

# 谭平版画

TAN PING





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# 自然的抽象

## ——谭平近作释读

殷双喜 博士、艺术评论家

今年7月，我再一次应邀访问了韩国汉城的三星美术馆，在那里，我面对马克·罗斯科 (Mark Rothko) 的作品《四块红色》，凝视许久。在2米多高、1.2米多宽的画布上，一块红色的正方形在栗红色的背景上神秘地飘浮，这些色块以一种有节奏的脉动表现了一种理性的尊严，并且允许我的目光与思绪在画中自由地飘流。我在这幅画前再一次想到一个久已萦绕心头的问题：抽象艺术的意义究竟在哪里？换句话说，抽象艺术的内容是什么，它可能是一种没有内容的艺术吗？

我知道，我的这种疑惑来自于20世纪后半期以波普艺术为代表的后现代艺术的崛起，它们将艺术与生活的界限进一步模糊，极大地扩展了艺术的内容。相比之下，作为20世纪经典艺术的抽象艺术与世俗生活保持着有尊严的距离，显得不那么亲切，对许多缺少抽象艺术欣赏经验的观众来说，抽象艺术过于神秘，甚至有些晦涩。更有些评论家将其划归于一种已经过时的学院派艺术，不再予以关注。

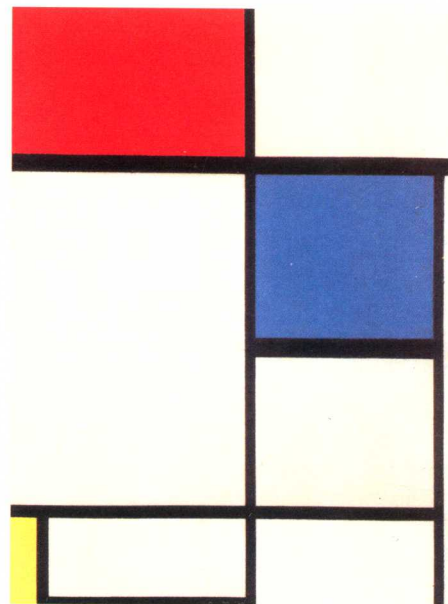
在这样的背景下来看谭平的艺术，我们不能不为谭平这种持续的努力而产生敬意，同时也产生困惑。毫无疑问，谭平是一位对生活和人性具有洞察力的艺术家，他对于语言的实验和创新具有不倦的追求，他从来不在乎某种固定的风格与样式，但这种对实验与创新的执著似乎导致谭平步入了一个没有出口的长廊。谭平的绘画风格很多年一直处于抽象的状态，而且作品在形式语言上就不断地变化着。当代某些成功的艺术家，大多以一种风格确立自己的形象，但以后的时间里，在形式语言上则没有太

大变化。而谭平的作品跳跃和变化是比较多的，自1989年以来，几乎每隔一两年，谭平的版画都会出现一些新的系列，作品的趣味与价值取向都会有较大变化，谭平至今还没有一个固定的为人们熟悉的代表性画风，这是因为谭平一直在努力摆脱“再现”的概念和“塑造”的过程，他看重的是自我感受的表达。

谭平毕业于中央美术学院版画系，1989年又获得德国文化艺术交流奖学金，到柏林大学自由绘画系学习。在那里，他很快发现版画在众多艺术形式和当代艺术中已经成为非常边缘的东西。但是他为什么能够摆脱浮躁，沉浸于版画的创作呢？这是因为，在版画中，无论是黑白语言与光影对比、还是纸张材质的凹凸肌理与残破边缘，都具有抽象艺术语言的魅力，能够表达谭平对人性深层的体悟。

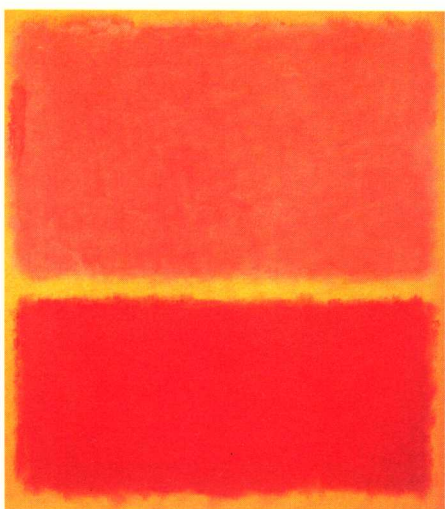
对于谭平来说，抽象意味着说出一事物、一系列事物或一个环境的基本特质。艺术的抽象因素能使他把自然的真实性或者自然在他心中创造的感觉传达到画面上，这种因素在现实主义绘画与抽象绘画中都存在着。

