

*"Zhuó Li Ji Cha" (着力即差) –  
An Analysis of the Concept of "Integration" in Su Sui's Music and Painting*

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**Abstract**

The term "Zhuó Li Ji Cha" (着力即差), which means "Efforts Leading to Failures" was coined by Chinese artist and philosopher Su Sui (蘇軾 or Su Dongpo 苏東坡, 1037-1101). Song Dynasty (960-1279), the era in which Su Shi lived, referred as "The Chinese Renaissance" by American art historian Ernest F. Fenollosa, was a time of great achievements in Chinese culture. During this period, Chan (禪) Buddhism which had appeared during the Tang Dynasty(618-907), became a mainstream ideology. Chan (禪) was, in turn, introduced as Zen to Japan by Myōan Eisai (明菴栄西 1141-1215) and other Buddhist priests, flourished under the Shogunate of Ashikaga Yoshimizu (足川義満 1358–1408) and profoundly impacted Japanese arts and aesthetics. Su Shi's philosophy is closely connected to his belief in "Shan Jiao He Yi" (三教合一), unity of the three teachings, the synthesis of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism) which has been explored in the context of research on his poetry and artworks. This essay will explore the concept of "Zhuó Li Ji Cha" through his musical piece "Crane Dance in Dongtian" (鶴舞洞天) and his painting "Withered Trees and Strange Rocks" (枯木怪石圖) in the context of the Zen and the Taoism music text "Xianchi Music Theory" (咸池樂論). Furthermore, aiming to take as a departure point to understanding the concept of "Integration" in connection with "Zhuó Li Ji Cha" an analysis shall be carried out regarding the 20th-century avant-garde movements, which called into question Western logic and knowledge-based paradigms from the perspective of Eastern thought.

Keywords: Su Shi, "Zhuó Li Ji Cha", Yue (樂), "Xianchi Music Theory" (咸池樂論), Guqin (古琴), "Wu Xin" (無心), Zen (禪), D. T. Suzuki, Wabi-Sabi (侘び寂び), Freedom, Unconscious, Integration, Avant Garde, Jackson Pollock

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## Introduction

Su Shi (蘇軾, 1037–1101), also known as Su Dongpo (蘇東坡), was among the most notable intellectuals (文人) in Chinese history. His contributions on poetry, calligraphy, and other fields of arts have been explored from diverse perspectives. This article shall focus on Su's concept of "Zhuo Li Ji Cha" (着力即差), translated in English as "Efforts Leading to Failures" with the aim of exploring its importance in Su Shi's approach to artistic creation.

In 1101, when Su Shi was in a critically ill state, a Buddhist monk and a friend told him "you have always believed in the Buddha, and now you should work hard." Su replied "Zhuo Li Ji Cha" and, after saying this, he passed away at the age of 66.

Su Shi's philosophical views were connected to his syncretic belief in "Shan Jiao He Yi" (三教合一, unity of the three teachings, the synthesis of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism). However, Su Shi always regarded himself as a Buddhist foremost. He developed his interest in Buddhism since a young age, due to the influence of his mother. Around 1071, while living in the city of Hangzhou (杭州)<sup>1</sup>, Su began visiting Buddhist temples with several monks from different sects (such as Yunmen, 雲門宗; Rinzai, 臨濟宗; and Cao Tong, 曹洞宗). During his exile Huangzhou (黃州), between 1079 and 1086, Su's understanding of Buddhism further deepened.

An anecdote which took place during Su Shi's time in Hangzhou illustrates his Buddhist beliefs. During a visit to Shouxing Temple (寿星寺), he said to monk Canliao (參寥) that this is my first visit to this temple, but what I am seeing here seemed very familiar like I have been before. There should be 92 steps to the Chan Hall (忏堂). According to existing records, the number of steps was exactly what Su had said. He summed this experience in the following poem: "I have been to Hangzhou in my past life, and everywhere is like visiting places seen in an old trip" (前生我已到杭州，到处长如到旧游).

