

'85 Art Movement Period in China  
中國“八五美術新潮”時期（1984 — 1988）

## Generation Gap & Generation Symbiosis 世代隔 閼與世代并集

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A response to the evolving contemporary Chinese art trends about psychological differences and similarities through three generations, as well as some extensive changes from generation gap to generation symbiosis in the two-generation cover area. It discusses the characterization of three psychological models, and explains how generation symbiosis is one of the main resources in giving great impetus to Chinese contemporary art harmony.

# Generation Gap & Generation Symbiosis (Excerpt)

## 世代隔閡與世代并集 (摘要)

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Certain common psychological structure and social behavior regulations formed by common understanding in the contemporary age are termed: generations, in physics theory; the difference between generations is called generational gap. Different generations hold varying values in nature. Within their life sentiment and aesthetic consciousness consist of contrasting relationships. The intensive change of the opposite relationship in the contemporary art community has attracted wide concern in society (see fig.1).

One characteristics of the change is that the cultural fortune is surpassing the age levels. A popular and inevitable trend is to foster the youth culture, in which seniority of age is no longer a sole reason for respect. Therefore, aiming at this phenomenon, famous American anthropologist, futurologist Margaret Mead demonstrates that human society has transferred from "Postfigurative Culture" (the junior must learn from the elder) to "Cofigurative Culture" (the compeers learn from each other), and forecasted the forthcoming birth of "Prefigurative Culture" (the elder must learn from junior). (Please refer to my works Future Characteristics of Chinese Art Concept)

Appearance of youth culture——"Prefigurative Culture" tells us: Generation gap is certainly a symbol of social civilization progress, and the width and depth of the generation gap will decide the developing speed of the society. However, "Prefigurative Culture" is anyhow not a kind of incommunicable culture with more and deeper generation gap as someone described before. In fact, she doesn't discriminate certain common psychological structure between generations and the communication of common aesthetic consciousness, but overturn the orders of the communication. This kind of communication, which draws the old, the middle-aged and the young together, can also congregate tightly some favorable factors of social development and combine it into a solid rational kernel which can facilitate social progress. The author calls this phenomenon as generation gap and generation

人們在富今時代共同的認識所形成的某些共同的心理結構和社會行為規範的年限在心理學上稱為世代，世代之間的差異，便稱為世代隔閡（代溝）。不同世代可以說具有性質上的不同的價值觀、生活情感，審美意識存在着尖銳的對立關係。當代藝壇，這種對立關係的激劇變化，已引起社會的廣泛關注。（如圖1）

這種變化的一種顯著特徵乃文化財富正在超越年齡的層次，一個最普遍，也是絕對不可避免的趨勢就是助長一種年青的文明，在這種文明裏，年高並不成為受尊敬的理由。為此美國著名人類學家，未來學家米德針對此現象論證了人類社會已從“後喻文化”（年輕人向老年人學習）轉為“同喻文化”（同代人相互學習），并預測迫在眉睫的將是“前喻文化”（老年人向年輕人學習）的誕生。（參看拙作《中國藝術觀念的未來特徵》）

一種年輕的文明——“前喻文化”的出現將說明：世代隔閡確是社會文明進步的標志，世代隔閡的深度與寬度從而決定社會的發展速度。但“前喻文化”又絕對不是一個人所闡述的那種“世代隔閡”越來越深，根本無法溝通的文化。其實，她根本不排斥世代之間某些共同的心理結構和共同的審美意識的溝通，而祇是把這種溝通的順序顛倒來罷了。因為這種溝通同樣能把老、中、青距離靠近的有利于社會發展的相同因素緊緊聚集在一起，組合成堅實的能推動社會進步的合理內核。筆者把此現象稱為世代隔閡與世代并集。（如圖1用符號 $n$ 表示）

symbiosis (See fig.1, express with symbol “n”).

