

# A Comparative Study of Color Application between Chinese Painting and Western Painting

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**Abstract:** Color is rich in expressiveness and symbolism, which enables the communication between the artist and the audience. Chinese painting and Western oil painting have their own distinct characteristics in the color of the painting. In different stages of historical development, the concept of painting color and the application of painting color are different. Under different cultural backgrounds, colors have different connotations. The differences in color application between Chinese and Western paintings are discussed in terms of color culture, color expression form, and color application.

## 1. Differences in Color Culture between Chinese and Western Paintings

Chinese painting is an independent and unique system. It is an important part of Chinese traditional culture with a long history. Chinese painting fully embodies the wisdom and wisdom of the Chinese nation, and fully demonstrates the Chinese people's skill in depicting nature, reflecting the author's deep thinking on nature and the universe. In China, records of color were first seen in the book. In terms of theoretical research, the most famous book of Chinese painting is Zhou Li Dong Guan, which interprets the application of blue, red, white, black and yellow in terms of ancient Chinese culture. In the West, the pioneering father of color theory was Aristotle of ancient Greece. Regarding color, he believes that white, black, and yellow are independent basic colors, and other colors are either between these three colors or they are generated by mixing these three colors.

In China, red is auspicious. For example, at a wedding ceremony, a new man wears a big red flower. This is a symbol of love and happiness, and it also expresses a happy and auspicious atmosphere. White is a sad color. In traditional funerals, the color is dominated by white. Yellow is a symbol of power. In Western culture, it is advocated that red is used to represent cruel and bloody and unclear things. For example, in the bullfighting culture of Spain, the bullfighter irritated the cow with a red cloth and raised the wonderful scene of bullfighting. White represents elegance and purity.

In Chinese paintings, unlike the western paintings, light and shadow are not emphasized, but are expressed in the same hue. Due to the natural connection between wood and charcoal, charcoal black has become the dominant color of Chinese color concept. These black and white colors show before us a color world centered on solid colors. Sometimes Chinese paintings use only the halo and shade of ink to express all natural objects. The shade of ink is not meant to represent light and shadow. In the meantime, the ink contains all the colors. The black and white of Western paintings appear purely as black and white, while black and white in Chinese ink painting are the embodiment of all colors of objects. For Europeans with white races, there is no whiter color than marble. They have made the white marble the ideal monochromatic world. This has become their tradition. On the other hand, they also began to like the colors of various stones such as opal, sapphire and emerald. Red, blue, yellow, green, purple, white, black, and other colors have gradually entered the West as a way to convey the mystical color language of Christ.

## 2. The Differences in Color Expressions between Chinese and Western Paintings

The tools and materials used in the Chinese landscape paintings mainly use the four treasures of ink, rice paper and other texts, and their line shapes are another major feature. Western landscape

paintings are mainly based on oil painting materials, and their images emphasize light and dark light to create a space atmosphere. The traditional poetry, calligraphy and painting of Chinese traditional paintings complement each other. Each part of poetry, calligraphy, painting and printing is the main chapter of the composition diagram. In doing so, on the one hand, calligraphy and painting can be matched with each other with the same line art; on the other hand, the meaning of explicit expression is borrowed and the poetic imagery on the screen is emphasized. This style of using calligraphy poetry and Zhu Hong seal to complement the effect of the screen forms a unique tradition of Chinese painting art. This is something that Western painting does not have. The large gaps in the composition of Chinese landscape paintings have the effect of "virtual", and their understanding should be the treatment of "real". This concept of "emptiness" in Chinese landscape painting is a reflection of oriental philosophy and aesthetic concepts in the picture, and it is also a representation of art. Fang Xun of the Qing Dynasty once said: "The so-called painting method is between the actual and the actual." Virtual and real, that is, opposite and unified, "real" is relative "virtual" in terms of, "virtual" is born from "real" constitute an aesthetic whole. "The white in the picture, that is, the picture in the painting, that is, the picture outside the picture," can completely make people feel the scene of the blank place and the implicit artistic conception through the picture. This "virtual" method of writing "real" paintings and the reality of traditional Chinese opera scenes and props simplify the appearance of a common thread. Western landscape painting simply does not allow this treatment to appear on the screen. From this point of view, Chinese traditional paintings seem to be more ingeniously aware of the essence of art.

