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(AIJBES)**www.aijb.com**THE APPLICATION OF ZHUANGZI'S "NATURE AND
INACTION" AESTHETIC THOUGHT IN CONTEMPORARY
ART DESIGN: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW**Xie Wanying^{1*}, Suraya Md Nasir²

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DOI: 10.35631/AJBES.619013.**This work is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)****Abstract:**

Background: At present, Zhuangzi's aesthetic thoughts are applied in different fields and are widely used. There are also endless studies on Zhuangzi's "nature and inaction" aesthetic thought in the world. Zhuangzi's "nature and inaction" aesthetic thought has important guiding significance for relieving contemporary people's psychological pressure and promoting people's healthy mental development. Therefore, it is imperative to conduct more in-depth research on Zhuangzi's "nature and inaction" aesthetic thought. Objective: This study aims to conduct a comprehensive review and analysis of existing literature related to the study of the application of Zhuangzi's "nature and inaction" aesthetic thought in art design, to provide new research directions for future relevant researchers. Participants and setting: Screen and organize relevant literature collected in CNKI and Scopus databases during the 10 years from 2013 to 2023. Methods: The literature review adopted a "systematic review" to systematically organize the literature in the past 10 years. Results: This review combed through the research literature and found that most of the research focused on the application of Zhuangzi's "nature and inaction" aesthetic thought in the fields of product design, graphic design and architectural design, and there was a lack of research on the aesthetic significance generated by these applications. Conclusions: An in-depth understanding of how Zhuangzi's aesthetic thoughts are applied in different fields of art design and the resulting aesthetic significance can provide designers with new ways of thinking, while also providing valuable reference materials for future researchers and laying a theoretical foundation.

Keywords:

Zhuangzi, "Nature And Inaction", Contemporary Art And Design

Introduction

In recent years, with the continuous growth of China's population, China's unemployment rate has continued to rise, and people's employment pressure has also increased (Peng, 2021). Such a high-pressure environment also subtly affects people's physical and mental development. Under mental pressure, people are increasingly eager to pursue spiritual freedom and realize their independent life value.

Based on this, Zhuangzi's concept of "nature and inaction" has received great attention from society. The basic philosophical meaning of "nature and inaction" advocated by Zhuangzi refers to the original state of things. For human nature, "nature" is manifested as a sincere and non-hypocritical nature, which needs to overcome desires, get rid of etiquette and return to simplicity. For all things in the world, "nature" is manifested as the highest form of "great beauty", which refers to those extremely Magnificent, profound, and profound things. For art, "nature and inaction" is reflected in the fact that only when a person has a noble moral character can he use his skills correctly and bring positive influence on society and others. The "inaction" thought advocated by Zhuangzi is based on "nature", and "nature" requires inaction. Zhuangzi's "inaction" contains guidance for life, which means that people should also live according to their natural nature and adapt to the free nature of human life (Sernelj, 2016).

In the past, Zhuangzi's thoughts and works were widely used in philosophy, politics, economics, and culture. Nowadays, Zhuangzi's aesthetic philosophy of "nature and inaction" is also applied in some areas of contemporary art and design. Contemporary art and design refer to artistic and design activities occurring in the current era, constituting a dynamic and relatively ambiguous concept. Contemporary art and design encompass the period from the mid-20th century to the present, covering a wide range of artistic forms and design fields. This includes, but is not limited to, painting, sculpture, photography, fashion design, graphic design, architectural design, digital art, etc. (McCartney & Tynan, 2021). It typically reflects the characteristics of the current society, culture, and technology, demonstrating innovation and experimentation (Feng, 2020). The specific aesthetic significance generated by Zhuangzi's philosophy of "nature and inaction" in the field of art and design is yet to be thoroughly explored.

Closing this knowledge gap requires extensive research and analysis of the existing literature. This systematic review will focus on synthesizing existing research to allow researchers and designers to better understand Zhuangzi's aesthetic thought of "nature and inaction" and the aesthetic significance of its application in the field of art and design.

Research Objective

The Research Objectives Of This Study Are:

1. In which fields of art design has Zhuangzi's aesthetic thought of "nature and inaction" been widely applied?
2. In what form is Zhuangzi's "nature and inaction" aesthetic thought reflected in these fields.
3. Explore the aesthetic significance of applying the aesthetic idea of "natural inaction" to art design.

