

# The Basic Framework and Early Techniques of Chinese Painting

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## Abstract

Literary quality, as an aesthetic concept, was widely used in literary theory at first, and gradually developed into a pair of important aesthetic categories in Chinese classical literature and art. The discussion of "literary quality" in traditional Chinese painting theory originated from the Six Dynasties. Its basic spirit not only came down in the same line with the literary concept in literary theory, but also had a close relationship with other traditional painting ideas. The purpose of this paper is to make a systematic and comprehensive study on the theory of literary quality of traditional Chinese painting, by explaining the basic connotation of "literature" and "quality" in Chinese painting theory. To discuss the ideological origin of the quality of painting, and further clarify the context of the development of the concept of painting quality. On the basis of analyzing the dialectical relationship between "literature" and "quality" in the creation of Chinese paintings, this paper expounds the relationship between "literary quality" and the style of the times of Chinese paintings, so as to explore the influence of literary quality on painting creation. Undoubtedly, the study of the theory of literary quality in traditional Chinese painting aesthetics will be conducive to a better grasp of the relationship between the form, techniques and ideological connotation of the artistic expression of Chinese painting. So as to promote the development of Chinese painting theory and creative practice.

## Keywords

Chinese painting; literary quality; form of expression.

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## 1. Introduction

"Literary quality" is the basic term of Chinese classical literature and art. Confucius once said on the gentleman's personal cultivation: "quality is better than literature is wild, literature is better than quality is history, gentle, and then gentleman." It means that a person should pay attention to both external etiquette and internal moral character, if the lack of due etiquette will appear rude manners [1]. But if the appearance is too much decorated and will fall into the impression of exaggeration, only a simple and honest personality and elegant appearance of the people can become the same elegant gentleman [2]. The purpose of Confucius' statement is to emphasize the harmony and unity of "courtesy" and "benevolence" advocated by Confucius by advocating the image of a gentle gentleman. The study of "literary quality" in ancient Chinese literary theory has a long history [3]. Because of the rise of prose and Fu in the Han Dynasty, the concept of "literary quality" was introduced into the field of literature. Many writers incorporated the thought of "literary quality" in the pre-Qin period into their literary creation [4]. Therefore, the word "literary quality" can be used not only to refer to the text and meaning of the article, but also to refer to the language style of the text and plain. Since then, more and more writers or thinkers, such as Han Yu in the Tang Dynasty and Wang Fuzhou in the Qing Dynasty, have dealt with the proposition of "literary quality" from the perspective of literature or aesthetics. The theory of Chinese painting holds that there is potential relationship between art and Taoism, so painting

is equal to Tao. Philosophical theory and thought have a very profound impact on the development of Chinese painting. Painting is the Tao. Tao is the unique essence of Chinese painting, but also the internal theory of Chinese painting to show the beauty of form.

## 2. The Theoretical Foundation of Chinese Painting Is Traditional Chinese Aesthetics

Chinese painting is one of the famous paintings by the state. It is a precious historical and cultural treasure of our country for thousands of years. Chinese painting on the soil of the Chinese land is a native ethnic painting, is a sound system, an important school of their own. Chinese painting is deeply rooted in the national tradition and has a self-contained and self-contained development system. Therefore, Chinese painting is an important national painting which can be regarded as the representative of the eastern painting and the western painting. Chinese painting and foreign art are essentially different, it shows the unique aesthetic vision of the Chinese nation and its own aesthetic ideas, and its unique style has become a typical representative of Oriental art. In ancient society, Chinese painting has been a very common cultural product, and was deeply influenced by political culture, religious beliefs, literary ideas, philosophical theory. In particular, philosophical theory plays a key role in the formation of its aesthetic quality. However, the traditional Chinese aesthetics is a combination of Taoist, Buddhist, Confucian and other different ideas, although there are major schools, but can be integrated and shared.

Learning motivation is the most important factor to promote students' learning activities. It is the direct driving force of learning activities. It opens the learning process, inspires and guides students' learning. According to the survey of motives and reasons for Chinese painting learning of college students, as shown in Figure 1 and Table 1.