我将谭平的艺术称之为“自然的抽象”，有两层意思。一是说谭平的艺术是对自然的抽象，在他的艺术中表达了自然与生活对他的影响，特别是他对人性的体悟；另一方面，是指谭平艺术中的抽象具有艺术史逻辑的发展，这一过程十分自然。从他大学时代的《矿工》到他近期的《蓝色与黑色背景上的圆》，我们可以看到他浓缩了西方艺术从具象到材



蒙德里安 (Piet Mondrian)





马克·罗斯科 (Mark Rothko)

料到纯粹抽象的发展过程,在谭平的艺术中有着对人类数千年来的抽象遗产的继承。虽然我们说抽象艺术是 20 世纪的艺术,但是艺术语言的抽象因素却不仅仅是 20 世纪的产物。线、形体、体积、图式、比例、空间、明暗、色彩等这些抽象因素在人类早期艺术发展史中就已存在并处在不断的积累中,这些遗产是一种自然的精练和意义,是解开大自然的表现和秘密的钥匙。

谭平近期作品中的“圆”,不是一般美学意义上的形式符号,而是他对大自然神秘性的惊异。从父亲的肿瘤手术所带来的震惊出发,谭平在他的版画中超越了最初的感伤与痛苦,将自然界细胞的无序生长给人类带来的生命的挑战,转化为对自然界神秘规律的探寻,而艺术家刻骨铭心的感受也随之转化为不无幽默的在艺术中被观赏的对象。谭平的版画启发了我们,抽象艺术决不意味着反对自然,也不是压制自然,而是用一种新的方法去表现自然。当许多写实画家将目光持久地盯住眼前之物时,抽象艺术家却转向内心,他们在画布上倾吐内心深处的情感。人的内心包含了梦幻与欲望、理想与爱情,所有这一切都是自然与生活对于人类的馈赠。

康定斯基认为:“抽象艺术并不排斥与自然的联系,抽象艺术离开了自然的表皮,但不离开它的规律。抽象画家接纳他的各种刺激,不是从任何一自然片断,而是从自然整体,从它的多样的表现,这一切在他内心里累积起来,而导致作品。这个综合性基础,寻找一个对于他最合适的表达形式,这就是‘无物象的’表达方式。抽象的绘画是比有物象的

更广阔、更自由、更富内容。”[1]而在黄宾虹那里,艺术创造的过程是艺术家与自然的对话过程,艺术家在自然中寻找自我精神与自然的契合。当他面对画布时,实际上是调度自己的心灵状态,进入精神上的回忆与冥想状态,心物相映,体悟自然之道。所以黄宾虹说:“自然二字,是画之真诀,一有勉强,即非自然。”[2]黄宾虹对于绘画的最高评价是,当我们打开一幅画,“展观之余,自有一种静穆之致,扑人眉宇,能令睹者矜平躁释,意气全消。”[3]

在谭平的版画中,我感受到了这种“静穆之致”,如同看秋日晴空,神朗气清。我看到不同的圆在无限深远的色彩背景上飘浮,看到极为自由的线条在空间中行走、缠绕、穿插、交织,看到不同色块的叠压,看到挥刀向木的自信从容。对于谭平来说,对版画艺术的理解,除了画面中的结构与形式外,他更看重不同视觉单元的模数化组合,看重不同的画面与单元的边缘,也可以说,谭平更注重关系、注重整体。用谭平的话说,“正是这种画与画之间的关系产生出来的新意义,逐渐成为重要的组成部分,也是工作的关注点,从画内转向画外。我现在的作品更加极少,一块蓝,几条线,它存在于一个整体关系中。”在这样的整体关系中,谭平的作品逐渐过滤了那些不必要的现实生活中的嘈杂之音,而呈现出清澈明朗的心境与气象,这不是一般意义上的“形式美”,而是康定斯基反复强调的“内在的音响”。康定斯基主张将外表的艺术性逐出画面,摆脱熟悉的眼睛的感性享受,倾听灵魂的声音。那紧缩到最小度的艺术性,必须作为作用最强的抽

