Art Heritage Treasures- "The Research on the Color of Chinese Painting"

Liang GUO*
School of Art, Wei Fang College, Weifang, Shandong 261061, China
*Corresponding author

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Abstract. The color of Chinese painting has the unique features and effects. Ancient artists accumulated rich experience on how to use the colors, but there were only a little fragments left in the recorded books. There was no works on systematic theory introduction of the color of the Chinese painting and even some materials were lost. We didn’t have the comprehensive and systematic theory works about the color of Chinese painting until the book on "the color of Chinese painting research" was published, and there is no doubt that the book is helpful in understanding the tradition of the art at great length. We can get a comprehensive understanding of the constitution of the color of Chinese painting, the systematic use of color and traditional craft methods, which is significant for accepting and carrying forward the legacy of our art. And meanwhile it is a successful combination of old and new, traditional colors and modern industrial production, providing more effective support and protection for the development of Chinese art.

Introduction

Chinese painting has a long and glorious history. It has formed a unique style. After thousands of years of many artists’ creation, whether in the form or style it is also significantly different from Western painting. These differences reflected in many ways, including culture, the technique of expression, and the use of materials, etc. leaving the culture and the performance aside, there is essential difference in timber between Western and Chinese painting. The main painting tools in Chinese painting are a brush and rice paper. The root cause of this pattern lies in the use of color in Chinese painting. Chinese painting mostly uses natural colors. Precisely because of the unique properties of this color our ancestors chose to use brush, rice paper as painting tools. Today, we can also see a lot of ancient bright colorful paintings, such as the unearthed tombs, grottos, murals which are in all parts of country, and collections of ancient paintings at all levels of the museums. Among these remains the oldest is about two thousand years and the latest also eight or nine hundred years. The color of the painting is also maintained a certain amount of gorgeous, and also kept the atmosphere of different colors, which is easier to find status and role of the color of Chinese painting in the whole field. Therefore, the study of color is particularly important and necessary. Dating back fourteen hundred years ago from the literature, Sheikh, the artist, who retailed “Six Codes", proposed "with the class assigned color" theory. Zhang Yan Yuan, eleven hundred years ago, an art critic, talked about the color origin, usage and the reasons for enduring color in his "ancient paintings in mind". Later artists through the ages, left the experience how to use the colors by practice. These materials has a very high value on researching the colors of Chinese painting, but these materials are scattered and incomplete, until modern times the book "Chinese painting color research," written by Mr. Yu Feige comes out. The book gives comprehensive and systematic exposition of variety and nature of Chinese painting color, development and the use of other aspects. It covers color-related aspects with clearness, conciseness and understanding but without losing the extension of a wide range. This is the most fundamental and the largest value for this book.
Comprehensive Analysis on the Nature Varieties of the Color of Chinese Painting

Color is an important material basis for Chinese painting. It is an important tool not only to reflect the essential characteristics of Chinese painting but also to play an important role in the entire history of Chinese painting. Prior to the Ming and Qing dynasties, Chinese painting is called "Dan", "Dan", "green" are the two most commonly used colors in Chinese painting. There is no more than other words to name Chinese painting by the combination of the colors. At the same time it reflects that the color is an inalienable part in Chinese painting. Now remains of paintings are mostly the works of Tang and Song Dynasties, and mainly are color Pictures. only the painting "ancient paintings in mind" created by Zhang Yan Yuan in Tang Dynasty recorded as many as seventy-two kinds of different colors. After Song Dynasty, the Chinese style of ink painting came into fashion, resulting in Chinese painting color remained dozen in the sixties and seventies of the twentieth century.

In order to inherit and develop traditional Chinese color varieties, Mr. Yu Feige re-classified and re-summarized Chinese painting colors in his book "study of Chinese painting color". He introduced thirty seven colors in all and use methods. He divided the colors of Chinese painting into two main categories: Chinese ink and traditional Chinese colors.

