

## The Comparison and Development of Color Between East and West

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### Abstract

Take a panoramic view of the painter's application of color, almost everyone strengthens his self-cultivation positively. Chinese ancient ancestors established "the five elements" as the symbol of color to the space, and it's a kind of presentation of spontaneous philosophy. Chinese painting values verve highly, while Western painting lionizes are more about similarity in shape. But the appearance of modernism in the end of 19 century makes them close, in the mean time the art between east and west had achieved a considerable unification which means there is no border between the arts.

**Key words:** Color; The Chinese painting; The western painting; Development

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### INTRODUCTION

Profit from the difference of color theory and sense between east and west, we have more opportunity to appreciate and borrow ideas from each other. Western painting before impressionism can be defined as the server of the religious system, and the discovery of dynamical color in impressionism is originated from the chromatogram of the sun. The formative character of

Chinese painting is namely the "five color" philosophical aesthetics of color. The color of western painting is scientific while Chinese painting is emotional. There are unique laws and processes of the color application in Chinese painting. It rules out the superficiality of nature and shadow. It emphasizes the inherent color of the materiality and expects less in color relationship. It has a direct relation to the "five color" philosophy and the similarity and difference of the material. An excellent painter should be a person with a keen sense of color. Because color in painting is not the pronoun of color we use in our daily life, it endows with more symbolic significance. It can be national, regional, hierarchical and personalized. The painters obtain a new cognition towards the harmony of color. And their own color-discovery drives the development of epochal character on the knowledge of color. The reasonable cognition from Confucius saying "men's natural instinct are much the same, but their habits are widely different", before 2000 years is the antecedent leading to the knowledge of color for the contemporary era painters.

Take a panoramic view of the painter's application of color, virtually everyone strengthens his self-cultivation positively. So that it can play a dynamic role during the transmission of effects and emotion in the frame. Virtually every work with huge image beyond the idea that has been handed on from age to age has depended on vivid color and image. It transcends its intrinsic quantity and intensifies repeatedly. "The mountain is in the entirely imaginary" is the kind of artistic conception. The appearance of impressionism emboldens the perceptual knowledge of color based on the foundation of rationality. As far back as in the 19th century, the impressionism exerts the function of color superlatively. They actualized "the dynamic expression of color" in heptachromic system and established the methodical system of color grounded on the physical optics. The key factor is the painter drawing directly with the inspiration of the heliolamp, namely to seek the variation of the

color relationships. It also sharpens the painter's inner sensibility of color. Post-impressionism showed the power of emotional color adequately to personalize the color. Fauvism and expressional artists achieve the vivid flavor of various modern color elements via the comprehensive representation of color.

The Chinese painting color belongs to "inducible color" which is ruled as "enduing with the color based on the category" by Xie He. The author's opinion is the color application in Western painting from the Renaissance to impressionism can be classified as above. Both are putting the inherent color on the observed image. The appearance of impressionism is to return to the rationality and scientific, while the Chinese painting color is perceptual all along.

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## THE AESTHETIC ANALYSIS OF CHINESE AND WESTERN COLOR

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Chinese ancient color is on the foundation of "the five elements". It established the stable color structure. The symbol of color is changed to the decorative function gradually from the Qin Dynasty. Chinese ancient color trended to a rich and varied development. The color aesthetic in this period is "the five colors", and it's the foundational character of eastern color art. It is different from the theory of optic in Western. The ancient color symbol is created on the spontaneous rational conception and it is distinguished from the western. Chinese ancient ancestors established "the five elements" as the symbol of color to the space. The symbol of "the five elements" is a kind of presentation of spontaneous philosophy. As "the painting is mixed by the five colors" recorded in The Chou Rituals, the articles about black, white, blue-green, red and yellow conveyed various color related cognition. It represents the earliest color rationality. Everyone who has seen the Silk painting in Mawangdui or the Dunhuang Mural can feel the demeanour of Chinese Strong coloring. The character of applying rich color leads the human beings. "The painters in ancient like to use the five colors together, so the gentlemen in Tang and Jin prefer the strong colors and delineation." said by Dong Qi, Qing dynasty. Chinese ancient painting formed the Strong coloring of five colors which represented the whole world. Chinese ancient strong coloring of five colors related to the character of "the five elements" and "the five moralities". It constituted the spirit and aura of Eastern people's color activity. According to the color formation of structure, Chinese painting Strong coloring pertains to the comparison of the hue of color. Ancient painter inherited the necessity of spontaneously applying monochrome from the primitive instinct. It abuts the biotic color. And the creating of the juxtaposition of the saturated color and five colors products the relative and relatedness. The pure hue of color can be limited by coaly and gold or silver string in Chinese remote antiquity drawing from.

Red yellow and blue-green has its own inherent quality in the limited district. These hues of colors on the entire painting produce the grave and strong characters of the strong coloring simultaneously. Chinese strong coloring painting realized the epochal character of human beings. The character is the change of spontaneous natural ability of color to color consciousness from remote antiquity to the ancient. Chinese remote antiquity strong coloring stands for the preliminary consciousness of color. The theory of "the Chinese ink has five different colors" in Chinese traditional drawing theories is the archetypal concept of "ink is a kind of color". The ink not only means black in Chinese painting color but also a "color" to adjust the relationship of the frame. Chinese ancient ink and wash paintings manifest the extreme developmental character of mono-color in the period of human beings' color consciousness.