Beyond these anecdotes, understanding Su Shi's concept of "Zhuo Li Ji Cha" requires taking into account the cultural and ideological context in which this author lived. In that regard, Chan Buddhism (禪), more widely known in the West by its Japanese denomination of Zen (禪), was an especially significant influence over Su's views and aesthetics. For this reason, a brief reference shall be made in the following lines to the historical circumstances in which Chan, emerged as a leading Buddhist current.

Chan (禪), emerged in China during the Tang Dynasty (唐朝, 618-907) and reached the peak of its influence in Chinese culture during the Song Dynasty (宋朝, 960-1279). American art historian Ernest Fenollosa(1853-1908), whose remains rest at the Mii-dera (三井寺) near Kyoto, has referred to this period as "The Golden Age of Chinese Culture" and "The Chinese Renaissance". In turn, Japanese scholar and monk, Kaiten Nukariya (忽滑谷快天, 1867-1934), when studying the stages of development of Chan doctrines, regarded the form they took during the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279) as "Pure Zen" (純粹禪).

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<sup>1</sup> Hangzhou is the capital and most populous city of Zhejiang, China. It was the capital of the Southern Song Dynasty. Hangzhou is famous for West Lake, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that has been praised by numerous poets and painters. Marco Polo made a detailed record of Hangzhou in "The Travels of Marco Polo."

Chan Buddhism was introduced to Japan in 1167 by Japanese monk Myōan Eisai/Yōsai (明菴栄西, 1141 –1215), the founder of the Rinzai school of Buddhism (臨濟宗). At the same time, Chan gained a notable influence over Chinese aesthetics, being reflected in the ink paintings of Mayuan (马遠, 1160-1225) and Muqi (牧谿, 1210-1270), whom, along with Song Emperor Huizong (宋徽宗, 1082-1136), were among the most prominent artists of their time. The concepts of "Ma Yi Jiao" (马一角)<sup>2</sup> and the unique sensibility of Muqi's ink paintings reflected the influence of Chan ideas, would have a decisive influence in the development of Eastern aesthetics and arts. As it was also the case of Chan Buddhism, Mayuan and Muqi's artwork, exerted its greatest influence over Japanese aesthetics, due to the active support by the Ashikaga shogunal clan (足利將軍), who ruled Japan during the Muromachi Period (室町時代, 1336-1573). Thus, from that time, Chan had a huge influence over Japanese influential traditions and cultural manifestations, such as the Tea Ceremony, gardening, painting and poetry.

During the 20th century, Zen, in turn, influenced Western culture. A decisive role in its diffusion was played by Japanese Buddhist monk Soyen Shaku (釈宗演, 1860–1919). In 1893 Soyen gave a speech at the Universal Conference of Religions in Chicago as a representative of Buddhism from Japan. During the conference, Soyen established a close friendship with religious scholar Paul Carus<sup>3</sup>. In turn, Soyen introduced D. T. Suzuki (鈴木大拙 貞太郎, 1870–1966) to Carus, and to assist with the translation of Laozi's Daodejing (道德經) from classical Chinese to English, and Daisetsu moved to America to carry out this work in 1897. During the following 11 years, Daisetsu worked with Carus's publishing company and translated and edited classical Chinese Buddhist texts. This experience expanded Daisetsu's global perspective and laid the groundwork for his future efforts in introducing Zen to the world.

Zen has conceited interest in contemporary Western societies and had significant influence over its arts and culture since the early XXth century through the contributions of D. T. Suzuki along with Inazō Nitobe (新渡戸 稻造, 1862 – 1933) and Okakura Tenshin (岡倉 覚三, 1863–1913). Arguably, Zen represents the Eastern thought which has had greatest influence over Western thought and arts during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since Zen's roots date back to Su Shi's lifetime during the Song Dynasty, it can be argued that Chan Buddhism establishes a notable cultural link between the work of this classical Chinese sages and Western contemporary Avant Garde cultural movements.