In the following chapters, to understand the application of Zhuangzi's "nature and inaction" aesthetic thought in art design during the 10 years from 2013 to 2023, we will first understand Zhuangzi's work in the field of education during this period by reviewing relevant existing research. position and position in the field of art and design, and then a thorough examination of its specific application in the field of art and design.

Literature Review

Zhuangzi's Stance In The Fields Of Education

Zhuangzi advocates free education in the field of education, pursues the true and free state of existence of the individual, and pays more attention to the unique experience of the individual rather than the general recognition of society (Singh, 2014). Different individuals require different methods of education. Fully respect the individual personality and spiritual freedom and realize the independence and freedom of individual life as the ultimate value of education (Matthyssen, 2021). Zhuangzi believes that the knowledge an individual learns must come from reality and be basic, practical, and forward-looking (Silova, 2020). Establish a learning methodology that respects cognitive laws and values personal thinking results. People should fully understand and maintain their own characteristics, because different people have different natures and specialties (Lai et al., 2021). Education should be in line with individuality and teach students in accordance with their aptitude, to ensure the diversity of talents. Zhuangzi's thinking on the relationship between life and education is very profound. He advocated the educational value orientation of "nature" and "inaction", valued the value of life, and pursued the freedom and equality of life. These have had a profound impact on the history of Chinese education and even the history of thought. far-reaching impact (Villaver, 2023).

Zhuangzi's Stance In The Fields Of Art And Design

In the field of art and design, Zhuangzi advocates that scholars, artists, and designers should get out of closed rooms, broaden their horizons, use real things as their teachers, create in practice, observe nature carefully, and strive to learn from what they observe. Learn new knowledge and obtain new creative inspiration from natural phenomena (Ilundáin-Agurruza, 2014). Art and artistic design themselves have independent aesthetic value. Zhuangzi's understanding of art and design touches the core of design, that is, the artist or designer must focus undivided attention on the creation or design process itself, have a detached and independent spirit, preserve his own unique personality and creativity, and become a Spiritually self-sufficient artists and designers (Graziani, 2020).

Let design happen in the purest, most natural state of nothingness (Hu, 2019). Zhuangzi said that the sky is vast and can accommodate everything in the world, and the sea is extremely vast

and can accommodate the water of hundreds of rivers. He is talking about the “inaction” creative method. Regarding the research on “inaction” creation, Zhang Chonglu and Jiao Yajuan mentioned in ““Extraordinary Situation” and “Intuitive Experience” - The Influence of Chinese and Western Aesthetics on Contemporary Landscape Painting Creation” that Taoism aesthetics has driven the development of the contemporary art industry, but there are also issues such as the art and design industry gradually moving toward commercialization and the pursuit of money, reputation, and status (Jiao, 2017). When the commercialization of art design becomes an important pursuit goal of artists, artists may not be able to maintain a “natural”, “free” and “purposeless” liberated state during creation. Art itself is to cultivate personal sentiments. Only by immersing yourself wholeheartedly in artistic creation can individuals be purified and create excellent works of art. Artists should control their pursuits and purify their creative mentality. Pursuing artistic creation for commercial purposes will inevitably be mixed with interests, and creation will also be restricted (Gai, 2023). If the artist’s ideal state of creation is broken and he creates with distracting thoughts, the simplicity of creation will be lost, and art will naturally lose its function of cultivating sentiment. Zhuangzi’s aesthetic thought advocates that to liberate one’s spirit, one must maintain an attitude of ignorance, desire lessness, indifference and tranquility. Whether in the conception stage of artistic creation or in the stage of creation, artists must maintain a state of “selflessness”. This is a prerequisite to ensure that artistic creation proceeds normally and is not interrupted midway. Advocating the design of “freedom” and “self-liberation”, the design should initially have an unconscious state like a baby, transcend the scope of reality in terms of cognition, and follow nature in everything, surround it with details, give up tedious things, and keep everything simple.

Whether in education, art or design, Zhuangzi advocated the pursuit of a natural, unrestrained, leisurely, and contented spiritual realm and creative means. This goes back to the previous discussion, in which fields in art and design is the aesthetic idea of “natural inaction” applied? In what form does it manifest itself in these fields? What aesthetic significance is produced? In the field of art and design, what other designs apply Zhuangzi’s “nature and inaction” aesthetic thought but have not yet been studied?