Since the Tang Dynasty, the Chinese ink painting was the only manifestation in Chinese painting. Zhang Yan Yuan in his book "ancient paintings in mind" began to advocate abandoning the color and seeking the ink. He believed that "vegetation deposited wing, wait for Dan's busy mining, snow clouds flying, wait for the lead powder and white ..." and he affirmed that "ink and transport colored with." This theory and practice for the ink beating down the color ultimately evolved into the pursuit of the aesthetic and critical criteria in "meaning enough not to do color like".we can see that Chinese people are fond of ink in particular. Therefore, Mr. Yu Feige in his book "study of Chinese painting color" classified Chinese ink as a separate chapter. In his book he introduced unique style in Chinese ink painting, which characterized by superficial, deep shades of ink to express the light and color possessed by everything. Usage of the ink can be divided into coke, thick, heavy, light, clear five kinds of ink-degree. In the ancient ink paintings were called the "ink color". So ink painting occupies the unique position in Chinese painting. The book not only describes the ink system-color process, variety, techniques, even the ink-related tools are introduced in detail and comprehensively, such as the brush selection, the selection of ink varieties, ink stone selection, water selection and the ink color storage, etc. we not only fully recognize the ink color of this unique painting, but also understand preparation system of making ink painting. It provides a strong data protection for the future learning and using.

In the book the traditional Chinese color is divided into three parts: mineral pigments, plant quality pigments and gold and silver. Mineral pigments covers six categories (red, yellow, blue, green, white, black) including twenty-two species, which is also a special presentation on the usages of some common used colors such as cinnabar, rouge, ocher, realgar, stone yellow, yellowish brown, azurite, stone green, and some bleaching methods. plant quality pigments cover thirteen varieties, namely red and blue flowers, madder, purple riveting, rouge, ebony, garcinia, Huaihua, yellow tiller, raw gardenia, anthocyanin, Mexico, Bai Caoshuang, all above it covers almost commonly used Chinese painting colors. The thorough introduction of the origin of various colors and producing methods not only enables us to understand the basic color attributes of varieties , but also allows us to understand the essence features of different colors. We can make the color by ourselves by learning the book and follow the steps. All of these are fundamental help for the future research and learning.

The Discourse on the Development of the Combination of Ancient and Modern

The entire history of Chinese painting is accompanied by the use of color and production development. It developed from the initially simple-made one kind or several kinds to inclusive colorful and varied forms at present. During different periods of the level of the colors selection in the different period will directly affect painting styles and forms. Mr. Yu Feige in his book discusses color usage and development features at different stages along the historical development.
from Zhou Qin, Han and Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, Sui, Tang, Five Dynasties and Song, Ming and Qing dynasties to modern making an analysis respectively. The color usage has their own characteristics in different periods. But if we make a general survey of the colors usages, we find that the whole development of Chinese painting color can be broadly divided into the following significant stages: 1, prior to Sui and Tang period the single color, specific in Zhou Qin, Han Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties and the Sui period, we analyze the color usage mainly from the pottery and mural remains. The color at that time only the special service product for royal members because of the relatively backward production technology and relatively isolated foreign exchange. Therefore, there were relatively few species and mostly coming from minerals and plant-based pigments in the nature. 2, the local multi-color development period, specifically the Tang and Song and Yuan Dynasties. In this period the development of Chinese painting was in pluralism. The subjects about Chinese painting was also relatively abundant and widespread, this performance was not only reflected in the pre-pottery, murals, but also appeared among the large number of literati paintings. At the same time the Tang and Song dynasties were the most powerful and prosperous period. With the increase of foreign exchange, foreign colors also contributed to the great development of Chinese painting. In this period Chinese paintings were composed of the colorful and diverse mineral colors, as well as seemingly simple ink on behalf of the Chinese charm. That is to say, a bright charm co-existed with simple and elegant form. 3, the industrialization of color period, specifically refers to the Ming and Qing period. In this period the use of color was not limited to the first two areas, and was applied to the silk, and as well as new-year-paintings, light paintings, colorful paintings, printmaking, etc. All of these raised new demands for the development of color. The methods of the original individual's choice of color, research drift, handling, application could not meet the requirements of various forms, so the production of color became specialization. Initially this skill was mastered by each individual artist secretly, and little by little institutions and factories specialized in production of pigment emerged. From then on the color users ended historic mission on making colors by themselves. 4, the period of the absorption of the foreign color and combination of external development. Specifically refers to the period after the Opium War. After the Opium War a large number of foreign chemical pigments gradually entered China and many of these exotic colors were cheap, effective and easy to use. So users also directly bought imported pigments in the market apart from using traditional Chinese painting minerals and vegetable pigments. The imported chemical pigments rich colors of Chinese painting market on the one side, but hit the traditional Chinese painting color on the other side. So many Chinese painters knew little or nothing about traditional Chinese color in the modern time. There’s no doubt that it is a great impact on the development of traditional Chinese color. The book "study of Chinese painting colors," written by Mr. Yu Feige is valuable on the protection and development of traditional Chinese color.