### **"Wu Xin" (無心) and "Wu Yi" (無意) in Su Shi's Arts**

Su Shi is regarded as one of the greatest classical Chinese authors. Beyond his influence in China, in modern times his poetry and calligraphy works have garnered worldwide attention. Notwithstanding, understanding of the conceptions underlying his works has been limited, particularly beyond the Chinese cultural sphere. In that regard, it's important to clarify the meaning of concepts that inspired Su's work, such as that of "Zhuo Li Ji Cha".

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<sup>2</sup> A style in Chinese painting created by a Song Dynasty painter Mayuan, who left most of the blank in painting, with images only in the corners (Yijiao in Chinese). The style of painting was influenced by Zen at that time and formed an important aesthetic in arts.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Carus (1852–1919), German-American author, editor, religious scholar and philosopher.

It is well known that Su Shi's frankness brought him grave problems throughout his life, since he was banished to distant locations on three occasions. Despite these experiences, throughout his life he remained as a humanist who expressed a deep concern for the public good. This is exemplified by his efforts to rescue orphan babies in Huangzhou (黃洲), and by his commitment as a magistrate in Hangzhou to re-move the long-term accumulation of silt in the West Lake, which culminated in the construction of the Su Causeway (蘇堤), named in his honor, which later became one of the Ten Scenic Spots of West Lake (西湖十景)<sup>4</sup>; and a paradigmatic example of Chinese landscaping, captured by Su Shi's poem "Drinking at the lake in the sunlight and then under the rain" (飲湖上初晴後雨)<sup>5</sup>, which in turn influenced a famous haiku written by Japanese poet Matsuo Bashō (松尾 芭蕉, 1644-1694), during a visit to Matsushima (松島): "Kisakata—Seishi sleeping in the rain, Wet mimosa blossoms" (象潟や雨に西施がねぶの花).

With regard to the aesthetic features of Su Shi's poetry, and particularly to its musical aspects, Prof. Naka Junko, based on an analysis of the poems written by Su Shi during his exile in Huangzhou, has made the following remark: "the place where Su Shi prepared to die, sharpened his sensibility as a poet and led him to pay attention to all kind of sounds as materials for his poetry". A character, Yuè (樂), may give us further clues about Su Shi's "Zhuo Li Ji Cha" with the influence from one of his best friends, Ou Yang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007 – 1072), Ouyang makes several mentions to the character Yuè in "Records of the Zuiong Pavilion." (醉翁亭記), such as "The Yuè of Mountains and Waters" (山水之樂), "The Yuè of Four Seasons" (四時之樂) and "The Yuè of Infinity" (無窮之樂). The pleasure of Yuè for Su Shi relates to his notion "Zhuo Li Ji Cha", insofar as it evokes the sense of non-worldliness of the author, who, in his own words, regarded himself as "a man who enjoys non-worldly pleasures", adding in turn: "In my heart there is nothing. That is, everything in the heavens and earth. Mountains, rivers, grass, trees, insects, fish, and all other things are my pleasures." (所謂自娛者 亦非世俗之樂者 但胸中廓然無一物, 即天壤之內山川草木虫魚之類 皆吾作樂事也). Here he emphasized the importance of the statement "in my heart there is nothing" (胸中廓然無一) which stems from Zen's teaching, in Su Shi's "Wu Xin" (無心, nothing in the heart). Aside from "Wu Xin", Prof. Fukumitsu Yu (福光由布) has emphasized the significance of the concept "Wu Yi" (無意, no intention) in Su Shi's artistic creation. "Wu Yi" 無意 originated from Su Shi's essay about calligraphy as 初無意於嘉, Su regarded the lack of intentions as the best state of mind, calling it "Jia" (嘉 good), which is the antonyms of "Cha" (差, Failure) in his quote "Zhuo Li Ji Cha".