If we simply divide the old, the middle-aged and the young in the artist world as engrained, bound and open types, then, there must be symbiosis levels between the old, the middle-aged and the young to belong to an open type. (See figure 2) Therefore, the openness of the old and middle-aged and the openness of the young together consist of a strong tide, which strikes and drives the contemporary art community. In a sense, the openness of the old and the middle-aged actually play a part of protection for the young, and buffer various striking powers from the persons of the bound and engrained types.

Costs of the engrained, bound and open type persons are the same to the art. Engrained persons are cordial toward the traditional arts; regrettably, this cordiality is a kind of blind worship and out of custom which they defend it with loyal fanaticism. The open persons break inevitably with the tradition. However, from the new point of view, open persons can indeed maintain, treasure and protect the traditions than engrained persons. The traditions grow, struggle and bend in them, finally unfold layer after layer like flowers. The bound persons run into a dilemma since they are bound by the traditions, at the same time, they don't want to be as carefree as the young, and run in the crack with their binding feet.

The other characteristic of generation opposite relations in the art world is: the contradictions between the engrained and the bound people are weakening, as well as the contradictions between the engrained and the open minded, while the contradictions between the open and the bound are strengthening remarkably and sharpening increasingly. One of the reasons is some bound people remain in power at all levels of the art circle, the vital point of the specialist leader measure and throttle all these with their knowledge structure obtained when they were in their twenties, which pushes the contradiction between the bound and open people to the extreme. Since the bound people don't experience the update of knowledge structure, the noblest open art is considered as trash in their eyes. As a result, the hardship and suffering, or even temporary loss and sadness of the contemporary art are imaginable.

Hence, the contemporary young artist should either realize the function of generation gap to the civilization development, or unite closely with the old people in the symbiosis and the open person in the middle-aged people, push them to the seats of power, then it is possible to talk about freedom of the fine art creation and multiform of the fine art. The activity of rejecting all middle-aged and the old person is stupid and ignorant and will be destined to fail.

如果簡單地把藝術界的老、中、青分為蒂固型、束縛型、發放型，那麼老、中、青之間必有并集層次，實質上老年與青年，中年與青年之間的并集層次都屬於發放型。（如圖2）為此，老、中年人中的發放型與青年發放型一道構成一股強有力的潮流，衝擊和推動着當代藝壇。從某種意義上說，老、中年人中的發放型實際上起着保護青年人的作用，并緩衝來自束縛型、蒂固型的各種衝擊力。

蒂固型、束縛型、發放型在藝術中所付出的代價完全相同。蒂固型的人對傳統的東西是真誠的，可悲的是這種真誠來自一種盲目的崇拜和習慣，并以宗教般的狂熱去捍衛她。發放型的人必然同傳統訣別，但從一種新的意義上講，發放型的人比蒂固型的人更能真正地維護、珍惜和保護傳統。傳統在他們身上生長、掙扎，變得彎曲，最後將層層迭迭開放出來，如同花朵。而束縛型既受傳統的束縛，又不願跟青年人一道無所顧忌，他們左右碰壁，自己裹上自己的腳擠在夾縫裏奔跑。

在藝術界世代對立關係中另一特徵是：蒂固型與束縛型的矛盾在減弱，蒂固型與發放型的矛盾也在減弱，而發放型與束縛型的矛盾則顯著加劇，并越來越激化。其原因之一乃一部分束縛型的人掌握着各階層的藝術領導權，而這種內行領導的致命之點是他們

一般都是用二十多歲時的知識結構在衡量和扼殺着一切，從而把束縛型與發放型的矛盾推向極致。由于這部分束縛型沒有經歷知識結構的更新，所以最高尚的發放型藝術，在他們眼中也會被視為垃圾。故現代藝術發展的艱難和痛苦，乃至暫時的失落與悲傷是可想而知的。

因此，當代青年藝術家既要認清世代隔閡對開拓文明的作用，又要緊緊地團結并集層次中老、中年人中的發放型，把他們推上各個階層的寶座，從而才能真正談得上創作的自由和藝術的多元化。一味地排斥所有的中年、老年人的行為方式，是愚昧無知的，并注定會失敗。

1985. 12 于長沙竈嶺

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