The Details of Color-Making and Use System

The book describes more than two out of the question, and the most valuable is the detailed description of the system of Chinese traditional painting process and characteristics of various colors. It is difficult to find another book in the previous historical data with full and detailed description and analysis. The book starts from the color of painting, and explains the production of various colors, their characteristics, hue analysis and production methods one by one, which provides a very comprehensive historical analysis for the future generations to learn about Chinese painting colors. In other words, today you can even follow the steps, which described in the book, to do the colors yourself. If it were not Mr. Yu Feige who had rich experience, experiment, production experience, he wouldn’t have written such a fine, comprehensive theory works. Then, the book also incorporates themes of Chinese painting and methods to make further analysis of color-making and use methods. Traditional Chinese painting includes not only traditional painting in the impressionistic manner but the folk art of color introduction, as well as folk painting, which was also inseparable with the experience of Mr. Yu Feige. Mr. Yu set about to learning Chinese painting from the folk painting. The earliest folk art learning experience laid a solid foundation for his
color-using learning, but also made a good premise foundation for his transformation from imperial-court decorative painting to modern painting meticulous re-creation in the future. The book introduced the color characteristics of portrait painting pictures and color characteristics of light painting respectively. The introduction is justified by the use of a large number of examples. Without a solid foundation and a large number of repeated painting practice it is impossible to complete such detailed explanations. Finally, the book also compared color and color drift methods between the ancient and modern artists. Ancient artists required not only the subject-object distinction for the image on the screen, but also "master and slave, respectively, and color harmony" in color. The methods are green, Qianjiang, ink and outline, hook filled, no bone, etc. respectively. These require the use of colors be very elegant, such as more common cinnabar, rouge, ocher, realgar, azurite, malachite green and so on. with the perfect development of the technology and the merging of foreign colors, The modern artist has made a slight change in common used colors, such as cinnabar, ocher, Western Red, Huaihua, gypsum, malachite green, anthocyanin, Gefen, etc. The production process is relatively simple compared with the old time. Mini-grinder is directly used to rub the paint. This method resulting in the production of many intermediate colors, the color varieties also will be increased and diversified. The book described the using methods of a variety of colors in detail, and which is easy to understand at a glance. These provide data support and assurance for the future generations to learn. Based on the above, the book has provided all the relevant knowledge related to painting and Chinese painting colors. The language is concise and easy to understand, and the words incisive scrutiny, no extra nonsense. it covers such a comprehensive knowledge system in a thin book, which is undoubtedly worthy of our future generations to learn. Knowledge and truth is a profound in Chinese painting colors from of old until in now. "Chinese painting color research," written by Mr. Yu Feige's, certainly provides a very good platform for us with a comprehensive understanding about Chinese painting colors and then a further comprehensive understanding of Chinese painting. In the Chinese art world it deserves highly artistic value. it is a rich legacy that our ancestors left. While we vigorously advocate promoting intangible cultural heritage protection and development today, "the study of Chinese painting color" can be said it is the visual art heritage, and is entitled to the gem of the art heritages.

References