### **3. Differences in the Color Perception between Chinese and Western Paintings**

In the period of primitive society, due to limited conditions, Chinese and Western paintings were expressed in simple colors. This monotonous concept of color contributed to the simplicity of the Chinese and Western paintings in this period. However, the difference is that the color of Chinese paintings during this period was relatively simple. In the large number of rock paintings that appeared during this period, basically almost monochromatic objects were expressed in monochrome, and the form of expression was also flat. The color expression of western paintings appeared in this period was not the same, the colors were relatively abundant, and a variety of hues were diversified and simple stereotypes were formed. Tonal changes also basically formed.

In the development of the complexity of the Chinese painting's color, the hue of the painting is richer, but the expression of the painting is still limited to the use of plane as a simple expression. During this period, the color of Western oil paintings showed two trends: some of the expressions of paintings used more simple colors to construct the images of the works. The other part of the painting is based on realistic color expression.

When Chinese painting is dominated by the color palette of ink, western paintings are rendered in a three-dimensional, light-dark perspective. Chinese painting is good in ink, and Western painting is good at color. Chinese painting is a model for the use of Chinese painting colors, and it is often replaced by ink. With the changes of ink, dark ink, light ink, dry ink, and wet ink, to express the texture, light, color, and space of objects, people stand before a picture of ink and wash, but they do not see beautiful colors. You can think for a thousand years and have a heart-felt journey. For example, the depiction of geisha dancers by the famous South Korean painter Gu Kaizhong in the Five Dynasties period is enough to illustrate this point, that is, the late meticulous paintings also pay attention to moisturizing and natural effects. Western painting emphasizes the use of color and is good at using color to express the color, quality, light, shape, and space of objects. It is rich in color and natural, beautiful and moving, and makes people feel at home. Western oil paintings are mainly composed of shades of light and shade. Oil paintings use light, shadows, and layers of colors to vividly depict the delicate color changes of the characters' skin and make people feel the flowing blood under the skin. Objects in the shadows or shadows produce a stable, deep sense of volume and space, increasing the saturation of the color of the picture. Oil paintings use light and shadow rhythm as their formal beauty features, pursuing a sense of reality, three-dimensionality, rhythm, and light and shade. The concretion of light is color, and color is not only the most important styling

means, but also the most important expression means. Therefore, the Western painting art as a whole tends to be optically pleasing, and is more full of geometric spirit and rational thinking.

Different nationalities have their specific historical evolution, national subjective personality, psychological quality, cultural background, customs and people's sentiments and artistic ideas and artistic ideals. If we say that Chinese painting is still good, then the western language is still shape; Chinese painting emphasizes expression and emphasizes emotion; Western painting reappears and emphasizes rationality; Chinese painting uses lines as the main modeling means; Western painting mainly expresses imagery by light and color. However, with the exchange and mutual influence of Chinese and Western cultures, since the 20th century, the color expressions of Chinese and Western paintings have gradually shown a tendency towards convergence, and the development of painting colors has shown performance, practicality, aestheticism, and diversity. Features.

#### **4. Differences in the Application of Color in Chinese and Western Paintings**

(1) Color is the concrete manifestation of the refraction of light on a specific object, and the colors of objects in the world are ever-changing.

The color of the object is a combination of the natural combination of the common color and the specific environmental color in the environment. The change of the light will cause the color of the object to change. In the traditional Chinese painting theory, Nanzi Sheikh's "Six Laws" put forward the theory of "coloring with class". He advocated that in the use of color, the author should pay attention to and break through the inherent color of objects, and should also assist them. Expressing emotions in color, emphasize the ingenious combination of the two. Moreover, there are subtle differences in the color perspectives of different Chinese painters, leading to differences in style. Color is one of the more important expressions and styling methods for Western oil painting. The determination of oil painting subject matter, the expression of emotions in oil paintings, the construction of atmosphere, and so on are all emphasized using corresponding colors. Therefore, in Western oil painting, the exploration and study of the law of the use of color has been more systematic and scientific. Color is most easily perceived by people. Therefore, in the natural world, strong or soft colors, bright or dark, will all affect people's emotions in a particular color to a certain extent. Therefore, color is not only one of the important expression techniques used by the author when the Western oil painting is performed, but also one of the important means by which Western oil painters express their feelings. Throughout the world, all ethnic groups have their own specific historical trajectories. The national spirit, people's psychological quality, social and cultural background, traditional folk customs, specific artistic concepts, and their artistic expressions all have their own characteristics.

(2) The formation of the principle of the use of color is the product of the development of the concept of color, and is the result of a historical process.