象而被认识。而那紧缩到最小度的物象性,必须在“抽象”里作为作用最强的现实来认识。如果一幅画里一根线条从摹写实物的目的性中解放出来,它的内在音响就不再因旁的任务而被削弱,反而会获得完满的内在力量。这种内在的音响,其实正是现代人对自然的内心感受与渴望,抽象艺术在更为纯粹的形式外表下,获得自己的“现实性”。

“最重要的不是形式问题(物象的或抽象的)而是内容(精神,内在的音响)。现代的艺术体现着已经成熟达到启示的精神。体现的形式可以安排在两个‘极’之间。1. 伟大的抽象; 2. 伟大的现实性。这两个‘极’启开两条路; 这两条路最后导引到一个目的。这两项元素一直存在艺术里; 第一项在第二项里表现自己。”[4]

讨论谭平的艺术,不能不提到他近10年来对于设计艺术的介入与理解,这对他的艺术产生了深刻的影响。虽然我们知道,在20世纪现代艺术的发展过程中,现代设计的发展是一个重要的催化剂。但是谭平没有简单地在他的艺术中引入设计的构成要素,而是从设计基础的教学与研究中获得一种新的观察视角与工作方法。设计思维的方式对谭平的艺术影响很大,纯艺术是逐渐塑造自己的过程,如何创新,并且怎样与自己的个性紧密结合在一起的;而设计则是一个自我消解的过程。附加值的创新、精神层面、文化层面、学科交叉等成为当代设计的理念。谭平对于艺术与环境的关系、对于艺术表现中时间与空间的关系,甚至艺术与观众、艺术与美术馆的关系都有所思考。可以这样说,如果是出于

内在表达的需要,谭平可以采用不同的材料与艺术表现方式,他不会将自己局限于艺术的某一个点上,版画在谭平的手中还会有什么样的新的表达方式,都是我们可以期待的。

只要留心观察一下近20年来艺术生活的倾向,就会发现,在我们这个时代,所有的艺术形式都无法抗拒地趋向于抽象。“而今,‘抽象艺术’这一概念已经不再是一个派别,也不再是一个固定的、含义广阔的运动。我们不如把抽象主义说成是一种普遍的自然现象,是一种普遍的语言。”[5]

在这样一个充满巨大变革和混乱的时代,社会不断遭遇冲突与危机,人们对事物的恒久稳定丧失了信任,当代艺术处在一个并不理想的挫折状态中。然而,在这些混乱和破碎的现实背后,我们看到一种具有普遍性的精神状态,这就是日益觉醒和增长的个性自由与民主思想。这种思想就是当代艺术创新冲动的根源,是一切艺术创造、语言表述和个人创造风格的基础,它表达了当代艺术的总体特征,只有自由才能发现和发展自我的个性,才能孕育形态丰富的新生事物。换言之,谭平的抽象艺术表明了艺术创造摆脱了外在现实的形象束缚之后所具有的充分自由,这种自由来自艺术家对自然和生活的洞察力,即康定斯基所说的“内在的眼光”。

谭平的艺术表明,他没有追随当代一些时尚的流派和运动,不屈从于将自己纳入某种流派的压力。这种必须要选择一种风格的时尚的压力,与其说能扩大我们的眼光,不如说是限制了我们的发展。谭平

把整个艺术看做是人类自由探索的富有意义的结果,创造性地、自由地选择最适合他的思想、个性、才智的表现方法。在这样一个时尚的年代里,谭平沉潜于内心真诚的感受与表达,为中国当代版画与中国抽象艺术的发展做出了坚实的贡献。对这个世界和这个时代,谭平既不进行复制又不使其理想化,更不会加以歪曲,他从中提取的不是偶然性,而是深刻的规律。他证明了人在自我心中创造另一个世界的可能性,也许若干年后,我们才能认识到谭平所做的这些朴素工作的真正价值。

注:

[1] 瓦尔特·赫斯编著,宗白华译《欧洲现代画派画论选》,人民美术出版社,1980年12月第1版,第131页。

[2] 赵志钧编《黄宾虹画语录》,浙江美术学院出版社,1993年1月第1版。第107页。

[3] 同上,第106页。

[4] 同[1],第132页。

[5] [法]米歇尔·瑟福著,王昭仁译《抽象派绘画史》,广西师范大学出版社,2002年12月第1版,第21页。



# Nature in the Abstract

## An Elucidation of Tan Ping's Recent Works

By Yin Shuangxi PHD, Art Critique



波洛克 (Jackson Pollock)

In July of this year I was invited to visit the Samsung Gallery, in Seoul, Korea. My gaze fixed upon a work by Mark Rothko for some times. A number of red squares floated mystically on the 200×120 cm dark-red background. All these colors expressed a rational dignity and pulsed with a rhythm which allowed me to drift freely through the painting. Once again the question that used to occupy my mind reemerged: Where is the meaning in abstract art? In other words, is it possible to have art without content?

I recognize that my confusion is a result of the expansion in the 20<sup>th</sup> century of post-modern Pop art, which confuses the border between art and life, and largely extended the definition of art. Comparatively, 20<sup>th</sup> century abstract art has kept a respectful distance from daily life, and therefore affects us less intimately. For many viewers abstract art is too mystical or obscure and they simply can't appreciate the experience. Numerous critics have said that it is merely an academic art style, out of date, and no longer worthy of attention.

Viewing Tan Ping's work under this context, we can't help but respect his continuous effort, and simultaneously, experience some confusion. Tan Ping is without doubt an artist full of insight into life and humanity. He is tirelessly devoted to creating and experimenting with visual languages, and never limits himself to a single style. However, this insistence on discovery and process has led him down a long corridor with no exit. For many years, he has created abstract works which continually change in form and method. Most of the successful contemporary artists create images in a certain style with little variation in formal language, especially in their later years. He has produced new series' of works almost every year since 1989, each a fresh variation with new tastes and value systems. There has never been a fixed or familiar aspect to Tan Ping's art, as he has always been committed to casting off "repetitive" ideas and "model" processes.

Tan Ping graduated from the Printmaking Department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts, and won the West German Cultural Exchange Scholarship Deutschen Akademischen Austauschdienste (DAAD) to study in the Free Art Department at Berlin University of Art. There he soon found that printmaking was already a marginal contemporary art form. How could he rid himself of such capriciousness and focus on etching? As with printmaking, the charm of a work is a result of the contrast, lighting, texture or paper materials, and it was just these elements which enabled Tan Ping to express his understanding of human conditions.

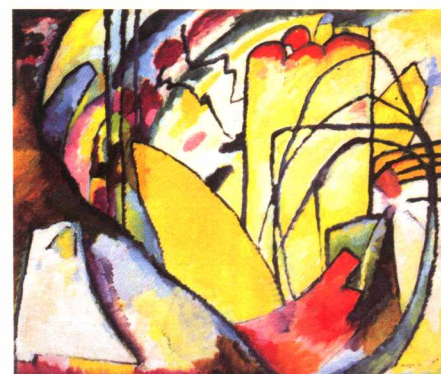
Abstraction to Tan Ping is the means by which he may express the essential quality of a subject, an event, or an environment. By exaggerating some elements he is able to express the essence of the subject's nature, or even his own perception, in a visual language. Thus, abstract aspects are made manifest in both realistic and

abstract styles of art.

I call Tan Ping's work "Nature in the Abstract" for two reasons: firstly, his art abstracts the natural world, and expresses the influence nature has had on his life; secondly, we might use an art historical logic to identify the development of the abstraction of his works. This evolution is also a natural process. From his print *Miner*, made while still at university, to his most recent works *Circle on Blue and Black Background*, we see a condensed process of Western art development from figurative art to material to complete abstraction as well as a view of the abstract heritage of the history of humanity. Although abstract art is mainly known from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, its history as an art form is much longer. The elements used in abstraction: line, shape, volume, graphics, proportion, space, light and shade, color, were all already part of the earliest stage of our artistic evolution. This heritage is the very essence and significance of the natural world, the key to working out the mysterious communications of nature.