Research Methodology

Identification

Choosing an appropriate method for your paper involves three main stages of a systematic review. The initial phase involves identifying keywords and exploring related terms by drawing on resources such as thesauruses, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and previous research. Then, after determining relevant keywords, search strings for CNKI and Scopus databases were generated, as shown in Table 1.

In the initial stage of the systematic review process, a total of 176 papers were successfully retrieved from the databases used in this study. The initial stage of the research process requires a comprehensive search of academic resources relevant to the pre-determined research topic. Terms used include “Zhuangzi”, “nature and inaction”, and “artistic design”. The initial stage involves identifying keywords and searching for similar phrases in previous academic research. Considering that there may be deviations when translating terms from Chinese philosophical thought into English, it is advisable to use recognized standard translations when conducting searches (Lihong & Feng, 2020). In addition, it is essential to consider synonyms to encompass

a broader search scope. To ensure consistency in searches across CNKI and Scopus databases, adjustments should be made based on specific circumstances, considering language differences, cultural disparities, and the characteristics of search engines. This will contribute to improving the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the searches. Next, all relevant terms and search queries for CNKI and Scopus databases were formulated (refer to Table 1). Therefore, in the initial stage of the advanced search process, this study successfully obtained a total of 76 publications from the databases.

TABLE 1: Identification Of Keywords And The Exploration Of Associated Terms In CNKI And Scopus Databases

CNKI	“Zhuangzi” AND “nature and inaction” AND “contemporary art and design”
Scopus	TITLE-ABS- KEY (“Zhuangzi” AND “nature and inaction” OR “natural and inaction” OR “naturalness and non-action” AND “contemporary art and design”) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, “ar”)) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, “english”)) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE, “j”)) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBSTYPE, “final”))

Source: (The results of the search through the two databases are tabulated in a self-contained table)

Screening

In the initial round of screening, although no duplicate papers were found, duplicate papers had to be excluded. In the initial phase, a total of 176 articles were excluded, and in subsequent phases, 76 articles were examined. Both stages of the selection process involved the application of specific inclusion and exclusion criteria developed by the investigators (refer to Table 2). The initial selection criterion was literature in the form of research articles, as it is the main source of practical information. Additionally, publications including systematic reviews, reviews, meta-analyses, meta-synthesis, series, books, chapters, and conference proceedings were missed from this survey. Additionally, the analysis focuses on academic articles written in English and Chinese. The selected time frame spans 10 years, specifically from 2013 to 2023. A total of 76 publications were finally selected.

TABLE 2: The Selection Search Criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English& Chinese	Non-English& Non-Chinese
Timeline	2013-2023	< 2013
Literature type	Journal (Article)	Conference, Book, Review
Publication stage	Final	In Press

Source: (Chart of statistics on the screening process for the second phase of the systematic evaluation)

Criteria for Eligibility

In the third stage, referred to as the qualification stage, a total of 92 articles were compiled. At this stage, a comprehensive assessment of the title and main content of all publications was conducted, and it was determined that they met the inclusion criteria and were consistent with the research objectives of this study. Therefore, a total of 35 reports were excluded from the analysis due to incompatible inclusion criteria. Due to the small sample size ($n=15$), the full text was removed from this analysis. Furthermore, as supported by the empirical data, the titles did not show a significant relationship ($n=13$) and the abstracts did not meet the stated purpose of the study ($n=11$) and were removed. There are now a total of 37 articles available for inspection, as shown in Figure 1.

