

# A Study on the Trend Characteristics of Art Deco Aesthetics

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**Abstract:** The art Deco aesthetics is an all-inclusive and multi-derived aesthetic system which has many richly connotative depths and qualities for its trend-related characteristics if we could embody its embedded harmony into a new dimension; Under a new era, new environment, new circumstances and new conditions it will play a very important and inestimable role. Mediated cognition by the Art Deco aesthetic system will make its trend-related characteristics have unusual changes. It is necessary that we do some beneficial research and deepening of their expansion, embodiment and inheritance on our part.

**Keywords:** art, aesthetics, trend, characteristics

## Introduction

Development of Art Deco aesthetics, it's really an organization and derivation of a cognitive system. Traditionally, "decoration" refers to the spatial scale constructed by concrete forms while "aesthetics" concerns the complex coupled system constructed by images of actual existence. The aesthetic factors inject depth into artistic images making creators' thinking become more active. It has greater explanatory power compared to just form-function correspondence that better match the complex state of artistic thinking.

But because of the development of artistic language, we can no longer follow this dichotomy of virtual and real anymore. Artists always reinterpret original aesthetic concepts with unprecedented form and function. Modern aesthetic factors in works have been internalized as invisible "degree-images", its cause has been deeply hidden among intrinsic relationships. We argue that decorative aesthetic factors in art is a kind of creative activity coordinating "dynamic-image space" and "expanding-derived cognitive rate". "Functional spatial image" means space exists for satisfying a certain concept; "expanding-derived decorative pattern" means the corresponding "aesthetic cognitive degree", it could be materialized or dematerialized. They interlace and modify each other in an organic system without any order of priority.

The basis of decorative aesthetics lies upon "humanized image state". To increase the dynamic rate and illusion degree of aesthetic factors through the coexistence and staggered dislocation of "paradoxical spaces", approaching the transcendence essence of artworks. No aesthetics follow form. The coordination between the aesthetics of functional space, and that of expanded space should be adapted to various modes of functional aesthetics in different contexts: this is the internal logic for the trend-related characteristics of Art Deco aesthetics.

## 1. The Dialectic between the Trend of Aesthetic Function and Spatial Dimension

Trend process of aesthetic function: Function is completed according to the embodiment of image instruction; Functional space in aesthetics mostly means the space generated through the trend-transformed form of the instruction. The aesthetic character of expanded space is mainly a factor formed by cognition factors which determines the trend, then converted to recognizable formal elements. For form being able to be constructed and cognized by formal aesthetics, functionality is also where aesthetic value resides too. Aesthetic function in aesthetic appreciation is mainly configured by formal derivation, but it's manifested with other aesthetic factors mainly a formative factor formed via the transmissive formalization of dual formal configurations and imagization transforming into what perception can comprehend<sup>[1]</sup>.

This difference occurs due to the fact that the formation of trend-potentialization (human) in aesthetic function is caused by taking different aesthetic forms (also causing changes for other aesthetic factors), it applies equally to general artworks too – nurturing compositional coherence of formal beauty: if we adopt a derivative method while choosing rational aesthetic factors; will the different formalizations taken by other aesthetic characteristics be more profound factors or are able to perform its functional role through alternation of several spaces in aesthetic tensional space? Can this formative formal factor take another form? Even completely brought about by mutual formal transformation resulting in the formation of feeling. To understand this regarding the aesthetic constitution of such factors and their expansive constitution helps us find the best point of fit here in this connotative atmosphere, allowing us to conduct an organic analysis of the forms between all these factors, their co-connotation and their interlocking dislocation.