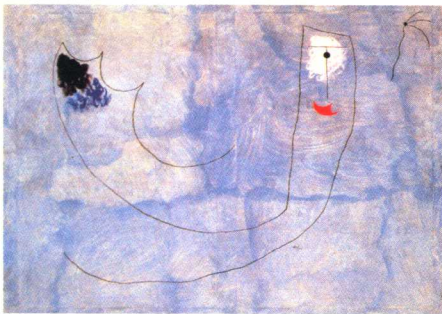
The "circle" in his recent work is not an aesthetic symbol of general meaning, but his own astonishment at the indignant, esoteric natural world. Experiencing such trauma during his father's surgery, Tan Ping's printing then surpassed that initial feeling of suffering, and he was able to transfer those emotions—the biological growth of cells—into a challenge and exploration of the laws of nature. Because he is an artist he turned those strong emotions into objects of amusement and humor. His prints intimate that abstract art neither opposes nor suppresses nature, but represents it in a new way. While realist painters gaze at objects, an abstract artist turns his back away, and by looking into his heart he then puts that deepest sensation out into his work. He manifests dreams, aspirations, ideas and even love—the gifts of nature.

Wassily Kandinsky said "abstract art does not exclude its relationship with nature. It neglects the skin of nature, but never deviates from the natural principles. An abstract painter will receive a variety of stimulations, not from any fragments of nature, but from the universe and diversity of nature, which accumulates in his heart to form a work. This comprehensive ground will find a most appropriate means of expression, that is, 'non-material' expression. Abstract painting leads to a presentation more capacious, more liberal and contentive than material painting." [1] While to Huang Binhong, art-production is the process of a dialogue between the artist and nature, during which, the artist finds a spiritual correspondence between ego and nature. An artist is supposed to transfer his mind into a memory and meditation in front of the canvas, and comprehend nature through a mutual reflection between subject and object. As Huang said, "Be natural without any reluctance; that is the secret of art." His highest recommendation to painting is to emanate an air of quiet solemnity,



康定斯基 (Wassily Kandinsky)

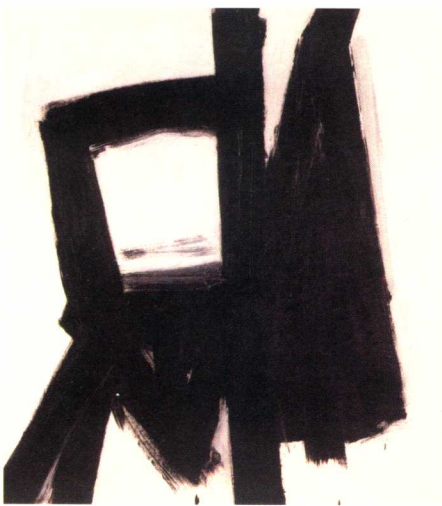




米罗 (Joan Miro)

which calms the viewer and causes their conceit and impertinence to melt.

From Tan Ping's prints I sense this "solemn mood", as if seeing a bright and clear autumn sky. Various circles float on a distant background, with lines freely walking, intertwining, and interlacing, superimposed patches of color, all a result of confident and calm woodcutting. In addition to the structural and formal elements, he focuses on the modulus composition of divergent visual units, and the borders between planes and units. In other words, he concentrates on the relationship between these elements and a general reflection. He has said "this way of painting relationships brings about a new meaning, which becomes a more and more significant concentration on the division of forms, focusing on the transition from the interior of the painting to its exterior. My current work is even more minimalist—with only a single patch of blue and several lines existing in a holistic relationship." Within such a complete relationship, Tan Ping filters the unnecessary noise from real life and presents a bright, clear contextual scene. This is not a beautiful form in meaning, but the internal music emphasized by Kandinsky who claimed to expel superficial artistic concerns in order to aid the viewer to free himself from familiar visual appreciation and hearken to his own soul. The skilled compression of ideas to their most basic unit must be identified as extreme abstraction, while material compressed to a minimum must be recognized as extreme reality in "non-material". If a line can be freed from the task of simply reproducing an external object, then its internal sound can also be liberated by trying to successfully attain inner strength. Indeed, this internal music represents the modern person's private emotion and anxiety towards nature. In this way, non-material art acquires its own "materialism" within a purer form. Kandinsky regarded content (spirit, inner harmony) instead of form (material or non) as the most important problem. Modern art was already inspired to reflect a new psyche. He also pointed out that the form of expression could vary between two extremes; one, ultimate abstraction, and two, ultimate reality. These two radically different roads may lead to a common conclusion—the two simultaneously exist in art and the first is reflected in the second.