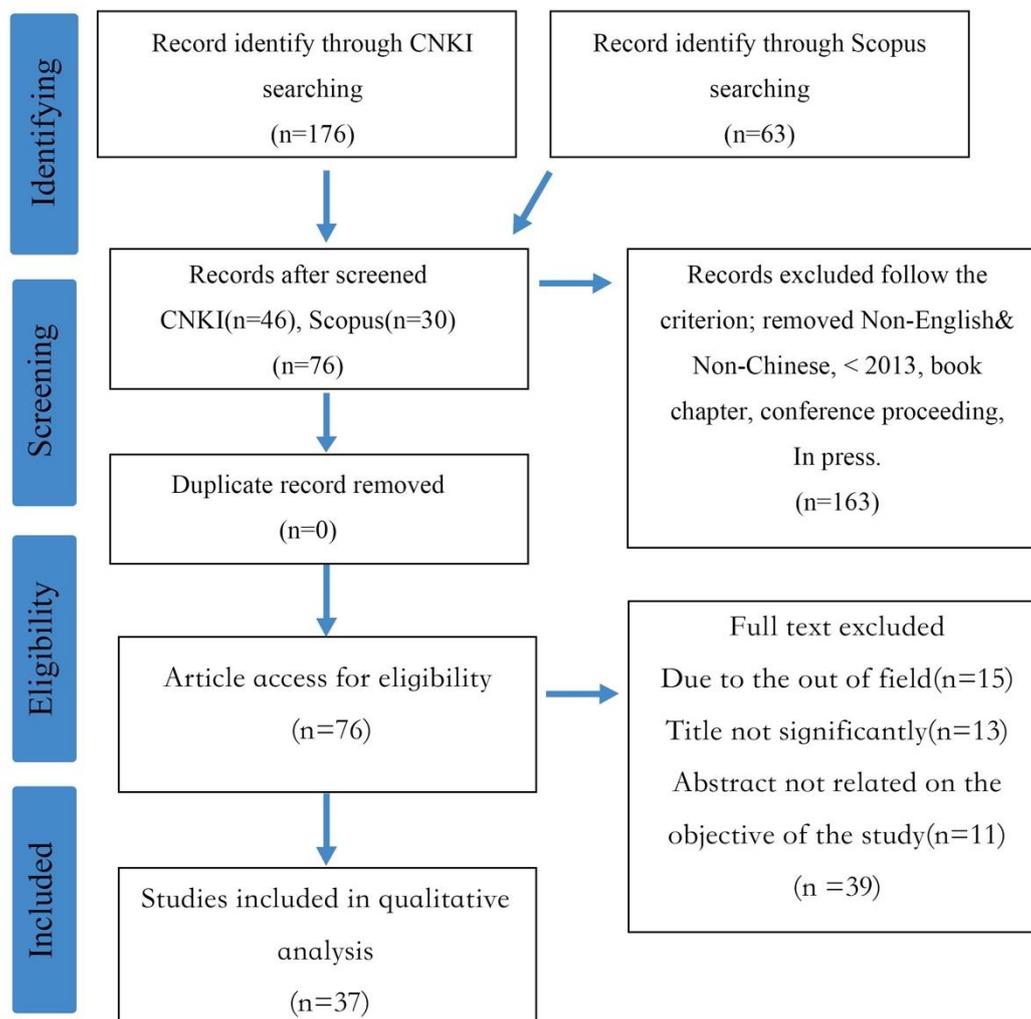


Figure 1: Flow Diagram Of The Proposed Searching Study

Data Abstraction and Analysis

The literature review method for this study was a systematic review. A total of 37 relevant articles were included in this review. Table 2 illustrates the systematic approach adopted by the researchers in analyzing the corpus of 176 articles to identify claims or content relevant to the research questions of this study. Subsequently, the author conducts a comprehensive

analysis and summary of the latest and influential academic articles on “Zhuangzi”, “nature and inaction” and “art design”.

Results

Through literature search and screening, the final 37 studies were integrated in more detail. The research explored the application of Zhuangzi's “nature and inaction” aesthetic thought in product design (n=17 studies), the application of Zhuangzi's “nature and inaction” aesthetic thought in graphic design (n=12 studies), and the application of Zhuangzi's “nature and inaction” in graphic design (n=12 studies). Application of aesthetic ideas in architectural design (n=8 studies). These research results show that Zhuangzi's “nature and inaction” aesthetic thought has been applied to many fields of contemporary art design and shows the necessity of this research.

The Application Of “Natural” Colors In Product Design

If a specific art form must be imposed on art, then this art form will become a shackle of art and imprison art, which will also make people forget to appreciate the art itself, pay more attention to those cumbersome forms, and ignore the beauty of the original state of things (Runqi & Huiyou, 2023). In art design, Zhuangzi's aesthetic thought of “nature and inaction” requires abandoning those things that are intentional (Ding, 2020).

First, in the field of product design, most of the research explores the evolution of social concepts on color preferences, the connection between the tolerance of natural colors and Zhuangzi's aesthetic thoughts, and the natural mentality of color selection in product design. When the aesthetic idea of “nature and inaction” is applied to art design, it can be understood that design should learn from nature, find beautiful factors from nature, integrate into nature, and create nature.