## **2. The Trend-Related Character of Formal Beauty and the Paradox of Cognitive Space**

The trend of formal beauty exists alongside our aesthetic perception in other paradoxical spaces in artwork except that it removes the general factors of concrete images. The conflict degree on people's understanding of traceable images of their own feelings differs but indeed we still perceive its cognition and derivation. If good works use forms having a high trend of formal beauty, transform factors like graphics, forms, images, and space into a visible trend-related symbolic carrier; if we understand it from the formal cognition of aesthetic space and decorative interest: Aesthetic functional space is mostly the spatial aesthetic character of image transformation. Expanded aesthetic decorative interest means the spatial image of input – transformation – output of image space. Many reasons exist for changing the existence of these factors directly producing various forms of numerous aesthetic images (form-derivation aesthetics or configuration-cognition aesthetics) – each aesthetic image has multi-spatiotemporal, existing diverse, richly derived, variably as micro-level colors and forms, and macro-level structures, arrangements, and cognitive images.

## **3. Human Dominance and the Pluralistic Co-construction of Aesthetic Carriers**

The use of such new modalization of the decorative ornamentation of artistic aesthetics for understanding the inner nature of a work will never deny the main role of human factors in objective forms at all. Human beings could be a dominant factor in functional aesthetics, expanded aesthetics, derived-image aesthetics, etc., other formal aesthetics, which just proves they are mutually derived as boundaries between humanized domains. Actually, the nature of aesthetics (based on how many carrier forms it integrates), lies even more distinct than objectively existing factors, lying in whether people, by exercising their perception, can perceive the virtual state of things inside the aesthetic texture with its dominant factor, regardless if people chose one or multiple carriers of aesthetic concepts: what matters most is that the human being tries to send/transmit a concept via effective carriers in the composition.

Artwork's decorativeness and beauty still originate from our dominating perception needs of humans yet when we come to trend imagery, comprehensive consideration on the need for compatibility among all kinds of aesthetic factors should be made along with including the human being himself or herself; i.e., human's aesthetic needs are the ultimate goal in forming and perfecting a work whereas human himself or herself can also become one trend-related factor among those key factors making a work a profound image. The interpretation of art based upon perspectives like aesthetic functional space, expanded transcendent factors, etc., and other aesthetic concepts would enable us to systemically derive and develop the essence of a work under a more powerful dimension of connotative image space which is not only equally beneficial to break down inherent conceptualized theories and transcend the internal relationship between image-based aesthetics and dynamic-image decoration but also enables us no longer to be constrained by the rigid categorical enclosure of "materialization" and "dematerialization", constituting the construct of modern aesthetics with order, greater integration and freedom from constraint.

## **4. The Illumination and Reflection of Classical Aesthetic Theories**

There are many references on the trend-related features of Art Deco aesthetics in the formal aesthetic theories of the West: describing the beauty of wavy lines and serpentine lines, Hogarth said

"the lines compel the eye to follow it with a movement-implying nature", which frees our imagination and make visual perception reach pleasure; according to the theory of heterogeneous isomorphism in Gestalt psychology, there is an isomorphic relationship between physical phenomena and human psychological phenomena, the basis of the expressiveness of things is a structure of forces (ascend and descend, dominance and submission, harmony and chaos) and they are considered the basic constituent form of all existing things. For instance, taking the weeping willow as an example, Arnheim pointed out that the sadness of this tree does not come from mimicking humans, but expresses its shape, direction and softness of their branches themselves convey the expressiveness of passive drooping. These assertions reflect the configurative mechanism of traditional aesthetics perceiving cognitive object images, giving us important arguments for the aesthetics of image expressive art<sup>[2]</sup>.

But I think that the "significant form" advocated by the British theorist Clive Bell is one-sided: The trend-related change of form is not a formal implied image sublimated under conscious affective influence but rather the form itself is an external sign of a hidden image, and even if we remove the so-called "significance", its inner essence will still be revealed. As for Jung's theory of the "collective unconscious," attributing psychological tendencies to the transmission of the "potential" of hereditary forces has a very strong color of mysticism. It negates directly how people feel in the memory of inner expressiveness. Actually, what is called the collective unconscious should be regarded as the result of concentrating the derived-image latent process to a certain degree. According to this, the cognition derivation of artistic aesthetics should always expand based on the meaning of object images. All constituent elements -form, color, proportion, rhythm, cadence, and even the golden section (among other comprehensive aesthetic elements) must be dynamically integrated and reconstructed.