Zen deeply rooted in Japanese culture and has formed Japan's unique aesthetics of "Wabi-Sabi" (詫び寂び). Wabi meaning rough and simple. The essential element of Wabi is 貧 (poverty), in negative terms, which implies one not being part of what is trendy or

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<sup>4</sup> People named the Ten Scenes of West Lake with a poetic name by four-characters, including 苏堤春晓、曲院风荷、平湖秋月、断桥残雪、花港观鱼、南屏晚钟、双峰插云、雷峰夕照、三潭印月以及柳浪闻莺. The tradition of naming landscapes began with the Eight Views of Xiaoxiang (瀟湘八景: 瀟湘夜雨, 平沙落雁, 烟寺晚钟, 渔村夕照, 山市晴嵐, 江天暮雪, 远浦归帆, 洞庭秋月) in the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127), and later became a form of literati culture gained a great popular in Asia, especially in Japan.

<sup>5</sup> The most famous poem praising the nature beauty of West Lake, Su Shi used the name of Xi Shi (西施 or Xizi 西子) to praise the four seasons scenery of West Lake: The brimming waves delight the eye on sunny days; (水光潑灑晴方好) The dimming hills give a rare view in rainy haze. (山色空蒙雨亦奇), compare West Lake to Xi ZI (欲把西湖比西子), Whether she is richly adorned or plainly dressed" (淡妝濃抹總相宜).

popularity. Here the poverty means that one should not focus on wealth, power and fame, but should instead seek something internal that has supreme value and transcends time and society. Meanwhile, Sabi (さび) is a noun derived from the verb sabu (さぶ) to describe the state of silence when no people and things around. According to D.T. Suzuki, "Sabi" originally means that things deteriorate over time. Sabi connect with the exquisite skill of Japanese artists to transform imperfect and ugly or strange shapes into embodiments of beauty as see in Ki-Seto Chawan from the Momoyama period (Figure 1). This derives from a set of elements of Sabi, which include simplicity, ancient-style imperfection, and unforced structure.

The images shown below illustrate the common ground between Song Dynasty Chan and Japanese aesthetic of Wabi-Sabi, as well as with Su Shi's ink painting "Withered Trees and Strange Rocks" (枯木怪石圖) (Figure 2).



Figure 1: Ki-Seto Chawan from the Momoyama period (1573-1603)



Figure 2: "Withered Trees and Strange Rocks" (枯木怪石圖) by Su Shi (1077)

American art collector and historian, James Francis Cahill (1926-2014) has interpreted the tree and rock in Su Shi's painting as "queerly twisted like the sorrowss" and the subjects like bamboos in Su's another painting from the perspective of Confucian personality and morality. He consider Su Shi as an ideal example of the reclusive gentleman-official in ancient China, a type that later became highly idealized by many artists afterwards.

James Cahill also compared Su Shi's work with the paintings of Zhu Xi (朱熹, 1130-1200), another Confucianist from the Song Dynasty. Zhu Xi's paintings also depicted bamboo and rock. However, it is noted that what we can see in Su Shi's painting is the "Tao" by a abstract image rather than technique. On the other hand, Zhu Xi, a powerful literati official, his painting shows the appearance of these subjects which can be a good example illustrate how Zhu Xi has misunderstood and misinterpreted of Confucius and Mencius for over thousands of years, which is not the subject of this article.

It should be noted that when discussing Su Shi's ink paintings, the following comment by his contemporary Mi Fu (米芾, 1051-1107) has often been quoted: "In his mind, everything is a sign of chaos and confusion." In fact, some researchers even think that the ink itself represents chaos and confusion. This argument, in turn, brings up a key concept of "Chaos". Fukunaga Mitsuji (福永光司, 1918-2001), a renowned Japanese scholar in Taoist studies, has pointed out that ink is the color of "Tao", and it was embodied in the thoughts and works of ancient Chinese artist.

