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Contemporary Arts Practice and Outer Space: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach (3)

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EVOLUTION FROM ANCIENT CHINESE LEGENDS TO CONTEMPORARY ARTS AND DESIGNS
IN SKY AND SPACE

Abstract

Sky means the region consists of the atmosphere and outer space seen from the earth. In the ancient time, people only knew “sky” instead of “inner and outer space”, and their dream was traveling to the Moon. A Chinese ancient legend about sky said that “The sky has no boundary and the sea has no bottom”. Now it is rather easy to know where the bottoms of sea are, but it is still very difficult to understand where the boundary of sky is. In another Chinese legend, the Moon was called “Mother Moon” or “Lady Moon”, in other words it is equivalent to the Goddess, or the Chang E, or the Artemis. It was said that in the far, far ancient time, there were 10 Suns. Usually the 10 Suns orbited the Earth regularly one by one, but in one day they came together. The Earth became too hot and it was very difficult for people and everything to survive. A marksman archer named Hou Yi used his arch and arrow to shoot down 9 Suns so that people were relieved. In order to thank him, people acclaimed Hou Yi to be the king. But then he became a tyrant and people were bogged down into difficult days again. Even more, he wanted to be immortality and asked a Goddess to give him the elixir. To save the people, his wife Chang E stole and took the elixir. She then became so light and flew to the Moon and lives there forever with unlimited longevity. Children were taught to worship the Moon whenever they see it in the sky so that the Mother Moon would protect and bless them. Basically, the Chinese Lunar Exploration Program Chang E was named after the Goddess of the Moon in the Chinese ancient legend. Globally, there are full of similar stories about sky. In the painting arts, probably the most popular one is the Milky Way. Vincent van Gogh’s *The Starry Night* is another masterpiece worldwide. The purpose of this paper is to study the evolutions from ancient Chinese legends related to sky to the contemporary art designs in outer space [1]. Reference: [1] R. Miller, *The Art of Space: The History of Space Art, from the Earliest Visions to the Graphics of the Modern Era*, Zenith Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA, 27 October 2014.