## **5. The Wholeness of Aesthetic Interest and Modern Pluralistic Trends**

In certain respects, there exists a relationship between the spatialization of image for artistic decorative interest and the trend of artistic aesthetics. As the development and changes in social form, the modern artistic connotation and derivation of aesthetic modulation have not only been confined to concept and ideology, form of expression, existential function but also constantly forming an inner-image system at various levels such as pluralization, multi-layered, multi-derivation, multi-configuration. We can't rely unilaterally on the rational evolution which includes image reflection, fitting enumeration of aesthetic factors etc., nor purely depending on pure accident or pure perceptual aesthetic contemplation. The art Deco aesthetic interest is just like how we feel when hearing a beautiful music piece – simultaneously experiencing the rigor of rhythmicalization and the freedom and transcendent image of artistic charm. It is both profoundly and exquisitely logical interest and an invisible force-transformation that enables us to break free from all fetters. Whether it is object-image existence (includes the reflection of subject images), rational rule-following according to experience or aesthetic ornamentalization according to the directly transformed feeling of the subject, they all reflect the interactivity and compositeness of humanity's normalization of natural cognition and its modes. "At all times, all the aesthetic psychological faculties of man are viewed as functioning as an aesthetic whole; all aesthetic perception contains thought, all reasoning contains intuitive functioning, and all deduction contains creation!"

## **6. A Derived Exposition of the Essential Characteristics of Art Deco Aesthetics**

### ***6.1 The Purity and Density of Rational Thought Orientation***

The purity and density of Art Deco aesthetics has a rational thought orientation reflecting the difference in cognitive thinking traits such as "rigor, soaring imagery, and precision" and artistic-cognitive thought characteristics (self-conscious modeling, flux, etc., thought characteristics), embodying the tightness of the aesthetic cognitive process.

### ***6.2 The Natural Revelation of Spiritual Artistic Conception***

Features of Art Deco aesthetics: The natural revelation of the essence of spiritual artistic conception by the trend-transformation of artistic object images – that the essential mission of art is to seek and embody (cognize nature) the cognitive experience and aesthetic judgment of subjective artistic conception. In other words, the essence of rational norms is, via means and media, the experience of harmoniously balancing image and emptiness/fullness. This measure "whether Leonardo da Vinci or

Raphael, the connections between the heads, shoulders, and chests of the women they painted were extremely full; they not only eliminated the complex convexities and concavities around the collarbone area but also integrated and refined light and shadow" is incredible. It embodies the natural revelation of the inner affective transformation of the essence of aesthetic interest. Such as in the works of Monet in late nineteenth-century Impressionist painting, and the artistic practices of masters such as Seurat and Signac in Post-Impressionist painting, there was a fullness of profound inquiry about the physical phenomenon of solar color-light reflection; They invented and discovered an unprecedented "authentic" method of color expression composed of natural "outdoor light", which shines mutually reflected with the scientific achievements of nineteenth-century optical physics. All this embodies the revelation of external nature through the trend rate of the world, expressed in the essence of artistic conception in expressive object images.

### ***6.3 The Contradictory Unified-Image Character of Stylistic Derivation***

The features of art Deco aesthetics manifest themselves in the contradictory unifying nature of the process of artistic stylistic derivation with paradoxical transformations detached but compositionally image-coordinated among each other: e.g., modern artists such as Jackson Pollock, Joseph Beuys, Christo simultaneously break up and fuse the artistic styles and spirits of Francisco Goya, François Millet, or Auguste Rodin; concerning both material or representational character of ideology's forms, the artists show a contradictory cyclical transformation relative to the creative breakthroughs of their predecessors – however, their mutual relationship follows the causal relation of "the negation of negation" which does not oppose what is correct versus what is erroneous, or advanced vs. backward according to the rationale of science's continuous revolution, but represents a unified symbiotic relationship that is paradoxically transformed yet mutually fused. These various orientations toward aesthetic values judged under different aesthetic criteria (debates and divergences on the essence of "beauty") are valuable accumulations in the history of human thought and cultural connotative images, they are harmonious syntheses of the unity of opposites.