Regarding the concept of chaos itself, it is worth to note here the following quote by Belgian chemist and philosopher Ilya Prigogine (1917-2003): "chaos is a such misunderstood word, for many people chaos means disorder, curiously chaos studied in modern science has explanation that chaos is a kind of order, it's a type of unstable order in which a temporal sequences are complex". While Prigogine pointed out the misunderstanding about "Chaos" from the stand of new science, it's worth noting that American physicist, Fritjof Capra's in his book "The Tao of Physics", has explored the similarities between modern physics and Eastern philosophy. This discussion about chaos is relevant, insofar as it provides key for the analysis of Su Shi's approach to music, which shall be discussed in the following section.

### **"The Enlightenment Through the Crane" (因鶴悟道) in Su Shi's Guqin (古琴) Music**

The analysis carried about in the prior section regarding the underlying aspects of Su Shi's notion of "Zhuo Li Ji Cha" brings us observe carefully to Su Shi's music. Su was a passionate cultivator of music and a composer himself, although very little is preserved of his output in that field. According to Stuart H. Sargent, that 13% of Su's 2,586 poems were about music. Su was especially passionate about the guqin (古琴), having wrote over 80 poems about the Guqin music during his exile in Huangzhou. Su Shi's conception of music embraced intuition sensibility and even chaos. His approach to musical composition and the element should be instead understood in light of existing Taoist conceptions of music.

Fukunaga Mitsuji, who, from a Taoist perspective, defined art as the "the movement of life" (生命の感動), has pointed out that Chinese music symbolically expresses the rhythm of nature, and that humans establish order in their life in accordance with that rhythm, being guided by that rhythm to return to their own origin -the "Tao" (道). These conceptions were represented by the "Xianchi Music Theory" (咸池樂論)<sup>6</sup>, which stood in contrast to Confucian approaches to music, under the denomination of "Yue Ji" (樂記). While "Yue Ji" emphasized that music was a reflection of the natural order, "Xianchi Music Theory" regarded "chaos" (混濁) as a vital aspect, insofar as it reflects human efforts to affirm the existence of life in nature. At the same time, unlike the Confucian notion of "Yue Ji", which deems music as important for preserving the harmony of social and political relations, the Taoist view of "Xianchi Music Theory" regards the process of realizing the "Tao"(道) of music as a process for humans to expand themselves in the universe, purify their souls and realize themselves. Moreover, they relate the notion of "Tao" with three distinct states of mind: "Fear" (懼), "Neglect" (怠) and "Confusion" (惑) as the process of the embodiment of "Tao".

This metaphysical approach to music represented by the "Xianchi Music Theory" took root in Chinese intellectual tradition with the works of the "Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove" (竹林七賢), particularly Ji Kang (嵇康, 223-263) and Ruan Ji (阮籍, 210-263), and was further developed by Tao Yuanming (陶淵明, 365-427). Despite the overall ideological dominance of Confucianism, Taoist approaches became arguably more influential when it comes to conceptions of music in Chinese culture.

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<sup>6</sup> "Xianchi Music Theory" (咸池樂論) is a story included in Zhuangzi' (莊子)'s "Outer Chapters: the way of heaven" (外篇天道). It uses a musical allegory to explain the idea of the operation of the universe and the form of the "Tao" in music through the emperor playing Xianchi music and the dialogue with Beimen Cheng (北門成).

In that regard, Fukunaga Mitsuji has pointed out that the concept of "Tian Di Zhao Hua"(天地照化, the Tao of universe) in the classic "Yue Ji", which regards musical expression as a symbol of nature, as well as of the four seasons, Ying and Yang as the harmony of heaven and earth in music, as well as the understanding of the root of self-existence by those who play and listen to music. In fact, according Fukunaga, the concept of "Tian Di Zhao Hua" didn't stem from Confucianism, but originated instead and developed from Taoist thought. This Taoist approach to music became especially influential insofar as musical composition and interpretation, along with calligraphy, poetry and painting, became a key component of the education of the Chinese elites since the time of the Wei and Jin Dynasties (420-589).