In China, products using natural colors are consumers' first choice when purchasing, which also confirms that users are more inclined to choose more natural colors (Ning, 2022). People's preferences for product colors are closely related to the overall environment of society. After the war, people longed for stability, so people preferred cool colors such as blue and green. For people who are in a stable living condition, their color preferences will shift from dark to bright, and from cold to warm. In recent years, people's material lives have been greatly satisfied, and people's preferences for colors have gradually tended to be “natural” and returned to the “natural ecology” itself (Na & Suk, 2014). Therefore, the use of natural colors should continue in future product design, which also shows that continued research on natural colors is of great significance (Bingbing, 2014).

The Application Of “White Space” In Graphic Design

The strong visual impact and concise expression of black and white natural colors are equally important for modern graphic design creation. In graphic design, simple color expression not only highlights the purpose of publicity, but also gives people a direct visual impact. This form is more conducive to people's interpretation of the information the design wants to convey than works with various complicated artificial modifications (Rosli, 2018).

The “blank” in graphic design can give readers a “broad” vision and allow readers to have space to feel, imagine and breathe, so as not to overly restrict readers' ideas and

imagination(Usmani et al., 2020). Use blank space to create artistic conception, inspire readers' association and imagination, and create a spiritual artistic conception where "silence is better than sound". Consciously leaving blank spaces in graphic design leaves readers with space for imagination, re-creation, and aftertaste, allowing them to associate things that are not originally on the picture, which is a transcendence of the visible. Only such a blank space can give readers infinite feelings and enable readers to use their imagination to enrich its space(Kwon et al., 2019).

In graphic design, the "simplicity" that does not overly pursue artificial modification and does not overemphasize artificial carving is the "beauty" to be pursued. Zhuangzi was skeptical about excessive carving and creation that pursued form above all else. He believed that excessive decoration would hinder the nature of things and destroy the original appearance and laws of things. The beauty of "nature and inaction" is the real beauty, and it is a height that cannot be achieved by man-made things(Jun, 2019).

The Homogeneity Of "Nature And Inaction" And "Less Is More" In Architectural Design

Zhang Yamin and Cao Dan, in "The Relationship between Ancient Chinese Philosophical Thoughts and Art Design—A Discussion on the Relationship between Taoism's 'Tao follows nature' and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's 'less is more'", summarized Mies van der Rohe's The theory of "less is more" further explains how to return to "let nature take its course" in architectural design. "Less is more" is not an empty blank like "nature and inaction", and "less" and "nothing" are not the same as nothing, but mean simplicity(Colombo, 2017). "More" does not mean being cumbersome but reflects more existence value and unique positioning of the design through the simplification of "less". Both "nature and inaction" and "less is more" advocate not letting cumbersome things obscure the beauty of "nature" itself(Schlünder, 2019). But the disadvantage is that Mies van der Rohe's design is more cautious than Zhuangzi's "nature and inaction", but the two have a very similar "homogeneity". Both strive to restore the original nature of things, thereby pursuing integration with design(DI LUCCHIO, 2018).

In addition, Fu Mengping pointed out in "Design Enlightenment - A Brief Discussion on Taoism Thought and Modern Art Design" that "returning to nature" is not retro, and simplicity does not mean superficiality. The difference in footing is also an innovation. Today, when popular culture and elite culture coexist, there is no art without creation. Design that breathes with the times needs to maintain spiritual aura and poetic green space to be called design art (Xinxin, 2021).

Discussion

Through the collation and review of existing literature, this study determined that Zhuangzi's "nature and inaction" aesthetic thought is applied to product design, graphic design, and architectural design in the field of art design. In product design, the aesthetic idea of "nature and inaction" is more reflected through natural colors. In graphic design, the use of black and white and white space gives the picture an infinite feeling. In architectural design, "nature and inaction" is also like "less is more". By analyzing the application of the aesthetic idea of "nature and inaction" in these different design fields, the aesthetic significance it brings can be analyzed.

Simplicity Is The Essential Characteristic Of Beauty

“Simplicity” is the aesthetic standard of Zhuangzi’s “nature and inaction” aesthetic thought (Kai, 2020). Zhuangzi’s aesthetic thoughts believe that simplicity is something that no one in the world can compete with for beauty, and he advocates “blandness” in aesthetic taste and artistic pursuit. The word “pu” in “simple” means “unpretentious”, and the word “su” means “white”, without any decoration. From here we can see that the aesthetic thought of “nature and inaction” does not overly pursue artificial modifications, nor overemphasizes the “simplicity” of artificial carvings. It believes that the original appearance of things, that is, the beauty without any modification, is the most beautiful, and that is what everyone wants. “Beauty” that needs to be pursued (Madrin, 2022). Zhuangzi was skeptical about excessive carving and creation that pursued form above all else. He believed that excessive decoration would hinder the nature of things and destroy the original appearance and laws of things. The beauty of “nature and inaction” is the real beauty, which is a height that cannot be achieved by man-made things (Sufen, 2022).