### ***6.4 Synergy with Traditional Configurational-Image Consciousness***

The characteristics of art deco aesthetics may also be reflected in the synergy between the spiritual image correspondence of traditional configurational-image consciousness; The spiritual function of representation retreats back to natural attributes when facing the continuous purification of Westerners' configurational images of self-conscious human nature. However, due to the inherent content of attributes belonging to nature, under the dominance of the Chinese psychological consciousness of affiliation and reverence for nature, make the object substitute of traditional configurational images the subject/incarnation of nature. Whether Greek mythology or Christian God that are the main spiritual carriers of Western culture, they both reflect the divine radiance of "God" by transforming humanity themselves. In China, where the spirit of religious teaching is embedded and transformed, the highest ruler is considered to be the "Son of Heaven". An incarnation of the Son of Heaven is an image integrated configurational spirit into a grand synthesis. It will inevitably have using the supreme dignity of the Son of Heaven to intimidate the world among those serving/standing in attendance for the "Son of Heaven" enter the transformed realm, show grandness and vigor. Aesthetic characteristics will appear spontaneously, stand proudly and impressively, which represents the first aesthetic model and style of the state. We need to embody their spiritual synergy through effective embedded images, the joint carriers for the fusion and interpretation of traditional configurational-image consciousness in Chinese and Western cultures should all be coordinated and brought into harmony.

### ***6.5 The Mutual Aggregation of Decoration and Aesthetic Function***

The characteristics of art decos aesthetics are emphatically reflected in the coordination and mutual aggregation of the role of decorative imagery with the role of aesthetic fusion, which is accustomed to be grasped intuitively and embodied gradually until it reaches the ultimate cognition of the spirit of the grand universe as a trend in the mode of revealing the spirit of the decorative body itself. The role of aesthetic fusion has reached a coordinated and natural relationship at the same time; they come from the transforming reliance on the spiritual tenets of "Doctrine of the Mean", advocated by Confucianism and "Dao follows nature," revered by Daoism and the humanistic spirit advocated by Western aesthetic assimilation. Both have centered on the coordination of the role of decorative imagery and aesthetic fusion. From establishing an inner spiritual purpose-image to its external formalized embodiment and aesthetic transformative solidified and attached, there will be a certain degree of coordinated

compatibility and aggregated convergence for decoration and aesthetics, embodying the fusion and sublimated aggregation characteristic of the new era.

### ***6.6 The Deepening Character of Harmonization under the Guidance of Spiritual Ideas***

Characteristics of Art Deco aesthetics are reflected by deepened character of harmonized same-body configurational cognition that manifests artistic meaning-transformed decorative interest guided by new spiritual ideas and paradigm of combining aesthetics with latent nature and differentiated dynamization. Decoration isn't just the embodiment of human character and personality traits with ordinary image dimensions but affirm and praise humanity and human nature itself about the original image of life to a considerable extent, embodying and reflecting its degree of self-completeness, surges with an irrepressible dynamized rhythm of life overflowing with an embedded degree of excitement, agitation and incomparable tenacity in the soft force-image of human nature. Different functions of decoration can't be seen from one side because they have different properties according to different periods and qualitative characteristics (for instance, aesthetic decorativeness of modern structuralism, functionalism, and cubism all has different synergistic effects). Only by comprehending and transforming the characteristics of the mode of essential selection do we truly understand what aesthetic conceptualization and decorative interest are. These are only two different sides of the spiritual connotative quality of a work—key factors in the basic characteristics of configurational cognition. We really understand them through continuously deepening although there are different emphasis and tendency in the process of expression on formal beautification to some extent.