The intuitive approach to music embedded in the "Xianchi Music Theory" is reflected by Su Shi's only preserved musical composition "Crane Dances in the Cave Heaven" (鶴舞洞天). In that regard, instead of resorting to the general musical pattern for Guqin compositions of starting and ending with the sound "Fanyin"(泛音), symbolizing heaven, Su used instead the sound "Shanyin" (散音), symbolizing earth as the main melody of the whole piece to express the momentum of the crane soaring into the sky. The begins of the composition can be interpreted as representing the first stage of "Tao" form and the meaning of "Xianchi Music Theory". This approach, according to the emperor: "all great music first instills a sense of fear (惧) to the hearts of the listener. When the mind becomes emotional state of anxious. When the spirit that has been forgotten in the routine of everyday life awakens to the "Tao".

At the same time, the execution techniques employed in Su Shi's composition, aimed at achieving cooperation between the left and right hand on the basis of the concepts of Ying and Yang (as they have been interpreted from the Yi Ching), express both vivid human emotions and the postures of the crane circling heaven and earth. This could be interpreted as "Neglect" (怠), as the second stage of the "Tao". According to the emperor "Xianchi Music Theory", the constant change of rhythms relieves the tensions in the listener's heart. That is, an escape from the self - conventions, narrow-values, and worldly delusions that have supported one's life. This emotional state is represented here in musical terms by the intermittent but continuous (余白)<sup>7</sup> due to intervals of silence in the execution of the piece, The latter seems to evoke thoughts generated by the dialogue with the crane, with the chaotic rhythm together as the response to the third movement. This aligns with the notion of "Confusion" (惑) in "Xianchi Music Theory", as all common sense and judgment are turned into chaotic state of "Wu Wei"(無為, non-discrimination) which leading people into a state of confusion known as "Wu Zhi" (無知, ignorance) and "Wu Yu" (無欲 selflessness), in which one becomes an ignorant, desireless fool as described by the ancients. By becoming so, one can finally merges with the "Tao", the unconscious of nature. and embody the "Tao" in their life, thus realizing a state of being. Finally, in the ending of "Crane Dances in the Cave Heaven", expresses the feeling of quietness and satisfaction ("Dangdang Mo Mo, Nai Bu Zi De", "蕩蕩默默, 乃不自得"), symbolizing by the state of the water surface silently and aimlessly expanding to infinity.

Su's "Zhuo Li Ji Chae" unfolds in the analyzed musical piece as a complex synthesis of compositional dexterity, intuition, and an underlying syncretic philosophy. It aligns with Zhuangzi's idea that the Tao transcends technique, and that those who are aware of the Tao—philosophers—are true artists. In turn, the guqin, a musical instrument that ancient

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<sup>7</sup> Chiang Kui (姜夔 1155-1221), a writer and musician in Southern Song Dynasty, who discussed the importance of "blank"(余白) in paintings first time at "Theory of Calligraphy" (續書譜).

Chinese literati always had around, is the most representative instrument of the "Tao" as we can see in Su Shi's life and arts.

### **“Breathing” and “Action” As Elements of “Integration” in East and West**

The final section of this paper explores Su Shi's idea of "Zhuo Li Ji Cha" from the perspective of nature, intuition and unconsciousness presented in the works of Western avant-garde artists in the 20th century. A further analysis shall be carried out regarding similarities and differences between the East and the West in concepts such as freedom and nature based on the difference of "breathing" and "action", as well as the modern significance of integration, from the works of artists such as American visual artist Jackson Pollock (1912-1956).