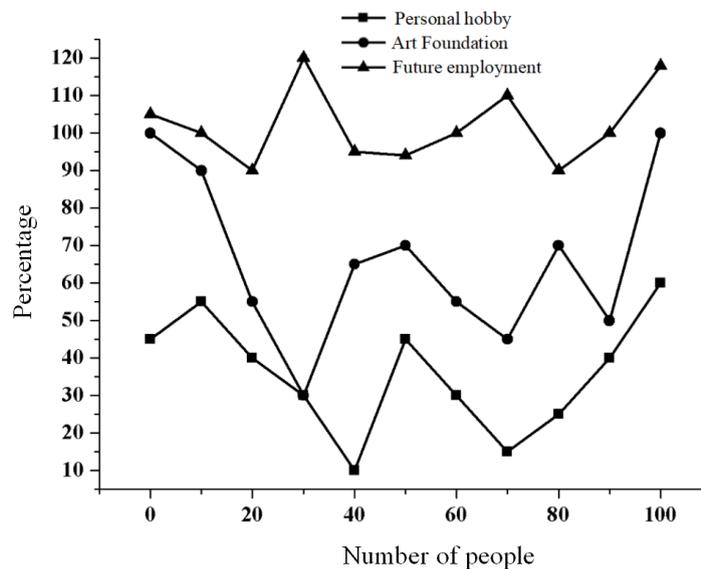


Figure 1. Motives and reasons for learning Chinese painting

Table 1. Motives and reasons for learning Chinese painting

Motivation and reasons	Number of people	Percentage (%)
Personal hobby	50	48
Art Foundation	23	21
Future employment	60	58

From the mainstream point of view, Chinese painting is the aesthetics of natural unity, subjective and objective unity of aesthetics, is the unity of truth, goodness and beauty of aesthetics, which is the theoretical basis of Chinese painting. Chinese painting is a concrete manifestation of this mature system of Chinese aesthetic ideas, and directly embodied as an artistic image of the unity of man and nature. For example, Lao Zhuang's viewpoint, metaphysical viewpoint and Taoist viewpoint have influenced Chinese painters' understanding of beauty and their imagination of beauty, thus forming the philosophical basis for the existence of Chinese painting. For example, Confucianism's concern about the ethical and moral significance of "Tao" has highlighted the function of Chinese painting in helping to civilize society. Chinese painting has not become a single visual sense of pleasure enjoyment, but the existence of the pursuit of truth, good and beautiful realm, the pursuit of a balance between emotion and reason. The intuitive enlightenment of Zen thought and the free spirit of Chuang Tzu formed a cognitive unity with the cultivation, character and freehand brushwork pursued by Chinese painters. The aesthetic thought of Chinese painting is not only different from the rationalism of Western classical aesthetics. It is also different from mechanical materialism, and contrary to the rationality of intuition and emotion highlighted by western modern aesthetics. Chinese painting pursues the realm of "you have me, I have you, and two forget each other." It can be said that the spirit of Chinese painting is the embodiment of the unity of nature and man.

### 3. Embodiment of Literary Quality in Traditional Chinese Painting

The relationship between "Wen" and "quality" has always been the key to the theoretical exploration of ancient literary quality. "Heavy weight" tends to exaggerate the role of "Wen" and has obvious formalism. Those who emphasize "light weight" only emphasize the "quality" aspect and despise or even negate the role of "Wen". Those who hold the idea of "unity of quality and culture" reject the above two one-sided views. They believe that there is a dialectical and unified relationship between "literature" and "quality", and "quality" is in the dominant position in this unity, and "literature" serves "quality". Painting is about painting. "Prime", that is, the background color of the blank space. "Painting after the facts", that is to say, first take the white background as the quality, and then apply colorful painting, which is like a person although there is the essence of beauty, but still need to be colorful decoration is perfect. The essence of Confucius's theory of painting is essentially to emphasize the principle of "propriety" after "benevolence". He thinks that "benevolence" is the ideological content of etiquette rites, and etiquette norms are the external expression of "benevolence", so "benevolence" should be first followed by "rites". The reason why "painting after the element" is related to "literary quality" is that Confucius emphasized that "painting after the element". Similarly, in the literary relations, "quality" is the dominant aspect, and the existence of "literature" is based on "quality", so "quality" first and then "literature". Although Confucius' theory of "painting after the event" is mainly to emphasize his philosophical spirit of "benevolence" and "propriety", the dialectical thought contained in it still exerts a profound and long-term influence on later literary theories and literary works.