Advocating nature and doing nothing, that is, “Tao follows nature”, is the essence of Zhuangzi’s aesthetic thought. Zhuangzi’s aesthetic thought advocates that the growth and development of everything in the world follows certain laws and exists and operates without any trace of man-made things. Seek values and aesthetic feelings in “simplicity”.

The Aesthetic Of “Natural Ecology”

Zhuangzi’s philosophy has a strong aesthetic color. There is a question here, that is, how can “nature” and “inaction” as philosophical concepts be transformed into aesthetic thoughts? Fortunately, the meaning of the idea of “nature and inaction” itself has some similarities with the laws of literature and art, which has become a direct condition for its transformation. As Mr. Xu Fuguan said, Zhuangzi’s thoughts were not intended to be applied to art, but they were unexpectedly applied to aesthetics.

Zhuangzi mentioned everything about the “great beauty” of heaven and earth. What he meant was that the reason why heaven and earth have “great beauty” is because it appears naturally according to “Tao” without any artificial force (Sturgeon, 2015). The essential characteristic of “Tao” lies in “nature and inaction”, so the essential characteristic of beauty also lies in “nature and inaction”, without artificial modification. Zhuangzi’s thought of “nature and inaction” has had a profound impact on China’s aesthetic values of advocating nature. Only by complying with nature to the greatest extent can we achieve spiritual freedom and true liberation. The beautiful scenery in nature, mountains, and flowing water, without any artificial traces. Even a blade of grass or a flower has its own unique vitality and power (D’Ambrosio, 2022). The beauty of nature contains life and vitality and nurtures all things in the world. Things that go against the nature of nature destroy the “beauty of heaven and earth”.

It can be seen from this that Zhuangzi’s “nature and inaction” aesthetic thought emphasizes the artist’s spirit of “freedom”, “no utility” and “no special purpose”, pursuing the state of forgetting oneself in artistic creation, and creating pure works of art (Ruiqing, 2016). In Zhuangzi’s view, the beauty of nature is the real beauty, and this kind of ecological beauty does not go through any decoration. We can simply understand that Zhuangzi’s aesthetic thoughts focus on the spiritual benefits that nature brings to people in the aesthetic process, and value the harmonious relationship between man and nature. Regarding nature as a source of aesthetic

pleasure emphasizes that in the process of appreciating nature, nature provides rich feedback to the human spirit (SELLMANN, 2016).

This feedback includes the purification and sublimation of the human soul by nature. This concept of respecting and advocating nature is the subtle influence of Taoism aesthetics on the field of modern art and design. It can be seen that Zhuangzi captured the basic characteristics of art, aesthetics and creation (Yongjian, 2018). Any abandonment of traditional Chinese aesthetic ideas will cause modern art design to lose its own national attributes and cultural traditions during its development (Lovtsova et al., 2021). Therefore, for the future, applying the essence of Zhuangzi's aesthetic thoughts to different fields of art design and pursuing the integration of aesthetic thoughts and design needs is not only an innovation in art design concepts, but also the inheritance and development of Zhuangzi's aesthetic thoughts (Jiawei & Hong, 2014).

The Taoism idea of simplicity of "emptiness" and "nothingness" does not mean simplicity. Its focus is on pursuing the natural and profound artistic conception in simplicity. It requires people to have a deep understanding of the laws of nature, strictly follow the laws of nature, and emphasize the relationship between man and nature. The unity of nature is the transcendent beauty of letting the spirit take its course.