Pollock use of the ground as a canvas and of unconventional tools for painting recalls the cursive writing on the ground by Chinese calligraphers. However, Pollock himself wasn't significantly influenced by Eastern art but rather by Native American cultural expressions, and by "sand painting"<sup>8</sup>. The influence of Native American Indian culture can be perceived in the rhythmicity and ritual-like activities and mystery in his works. With this unconventional spirits, Pollock challenged the themes, forms and techniques of traditional Western painting, employing freely his body as a creative tool. In turn, music also played a significant role in Pollock's creations, insofar as his painting activities resembled free dancing, with his body moving in an aimless rhythm to form the shapes that were spontaneously drawn on the ground to give form to his artworks. In a broad sense, Pollock's work displays a critical, anxiety and challenging attitude towards Western culture, in light of which his embrace of Native American traditions can be interpreted.<sup>9</sup> While, in contrast to other artists of his generation such as John Cage(1912-1994), Pollock didn't display a deep interest in Eastern culture, the latter's critical stance towards Western rationality display commonalities with schools of thought such as Taoism and Zen which vindicate intuition as a creative vehicle.

Pollock's works reflect that of several modern Western artists who have experienced the loss of prior certainties, which led to questioning the notion of reason. For example Irish novelist Samuel Beckett's (1906-1989) ideas on "stream of consciousness" and Russian Avant Garde artist, Daniil Kharms's (1905–1942) challenges to rationality in his poems. Pollock's painting can be conceived as a volcanic release of instincts, although his works simultaneously convey feelings of anxiety. Pollock's approach towards art and life is captured by his phrase "I am nature itself", where nature can be interpreted as liberating oneself to enter into a state of absolute freedom.

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<sup>8</sup> "Sand painting" was practiced for ritual purposes among the Navajo ethnicity Native American peoples living in South Western United States. Pollock came in contact with the Navajo during his youth following his stepfather, who was a land surveyor. Pollock developed a great interest in Native American culture and re-signified the ritual practice of "Sand painting" as a creative technique.

<sup>9</sup> After a comparison of the European, Chinese and American Indian versions of Shindelala, Japanese anthropologist Shinichi Nakazawa (中沢新一) believed that he Ancient Mikmaq India had a sharp critical spirit. They see Europeans Cinderella as embodying the frivolousness of European culture and the passivity of women, they see it as lacking in spirituality. In response to this spirit, Ancient Mikmaq India created their own version of Cinderella, the "Invisible Men" in opposition to the culture of "showing and been seen" in European culture. In the Mikmaq India's view, a beautiful soul has a high level of spirituality, and because of this, a beautiful soul is able to escape the deception of appearances.



It is relevant to note here that, from an Eastern perspective, the concept of "Freedom" is interpreted differently than in the West. According to Zen master D.T. Suzuki, when reflecting on the legacy of the French Revolution in modern political culture, he stated that the Western view of freedom focuses on self-control and includes negativity and passivity in terms of escaping and being liberated from that focus. The characters for freedom "自由"<sup>10</sup> imply a natural emergence from oneself and embody a positive connotation, and doesn't carry the meaning of escaping from oppression or political implications.

Taking this notion of "Freedom" as a point of departure, according to D. T. Suzuki, the object of Zen is human nature, and within each individual sleeps an awakening which is waiting for its moment to emerge. This awakening is not captured through words or reasoning, but rather experienced and intuitive, and this is, the essence of enlightenment. Zen rejects all efforts such as human calculation and conscious exertion. Just as birds fly in the sky and fish swim in the water, when signs of effort become evident, one loses freedom.

The art of Pollock's abstract painting, inherits the spirit Native Americans has the color of primitive and oriental thinking. The pursuit of free expression in Pollock's painting can be understood as a pursuit to deconstruct what is "visible" in Western traditional visual arts as well as in the culture. D.T. Suzuki gives a vivid account of the Zen concept of freedom by quoting the following haiku by Matsuo Bashō: "Eventually people die, no sign of scene, the cicada's cry" (やがて死ぬ けしきは見えず 蝉の声). According to Daisetsu, this should not be understood as a cicada that is loud and foolish, but rather as stating that, as long as the cicada is singing, it has eternal life. Thus, when a cicada forgets about death and continues to cry wholeheartedly, it transcending the distinction between life and death, and becoming one with nature. Such capacity of becoming one with nature is, according to Zen teachings, the highest manifestation of freedom.

