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## Image of "Trees" and "Geese": The design of travelling and carriages in baoshan chu tomb

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### ABSTRACT

The theme of this paper mainly focuses on imagination, where concentrates on 'trees' and 'geese' of the image of travelling and carriages in the painting box of No.2 tomb to conclude and analyze. Some contents therein related to research methods of fine arts imagination and relevant thoughts are presented. Meanwhile, this paper tends to develop the relationships between the modes of imaginary expression and the truths of narrative episodes, and in analyzing the expressions of 'trees in image' this paper is concluded that the trees might not be willows as it was presented in the published papers and that the measurement of shapes was designed proportionally by the painters. In consideration of the authenticity of narrative episodes in the imagination expression, it is speculated that the travelling season was spring according to the relationship between directions of geese flying and the branches swinging.

### KEYWORDS

Image of travelling and carriages; Expression of imagination; Modes; Authenticity of narrative.



## INTRODUCTION

The painting box of Baoshan No.2 tomb in Jingmen, Hubei province was initially discovered in 1987, which was regarded as an important discovery in the field of pre-Qin archeology research. The painting *The image of Travelling and Carriage* is meaningful to the research on courtesy and traditional cultures in Chan Kuo, and its painting style is also an important material in researching ancient history of fine arts and its formation and development in style. The length of this image is 87.4cm, with a height of 5.2cm. It was painted on the outer facade of the painting box with a radius of 14cm. There were 26 people, 10 horses, 9 geese, 5 trees, 2 dogs and 1 pig in the painting<sup>[1]</sup>. Different colors including white, black, brown yellow, light red, dark red were presented with a black background. The research about the theme has provided some views: Autumn outing<sup>[2]</sup>, Spring outing<sup>[3]</sup>, presents and greetings<sup>[4]</sup>, pricings greetings<sup>[5]</sup>, greetings and travelling<sup>[6]</sup>, carriages travelling<sup>[7]</sup>. The definition of this paper is *The image of Travelling and Carriage*.

The imaginary styles and some results in researching the history of arts are presented as follows: According to Peng De, *A narrative painting in Qu Yuan Period-Jingmen Chu Tomb Colorful Painting <Prinking Greetings>*<sup>[8]</sup>, it showed that there are 6 sorts of values in the fields of arts history in this painting. Shao Xuehai, pointed out that the painting style was developed towards rational spirits in his paper, *Sculptures and Paintings in Chu Dynasty*<sup>[9]</sup>. He claimed that space exits on square and details should be painted by lines to form lined figure paintings in ancient China. His research also pointed out the meaning of this painting in the development and transformation of Chinese painting.

In the descriptions above, fellow researchers have deep thoughts on artistic characteristics and macro aesthetics in this painting. Contributions they made are some of our common sense, however, we also need to explore more deeply in details and individual characteristics. This paper tends to analyse its creation model by studying imaginary expressions and narrative episodes through 'trees' and 'geese'. The personal style in the painting and visual-psychology analysis are also included to explain a standard model in works creation. Assumption that the episode in the painting was a reappearance of truth, which means authenticity does exist, is used to show the relationship between inherent models and its authenticity.

## ANALVITIAL SECTION

### The thoughts about 'trees'

The painting was painted on a box with outer facade like a circle. How can this form of image make the viewers more clearly about the episodes? It is apparently that the painter noticed this issue. The painter chose 'trees' as a media to partially smooth and diversify the episodes and partially perform the tense when it happened. This method of choice is obviously decorated and prevailingly accepted. 'Instead of the classification effect, five willows had connection functions actually.' as Peng De mentioned, 'The form of 'Trees' is a measurement to diversity episodes and connect images. In addition, 'trees' are not just connections, however, they might be a kind of settlement in dealing with shapes and rational episodes, which is a order of connection.