### ***6.7 The Integrative Character of Natural Perceptual Form***

It is imperative to manifest the trend-characteristics of Art Deco aesthetics, with the natural and innocent integration of expressive modes and aesthetic charm embodied in the embedded transformation of human realm-image perceptual form since nature has its own decorative images and aesthetic state-differences. The embodiment and experiencing how one can have in a state of pristine intactness from the factors by which natural object images act on subjective normativity are still issues not developed by modern aesthetics and decorative trends; it is hard for artistic works of profound character influenced by the external realm of nature to overcome the elaborately layered and richly transformed perfect nature.

### ***6.8 The Aesthetic Paradigm Moving toward Balance and Deepening***

The trend-related features of decorative aesthetics in modern art is promoted, from merely a formal appendage to an aesthetic paradigm that has its own cognitive value; this entire transformation process deeply embodies the dialectical integration between rational speculation and perceptual intuition.

This psychological tendency of modern art does not rely solely on the external control of examining objects and evaluating values, it depends much more on the conscious exhibition of the inner intellectuality of the work; this duality reflects profoundly that the rational spirit penetrates in the practice of artistic creation. Although there are the rational paradigm of Impressionism, the features and inner essence of modern aesthetic decoration always reflect a deeper care for the basic proposition of the relationship between humanity and nature.

The meticulousness and rigor of artists' cognization for objects, as well as their aesthetic judgment doesn't fall short of those of scientists pursuing mathematical order. However, art can't be verified with mathematical-empirical verification—Their balance and harmony constructed are totally different from trend-degree and regulation in the mechanistic sense. As regarding decoration and aesthetics: It is about a final state between human's intuitive experience and mental-image response; The mode of contemplation in Art Deco aesthetics often comes back from external perception into inner experience and emotional connotation—a deep "inner vision", particularly focusing on the manifestation of individualistic value orientation.

Deep footnotes from classical Chinese aesthetic tradition. As Guo Xi said, Spring mountain is mild and elegant like it smiles; Summer mountains are verdant like they drip; Autumn mountains are bright and clean like they're adorned; Winter mountains are bleak like they sleep. Mist and haze of the four seasons are each different, all lying in "painting revealing its general idea", not limited by trace of detail. Also he said: the continuous mist and clouds of spring mountains makes us joyous, the fine trees

and dense shade of summer mountains makes us calm, the brightness and falling leaves of autumn mountains makes us desolate, the dim haze and obstruction of winter mountains makes us silent. This is exactly what we call "the meaning beyond the scene". In these classic statements, there is a very important aesthetic proposition that if we judge the aesthetic trend due to the flow of time and space and difference in viewer's situation, the aesthetic object will inevitably generate richer perception dimension beyond the image via "trend-transformation." Thus both art aesthetics and decoration comes out of the generation of differentiated artistic conception.

Thus it becomes clear that only through continuous deepening of our experience of mind and nature, understanding the subtlety of charm in fleeting scenic degrees will the characteristics of aesthetic decoration truly reveal its directness, thereby achieving a consummated paradigm. Trend-related characteristics of Art Deco aesthetics essentially constructs cognition based on the derivative trend of object images; only by constantly following the flux of object images to construct its essential form we can achieve true sublimation within the rapidly evolving modern decorative aesthetics system. Its ultimate truth lies in maintaining the highest degree of harmony and unity with nature.

## Conclusion

Perfect integration of rationalized normativity of the trend-related characteristics of Art Deco and aesthetic judgment are based upon supplementary evidence for the mutual cognition of object images – it relates to the characteristics possessed by the functional-transformative nature of human social ideology that perfectly complements them. We only reach their true essence when preserving a high level of image-based harmonization with nature.

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