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## THE ACADEMIC EVOLUTION OF WESTERN COLOR

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An ultimate change occurred to the Western oil painting from the last years of 19th century. The narrow art function and all-in-one realistic of Traditional oil painting had attained the high saturation for autologous' system. Thus it tended to disassembly by the revolution of philosophy and art concept. The creative principles of oil paintings are not the copy or recurrence of the nature. Artistic images of oil paintings constructed freely by the painters are regarded as the new reality. The artists did not portray the nature by means of oil paintings but a medium to convey own spirits and emotions by it. The painters conceive their works by imagination and fantasy. Three painters after impressionism showed initiative to abandon the customary pattern of oil painting. Vincent Van Gogh chose untrammled and fast or drawing to impart the power in the fully saturated and bright color, and by this means to express worry of the inner soul. Paul Gauguin preferred color and modeling to construct the painting. The space of the work is violated from the traditional form, and the works complete with an atmosphere of mystery. Paul Cezanne groped for using geometric figure to form art image, and the frame he created is a world with autologous order. Their works became the marks of a tremendous change in the oil painting history.

Among the oil paintings in the 20th century, different art conception formed different schools. And they protected the art situation from appearing so many trendy. Some elements of the traditional oil drawing skills are treated as embodying of art concepts. They were strengthened frequently or pushed to an extreme. The language of oil painting form is highly valued. For instance: the cubism ignoring the color and choosing the free construction of form and structure, the fauvism emphasizing the balanced effects in the strong color state, the expressionism using the disorderly application of

color and brush work to express the innermost distortion, the abstract art constructing the frame with point, line and plane simply and the abstract expressionism drawing with the paint cast, splashed and dropped on the canvas. Schools of Western contemporary oil painting are numerous and complicated in the last 100 years. They subrogated each other in succession.

## THE CONCEPTIVE CONFORMITY OF BLENDING THE EAST AND THE WEST

Some Chinese artists counted the Western fine art as the reference object to their autologous artistic creation intentionally or unintentionally during the hundred developing and revolution. Especially for some Chinese painters who persist to explore the innovation from the traditional art and to absorb and appreciate the effective elements in contemporary western art so that they can enrich their art language. There are three aspects for giving a specific analysis of it. First and foremost, Chinese painters abandon the idealistic color completely and turn to present the intimate world of humanity under the influence of irrational philosophy. The substance is to deny the classicalism utterly and apply unsophisticated and deeply expressive means to reflect the dignified and holy religion. From actual-life point of view, arrange a new angle to describe the objective world and life the artists scientifically and authentically by different quarters. So as express their cognition of perceptual and rational. Secondly, form comes first. They treated “raising forms into individual position” as the basic language of artistic creation. It displays the objective world and the abundant human’s subjective spiritual world. It expands human’s appreciated area of the beauty. The third point is to absorb the outstanding achievement of systematic progress positively. It means to create the painting with artistic character plus the style and features of modern by absorbing and combining dissection, modern chemistry, chromatology, composition studies, perspective science, sociology and psychology together. These three aspects are not only playing a positive role in the development of the western modern art, but also influenced profound and lasting in Chinese painting development. It changes Chinese painting from a traditional form to the modern form. Gao Jianfu, the archetypal figure of Ling Nan School, had gone abroad to Japan with his team, and he maintains to compromise the ancient and modern, western and eastern. It refers to the new Japanese painting school which formed by drawing lessons from the color and shadow of Western painting. It was named as “the mix school of China and Japan” by contemporaries. Nevertheless, in fact it was the result influenced by Western art.

The discontentment of the Chinese painting color and the desire of pioneering the new thought precipitate some painters to reform and open-up of the painting system,

while Four Books and the Five Classics are controlling them at the same time. The painting is no longer the simple following of tradition, because the old net cannot hold the hope of insatiable thirsts. The revolution of painting began with 1980s. Accompanied by the deeper revolution in 1990s, the innovatory view of Chinese painting color became stronger and stronger. Finally, the first Discussion Forum of Chinese Painting Color Problems was held in Beijing. The forum discussed the cultural value and the existing of painting forms, also it explored the material, skill and the language form of painting. It had compared the history and reality, Eastern and Western. It is the conclusion of these passing days and the securement for the future. The forum can be regarded as a theory pageant of carrying forward the tradition to Chinese painting color. In the colorful morphological space, the shape and color are the leading factors of painting system. Shape as the main elements of any kind of painting should not be despise. And color influences the visual psychology more directly and irritatingly. Chinese painting is one of the very important forms in world culture. It has the closely and nonseparable relationship with the shape, color and texture. We can be aware of the important value of color by the development of Chinese painting. The element of color had gone through the culture baptism from the early stone painting with the trend of color to the Painted Pottery culture, from the strong color of Tang and Song density to the elegant of Ming and Qing. So the painting field is a hundred flowers blooming and a hundred schools of thought striving. The three main stream of contemporary art circle is Traditional Ink and Wash Painting, the Experimental Chinese Ink and Wash Paintings and the Chinese and the West union paintings. With looking back these histories help a lot to the cognition of color developing nowadays. The frame color is the main representative language in both Eastern and Western painting. And we concern more about impressionism when we talk about color. It was impressionism that exerted the perfection of color in 19th. But our Chinese painters are still arguing about the Chinese painting skills at that time. And only a few persons were supporting the color elements in Chinese painting. No one can deny that China Ink and Wash painting have the splendid accomplishment. “Chinese Ink Presenting Five Colors,” only says to express the material with several color gradation. With the fundamental interests of color, Ink and Wash painting is only a black tone painting with one single color. And it cannot replace the color expressing material. There are different forms, seasons and areas which can represent diverse color feelings and stimulate human’s sympathetic response of emotion. In this way can introduce the painter using color to express the emotion.