When we move to the shapes of 'trees', we will find some S-shaped curves that is full of motions and vitality. We will find that the tops of the 'trees' are tangent on the edges and the trees here seem to make a reduction of their parts which are beyond the edges. If the trees stood straightly and grew, their heights might be higher than their original heights. Therefore, we should take into consideration whether the drawing of the trees is related to the outer facade of the painting box and the proportion in the height of human and trees, which make the shape different. The type of the trees also matters. If they were willows, there is no wonder that the branches are bent but not straight. But when we take a look at the nature, there could be something skeptical.

As a conclusion, it is strictly presented that the trees in the painting are not willows as researchers have conceived. The trees drawn in the painting is used to separate every individual image by the means of narrative in the light of the proportions and the total height of the painting box. Therefore, the lengths of the trees are not sufficient enough to fill the straight-line distance blank, but sufficient to enhance the validity of the proportions. Even if the trees are willows themselves, they were chosen intentionally.



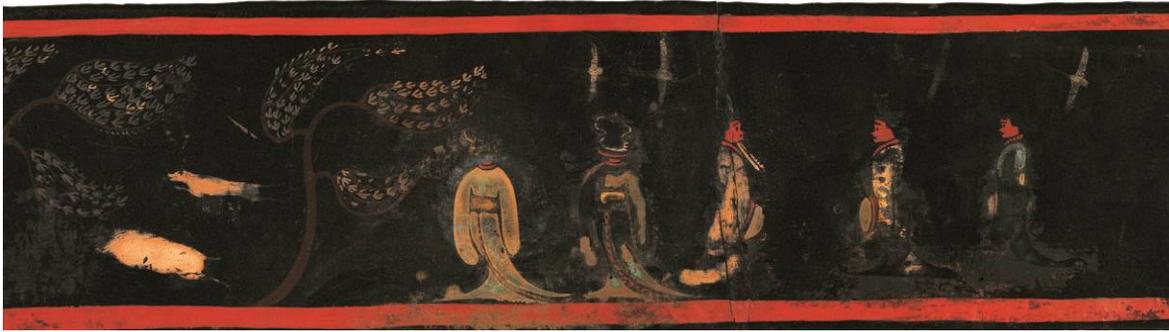
### Thoughts about the directions of swinging branches and geese

In the painting, eight of nine geese flew in the opposite direction of the swinging willows. Note that the directions of swinging willows are all identical. As far as I know, the direction of swinging willows are not formed occasionally, but intentionally. This measurement is probably the way that the painter express the direction of wind at that time, which implied the season of carriage travelling. So the possibility of authenticity exists.

According to the expression of the image, there should be some connections in both directions of geese and wind. The reason should be that Chu dynasty located in Northern Hemisphere where there are north wind and south wind seasonally, which made it possible to conclude the logical relationship in the episode.

We set assumption here that the direction of the branches were south and we can know that the wind should definitely be north wind. Then we make the conclusion that those eight geese were moving north. Because of north wind comes with autumns and winters in North Semisphere, geese should fly some colder places and the fact is just the opposite. So the assumption fails.





### Some thoughts about the spatial measurement of imagination expression

One characteristic of painting is performing 3-dimensional stuff on a 2-dimensional space. How did the painter place a 3-dimensional stuff on a 2-dimensional outer facade of the painting box in *the Image of Travelling and Carriages*? Mutil-perspective measurement was taken into account in the drawing. In the perspective of the painter, positive position is taken to view figures, trees, individual horse, pig, dog and carriages. When the painter faced different drawing perspective which cannot be shown in the positive position, he used side overlooking to overcome the difficulty, so that the numbers of the horses were clearly shown in the drawing. Overlooking perspective was also used from top to bottom in drawing the wings of the flying geese, but positive position were put in the drawing of the heads of the birds.



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We could take a view that the painter performed authentically in the drawing process of *the Image of Travelling and Carriages* as much as he could. These authenticities are reflected on the clear portraying and the depicting of the scene. Realism was actually a new pursuit of the painting at that time. With the combination of realism and narrative, this style of arts appeared in the burial utensils, established the foundation of Han Dynasty fine arts with plenty of narrative elements, and provided some clues on the research of the development of ancient burial culture.





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