Interest in learning is an intrinsic force to promote people's pursuit of knowledge and one of the important factors affecting learning activities. The positive tendencies and positive emotions brought about by interest will affect the learning process, thereby improving learning efficiency and results. At the same time, a good learning environment and ideal learning results in turn produce interest. There are many factors that affect learning interest, according to the author's questionnaire survey, as shown in figure 2 and table 2.

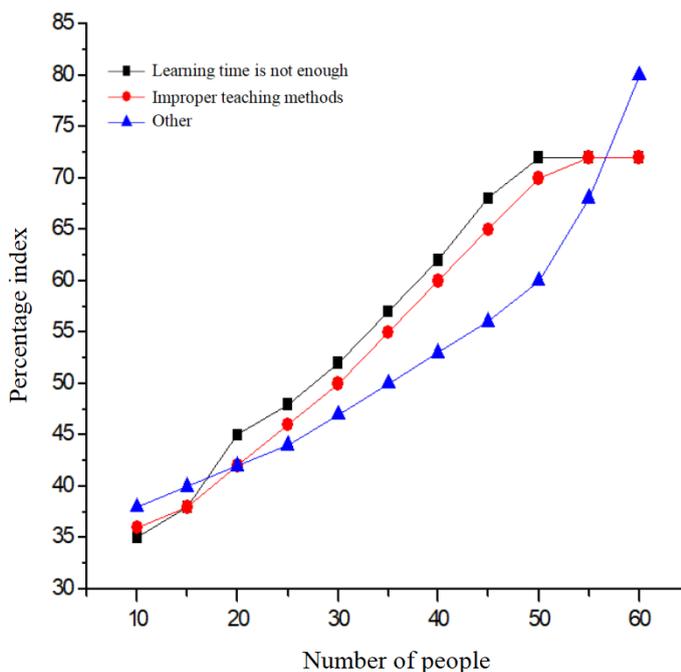


Figure 2. Factors affecting interest in learning

Table 2. Factors affecting interest in learning

Factor	Number of people	Percentage (%)
Improper teaching methods	18	40
Learning time is not enough.	34	65
Other	20	45

"In a specific sense, Chinese painting is the unity of emotion, context and painting. It never regards the real representation of things as the purpose of creation. It emphasizes the expression of the painter's inner feelings and carries out a lyric activity in the form of painting. Painters hope to express their inner feelings through painting, the purpose is not to paint itself, but beyond it. It can be seen from this that highlighting personality and expressing emotions are the gist of Xu Wei's paintings and the essence of his paintings, while the expression of freehand brushwork of flower and bird painting is to express its "quality" of the "text". It is precisely because of Xu Wei's "love" that he created such a "Wen". It is precisely because the painter subjectively has the need to convey his conception and creative purpose, as well as to express his thoughts, feelings and aesthetic taste, that he has a specific brush and ink, composition and other painting techniques of expression. The former is the core of painting creation, that is, "quality", while the latter is to serve the "quality" and the existence of "literature". "Quality" belongs to the main position and plays a leading role in "literature", while "literature" is attached to "quality" and is dominated by "quality". The primary and secondary status and order of the two cannot be reversed.

#### 4. Conclusion

Generally speaking, only the combination of theory and practice can achieve success in the creation of painting art. People of Chinese painting in past dynasties are both practitioners of art and creators of theories. Only when we have a clear understanding of the theoretical laws of Chinese painting, the nature of Chinese painting, and the creative laws of Chinese painting, can we break through the previous research results and create works with their own unique personality. Tracing back to history, the reason for "quality" has always been regarded as an in-depth study of literature and art theory.

Because literature and painting are in harmony in artistic spirit, the concept of literary quality has permeated into the painting theory and practice of ancient Chinese painters. They advocate that the concept of "unity of literary quality" should be closely linked with the spirit of painting, paying attention to the perfect performance of the external form of painting. And strive to highlight the inherent spirit of the work, whether it is simple and natural or elegant and gorgeous painting style contains the profound meaning of "unity of literary quality". The application of literary quality theory in traditional painting not only enlightens the artists on aesthetic ideas and aesthetic ideas, but also guides their creative practice. That is to say, through the mastery of the external expression and the internal essence of the work, we can realize the ideal of painting which is both external and internal beauty.

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