Chinese painting is swiftly developed during the Chinese revolution and open-up. The pattern-form theory of Western modern painting in 1980s made the young artists raring to learn more about Western. The aesthetic

concepts of modernism and post-modernism flooded to the painting circle. The young put their mind on the modern art after impressionism. And they tried to get help from the achievement of geometric modeling and chromatics to break through the immovable color and modeling. Painting with meticulous detail has a special growth in the modern time through the curriculum reform of Chinese painting. In that territory, except the viridity and gold-and-green landscape became the lost body of knowledge, Chinese realistic painting personages and fine brushwork flower-and-bird painting have a high occupancy. There is also a large eclosion of meticulous detail painters. Excellent works like Tang Pictures of Music Players and Night breeze. During the development process, some expressive artists deviated from the traditional artistic interests and standard, such as Li Shinan and Li Jin. The latter intensified the power of string and color obviously in a series painting of Tibet. "The color does not bother the ink. So does the ink" became the unchanged persuasion of some painters. They inherited the tradition created by Lin Fengmian to introduce the color lump into the art of ink and wash when relied on the Western expressionism. Representatives are Hairihan and Zhu Zhengeng. Tian liming even put large color lump to analyze the relation between ink and pen into a facula effect. Ling had pointed out "it needs a definite correction of the painting material, skill and method so that it will not restrict or bind the trend of free description." in the exploration of light, color and ink. It is not happening by chance that the pioneer who insisted on doing things in his own way finally won many successors.

Lin Fengmian is very learned in painting. He studied Chinese traditional chiefly when he was young, and later went abroad to France. He concentrated on studying the modeling and color of Western painting. That is why he has a deep realization towards Chinese and Western esthetic spice. He takes harmonizing Chinese and Western and revitalizing the Chinese art as his personal responsibility. His paintings unite the traditional line drawing of Chinese painting, folk interest, the style of cubism and fauvism and the conception of western color. He founded the new way to express the still life and landscape and created to paint with deep ink and color. It advocates the unique flag among the artistic sea. His works lay paint on canvas freely and completely. Moreover repeat pigmentation in the rich and gaudy area and lighten the elegant of pure and transparent. The paintings are endowed with the poetic sense of beauty for the inherent color and shadow. The infiltration of Chinese and Western makes the Chinese painting blend into literalism. The fundamental of Eastern and Western is totally different, so the expression of art before modernism is different too. Eastern art placed extra emphasis on subjective, while Western painting from objective. Eastern art is similar to the poem and Western art are more like drama, therefore Chinese painting is great at verve, and Western painting is strong in similarity

of shape. The appearance of modernism in the end of 19th century makes these two paintings closer, and finally the art running up to a border less situation.

The development of Chinese painting needs a new thread. The most effectual method is combining the ancient Chinese philosophy and the study of the color system in western painting. It is not the simple copy of Western phenomenon on the painting form, but the leading painters to bring the human color essence and modern color to further development and exploration of initiatively. Based on these thoughts, painters should continue the new visual angle to cogitate and research the main theory advocated as "deep thinking of philosophy". The content of it is to improve the color conception and color creation to a theoretic knowledge, and exert the expressiveness of the Chinese paintings which have the splendid color potential. Thus to rich the thought and develop Chinese painting, furthermore, it is the direction of positive exploration of "the pen and ink should follow the age". Following closely to the language character of the color in Chinese painting and digging deeper on its character in philosophy become the theme of promoting Chinese painting. The plenty cultural deposits and organic amalgamation of foreign culture provide a broader space and more expressive and visual impact power to the creation of Chinese painting color. Besides the elements above-mentioned the reflection of humanism, the formation of the painter's creative appearance and the consociation of colors is more important.

The analyzed mentally philosophy theory leads the author's practice field. As a university teacher, the teaching technique of philosophy and the color concept have influenced the students admiring the tradition and thirty to innovation. Chinese paintings value the artistic conception and it determines whether the frame is perfect or not. In conclusion, painters should exploit their private thought, disposition, emotion and imagination in the creation of painting, and make "self", "foreign teachers" and "tradition" as a triunity. And let the specific and limited color converge to measureless color rhyme.

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