科林 (Franz Kline)

On discussing Tan Ping's work, we cannot neglect the influence his involvement in and comprehension of design has had on his art over the past decade. Although we know that design played the role of catalyst in the developments of 20<sup>th</sup> century art, Tan Ping chose to find a fresh perspective and methodology. From his research and teaching of basic design, he simply introduced design elements into his work. Concepts of design played a significant role in Tan Ping's art—while fine art emphasizes remodeling and integrating one's personality into the work, design promotes a process of self-dissolution. Contemporary design focuses on innovation, spirituality, culture and cross-disciplinary additive values. Tan Ping developed his own theories about the relationship between art and environment, time and space, art and the viewer, art and the gallery. He employed a

variety of media and forms to meet his expressive needs rather than limiting himself to a particular area of representation. We expect all new possibilities to exist in the work of Tan Ping.

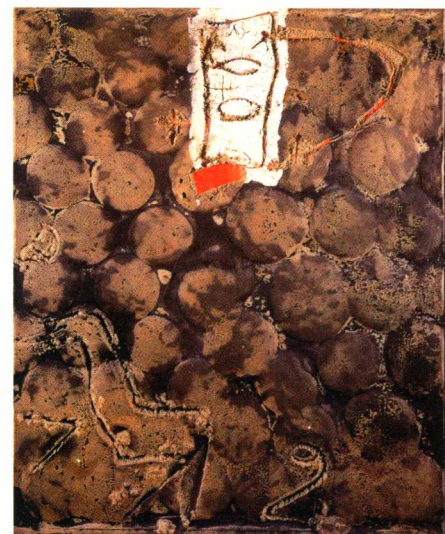
Those who have followed the course of art over the past twenty or thirty years will have been struck by its persistence. "Abstract art" today is no longer a school, nor a particular movement. We prefer to define it as a universal natural phenomenon, a universal language.

We are living in a time filled with great change and disorder, in a society confronted with conflict and crises, with the loss of confidence in stability, and contemporary art exists in a far from ideal situation. However, we can see the spirit of the universe hiding behind this chaotic and fractured reality. We increasingly witness the awakening of personal liberty and self reflection as the motivation for creating art. The basis of all art-production, language expression and individual creative style is the self. This universal spirit reflects a general quality in contemporary art. Solitary character can be discovered and developed only in a free context, so do the fostering of rich and renascent issues. The abstract art by Tan Ping presents a fully free art, casting off the bounds of realistic images. This liberty originates in his insight into nature and life, the element Kandinsky called "internal music".

Tan Ping is unyielding to the pressures of popular trends. In fact, the pressure of working within a fashionable style limits rather than liberates our vision. Tan Ping takes art as a whole to be a significant result of humanity's free exploration and chooses an expressive form that matches his mind, personality and intelligence in a creative and unrestrained way. In this age of fashion, he immerses himself in the experience and interpretation of interior senses in order to make a firm contribution to the development of Chinese contemporary printmaking and abstract art. He does not reproduce, idealize, or distort our world and time in a simple way; he extracts a profound precept from the occasion. He has demonstrated that the possibility of creating another world in one's heart exists, though it may take years for us to fully understand the real value of his work.

*Notes:*

1. Walter Hess, translated by Zong Baihua, *Selection on European Modern Art Theory*, Peoples Fine Art Publishing House, 1st Edition, Dec. 1980, Page 131
2. Huang Binhong's Quotation about Painting, Edited by Zhao Zhijun, Zhejiang Fine Art Publishinghouse, 1st edition in 1993 Jan., Page 107
3. Huang Binhong's Quotation about Painting, Edited by Zhao Zhijun, Zhejiang Fine Art Publishinghouse, 1st edition in 1993 Jan., Page 106
4. Walter Hess, translated by Zong Baihua, *Selection on European Modern Art Theory*, Peoples Fine Art Publishing House, 1st Edition, Dec. 1980, Page 132
5. Michel Seuphor, translated by Wang Shaoren, *Dictionary of abstract painting, : With a history of abstract painting*, Guangxi Norman University Publishing House, 1st Edition, Dec.2002, Page 21



塔皮埃斯 (Antoni Tapirs)

Translated by Jin Hua