At the same time, it is also a product of the guidance and influence of a color theory; it is also a certain art tool material and artistic method. "Fashion with variety" has always played the role of the color theory basis of Chinese painting. Under the influence of it, Chinese painting has formed a unique color system. It is different from the light source color, intrinsic color, and environmental color that are emphasized by the Western realistic color system. The reproduction of complex relationships is different from the process of decorating the color system. As a color-using principle with national characteristics, there is an inseparable internal link between "specialty with variety" and Chinese traditional philosophy, aesthetics, and national aesthetic methods. "Coloring with a class" can be interpreted as a color based on the inherent color of an object or a similar inherent color. This is actually the preliminary and correct principle of Chinese painting's color application. If "class" is regarded as time, it can be interpreted as using colors according to the four seasons of spring, summer, autumn and winter, according to the early, middle and late periods. That is to say, the painter should pay attention to the movement of the sun and pay attention to the color of the sun's rays. Impact. According to time, color is actually used according to the color of the environment. If "class" is regarded as emotion, then "coloring with class" can be interpreted as using the color with the object or the artist's emotions, and when it is happy, it can be used in red to

indicate that it is noble and yellow. Or imagine the painter and the audience to imagine that "ink and color" is the color of the imagery. Mental color. If "class" is regarded as an aesthetic interest, then "coloring with class" can be interpreted as either a "custom" taste or an "elegant" taste.

(3) The principle of color painting is evolving with the advancement of the times.

The Renaissance paintings are full of rationality. Paintings, perspectives, and principles of optics all require paintings to be of the same color as nature. They must be painted in accordance with the original colors of the objects. They must have a sense of style and tactility. Emphasizing the individuality and materiality of the object image requires absolutely clear and precise representation. With the progress of society, the richness and variety of life, and the enrichment of people's visual experience and the desire to express feelings, the emphasis is on drawing visual colors. When people demand performance, they must be blurred and mixed, and they must have a good impression and overall color atmosphere. Therefore, the Baroque arts and romantics and later the Impressionists pursued in this area and created a series of color expression techniques. In general, they can be summarized as the realization and application of fuzzy techniques. Since the classical oil paintings of the Renaissance, the realistic issues such as the anatomical perspective and the pattern of light and darkness have been solved. However, the subject of color reality has not yet been completely resolved. In the second half of the 19th century, the Impressionists shouldered this historical mission. At that time, the important research results in optics and chromatics in physics had a great inspiration for the Impressionist painters. The Impressionists and their later use of creativity took the initiative to use colors, and they made a serious observation of natural colors. After the analysis and understanding, after acquiring a clear, intense feeling of the objective image color and understanding of the overall color tone, they also requested to actively and pursuing the expression of color and emphasize the imagination of color. They are concerned about light, shadow, and color. The resulting spiritual effect notices some hint of color to the human mind. When they observe nature, they think about the relationship between "light" and "color" in nature. They are intoxicated by the intense changes of light color and air. When they painted, they used their intuitive role based on the optical principles. They further used fuzzy techniques to flexibly and quickly express the light color atmosphere of nature and the artist's mood. Therefore, color juxtaposition and visual blending form a color segmentation method. Point color methods, brilliance techniques, and other techniques make colors brighter and richer. At the same time when the Impressionists were confirmed, the oil paintings that pursue visual reality can be said to be completely mature. A variety of realistic performance techniques can be said to reach the peaks that future generations really cannot surpass. Cezanne pursued classicism and rigorous structure and order on the basis of changes in light and color, and Gauguin made contrasts with the color analysis of the Impressionist and contrasted with the intense color of the single-line flat paint, with a symbolic color; Gao is represented by dazzling colors, rolling brush strokes, and venting passionate emotions. Although there are many differences between the beginning and the development of the principles of coloring in Chinese and Western paintings, they all come together in the same way, and returning to expressing the painter's personal emotions with color is the starting point of applying the most critical or ideal principles of color.

## **5. Conclusion**

Although in different stages of historical development, the color concept of Chinese and Western paintings and the application of painting colors are different. However, in modern times, as a result of the exchanges between the East and the West, Western painting has absorbed some of the representational concepts of Oriental paintings and formed new Western modern paintings. Chinese painting has also greatly enriched the face of traditional painting by introducing western sketch sketching and color theory. Drawing from east to west and learning from each other and learning from each other is a new trend in the development of world art.

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