latter is a combination of shape, shadow, quality and God: from the picture form, the former is vertical rectangular and can be looked up or down, the latter is flat square. From the perspective of modeling media, the former is a single brush and ink painting, while the latter can use a variety of tools. From the perspective of attributes, the former tends to aesthetics and the latter to science. From the perspective of artistic form, the former is image art and the latter is concrete art. From the natural point of view of teaching the Fa, the former focuses on observation, experience, accumulation and storage, that is, "the gully is formed in the chest, and the enlightenment is developed in the pen and ink"; The latter, on the other hand, directly studied or created nature (Xu Yingzhi, 2007).

Thirds, compared with the western contemporary sketch teaching model, the development of Chinese contemporary sketch teaching is too conservative, not innovative enough, not diversified enough, lack of anti-traditional and irrational avant-garde teaching content. This is widely existing in some traditional art schools and comprehensive university art departments, as mentioned above. In the future, the sketch basic teaching of fine arts major in China's higher education must implement diversified teaching contents, not follow the old road, try to get rid of the prison of realistic sketch, and take the teaching road of multi-disciplinary integration and development to adapt to the future.

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