Life is an art, and as a perfect art, it requires self-forgetfulness. There should be no trace of effort or feelings of hardship. Su's notion of "Zhuo Li Ji Cha" elates closely to this view rather than to what in contemporary Western eyes, would seem as a nihilistic vindication of inaction. Thus, Su doesn't reject effort in itself, but rather its futile or unnatural manifestations. This connects to a reflection by Simon Weil (1909-1943), stating that what workers need is not bread or butter, but beauty and poetry, as well as to Suzuki's view that that if people can find poetry in works (even if they seem apparently monotonous), their lives will change. These thoughts by Eastern and Western thinkers can be seen as a wake-up call both for contemporary "Workaholics", who glorify work for its own sake, and "Hedonists" who shun any effort.

## Conclusion

During the first half of the 20th century, Western culture witnessed a shift of paradigms. Classical modern thinking, represented by Galileo and Newton's ideas, reached the limit of dualism of Western thought—rational and irrational, spirit and matter, visible and invisible, life and death, and two cognitive cataclysms took place: the relativist and quantum revolutions, whose leading expressions were Einstein's theory of relativity and Heisenberg's principle of uncertainty. At the same time, the development of communication technology

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<sup>10</sup> When the concept of "Freedom" was introduced to Japan during the Meiji Era (1868-1912), Japanese scholars could not find an equivalent term in Japanese and they chose the Buddhist term of "自由" (jiyū, freedom).

enabled greater contact between people from different cultures. Moreover, secularization in the West and the simultaneous erosion of positivism and faith in progress in the West after the traumatic experience of the two World Wars led intellectuals to seek new explanations regarding art, philosophy and religion, and looking in turn to Eastern thought for new sources of ideas.

D. T. Suzuki's idea is that the East and West is not a geographical distinction, but the status of one's "heart-set", while pointing out the importance of "Integration" between East and West to which he devoted his life. As we can see from the activities of the 20th century artists mentioned in this paper, the journey toward the "Integration" between Eastern and Western full of difficulties and challenges.

When study Chinese literati paintings, some Western scholars usually take a Confucian perspective to compared with the Western tradition, they believe that Chinese artists were seek philosophy through art activities. In fact, as Fukunaga Mitsuji points out in his book "Chinese Civilization," that I Ching, which was the source of all ancient Chinese art, it has been represented in various forms such as "Xu" (虚) and "Shi" (实), and "You" (有) and "Wu" (无) in painting, as well as "Tian" (天) and "Di" (地) as Yin (阴) and Yang (阳) in guqin music. He also point out that the great artists of ancient times were first philosophers, and art is that which awakens one to the roots of human existence, and art must naturally express the "Zao Hua" (造化, Tao) from one's heart. Fukunaga has make the most profound explaination why ancient Chinese artists, like Su Shi mentioned in this paper, was both poets, painters, and musicians. From this perspective, the challenge of Jackson Pollock's abstract expressionism from the view of unconsciousness by "action" demonstrate a common sense with Eastern culture.

At the same time, Fukunaga Mitsuji strongly criticized what he perceived as the "opportunistic" and "formalistic" appropriation of Taoist thoughts by 20th century artists and intellectuals, pointing out in particular de-contextualized interpretations of passages of the Taoism (道) and the "Book of Changes" (易经, I Ching). Fukunaga also states that he regards contemporary distorted interpretations of Taoist teachings as akin to eating the leftovers of the classics. Arguably, the spread of new digital technologies and the apparent trend toward intellectual superficialism and immediatism that they have encouraged may have strengthened the tendency in recent times towards simplistic and distorted interpretations, such as those that Eastern Thought has often experienced from Western audiences.

As a great example mentioned in this paper by the concept of "Zhuo Li Ji Cha" in Su Shi's music and ink painting. In this paper, I made an initial exploration of the different present forms, contexts and cultural backgrounds in Eastern and Western culture and art and I believe that a continued studies from this perspective will reveal the extraordinary meaning of integration between the East and the West.

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