"Non-Utilitarian" Aesthetic Standards

Chinese scholars interpret the aesthetic survival in Zhuangzi's aesthetic thoughts from the perspective of Zhuangzi's world view, outlook on life and ideological evaluation of aesthetic survival, and then explore the poetic characteristics contained in Zhuangzi's thoughts (Tianen, 2021). Wang Jianjiang's "Ran Wuji - The Aesthetic Formation of Lao and Zhuang's Realm of Life" is based on the aesthetic realm of life to grasp Zhuangzi's aesthetic thoughts. From the perspective of combining internal and external aesthetics, this book points out that the outstanding feature of Zhuangzi's aesthetic thought is the aestheticization and artisticization of the realm of life. The completion of the author's project not only breaks through the ready-made theoretical framework of the realm of life and provides a more reasonable explanation for the long-term difficult problems of Lao-Zhuang aesthetics, but also further analyzes the contrast between aesthetics and sensory aesthetics based on the principle that aesthetics transcends utilitarianism. It not only provides a new theoretical framework for the development of aesthetic principles, but also provides a new perspective for the writing of the history of Chinese aesthetic thought.

The creation of art is most about the free expression of people's spiritual emotions, which is different from the direct satisfaction of utilitarian desires in the material world. Most good works do not impose complex carvings and pursue naturalness (Laikwan, 2023). No traces of artificial axes are left, just like the flowing clouds and flowing water, letting nature take its course. This requires artists to free themselves from worldly gains and losses, treat things as objects of aesthetic observation and appreciation, and create creations (Abrams, 2021). The creation of so-called artists in later generations should not be bound by ready-made traditional methods, but should be created in accordance with the laws of art. Then their artistic activities will enter a state of physical and mental freedom, thus reaching the highest state of aesthetic activities. It means not deliberately artificial but letting nature take its course and creating naturally. Only then will the resulting work be more likely to be a good one. In Taoism thought,

art carries the morals and laws of society, so we cannot have a utilitarian attitude towards art creation.

Conclusions

This systematic review investigates the topic of “the application of Zhuangzi’s ‘natural inaction’ aesthetic thought in contemporary art design”.

Through the research on Zhuangzi’s concept of “nature and inaction” in recent years, we have a general understanding of the connotation and significance of Zhuangzi’s “nature and inaction” aesthetic thought. The diversity and depth of these studies undoubtedly reveal the richness, diversity, depth, and depth of the concept of “nature and inaction” itself.

First, regarding education, Zhuangzi’s “nature and inaction” requires respect for individual differences and advocates that education should teach students in accordance with their aptitude and value the value of students, which conforms to people’s current needs for freedom.

Secondly, for art and design, Zhuangzi’s “nature and inaction” requires abandoning those things that are “intentional”. It advocates that art and design should occur in a natural state, contact nature, and feel nature. This is very beneficial to the art creation and design process. In addition, artists and designers must maintain a state of “selflessness” during the creative process, which is extremely important for the ultimate artistic effect.

Zhuangzi’s propositions in the fields of education and art determine the aesthetic significance that the aesthetic thought of “nature and inaction” can bring when applied in the field of art and design. Whether the aesthetic idea of “nature and inaction” is applied in product design, graphic design, or architectural design, what it conveys is a state of pursuit of “freedom” and “relaxation”.

This kind of aesthetic thought has an influence and effect on people. After being exposed to Zhuangzi’s “nature and inaction” aesthetic thought, people’s cognition and aesthetics will also be affected. The aesthetics of “simplicity”, “natural ecology”, and “non-utilitarianism” advocated by Zhuangzi’s “nature and inaction” aesthetics are just right for people in high-pressure environments.

Finally, in the process of studying the application of Zhuangzi’s “nature and inaction” aesthetic thought in art design, we found that it also affects people. Children’s picture books play an irreplaceable role in children’s education or aesthetic cultivation. There are overlaps between Zhuangzi’s “nature and inaction” aesthetic thought, the field of education, and the field of children’s picture book design. The subject of studying children’s picture books is open and rich. A variety of research methods also provide theoretical references for various practices in children’s picture books. At present, China’s research on children’s picture books is mostly from the perspective of the development history of children’s picture books, existing types, current research methods of children’s picture books, art design, etc., and lacks the aesthetic thought of Zhuangzi’s “nature and inaction” angle of entry. Therefore, this discovery provides a new research perspective for the future research on the design of children’s picture books in China. Future research can start from the perspective of Zhuangzi’s “nature and inaction” aesthetic thought and study the visual image in the design of children’s picture books.

Children's picture books are of great significance to children, through which they can construct their sense of self. Children's picture books have a vital influence and role in the development of children's self-agency and future personality and have good development prospects in the future. Conducting this research will play a stimulating role in the development of children's picture books, and it will also provide effective guidance strategies for the future development of children's picture books in China.

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