


# Traditional Chinese Architectural Colour Painting in Modern Architecture: A Systematic Literature Review

Li Jin Yan <sup>1</sup>, Nik Lukman Bin Nik Ibrahim <sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ph.D Candidate, Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment, National University of Malaysia, Malaysia

<sup>2</sup> Assoc. Prof. Dr., Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment, National University of Malaysia, Malaysia

\* Corresponding Author: [lukman@ukm.edu.my](mailto:lukman@ukm.edu.my)

**Citation:** Yan, L. J., & Ibrahim, N. L. B. N. (2026). Traditional Chinese architectural colour painting in modern architecture: A systematic literature review. *Herança*, 9(1), 70–81. <https://doi.org/10.52152/heranca.v9i1/1148>

## ARTICLE INFO

Received: 20 Jul 2025

Accepted: 20 Oct 2025

## ABSTRACT

Colour painting is a vital component and defining feature of traditional Chinese wooden architecture. These architectural colour paintings, with a history spanning centuries, reflect the distinctive historical attributes and cultural connotations of each era and region. However, numerous preserved colour paintings from past dynasties have severely deteriorated, presenting a significant challenge for designers committed to preserving this art form. Despite its cultural importance, limited research has focused on integrating traditional architectural colour painting into contemporary design. This paper presents a comprehensive literature review on the influence of traditional architectural color painting on contemporary Chinese architecture since 2014. A systematic review of the literature between 2014 and 2024 was conducted according to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines, with primary sources from databases such as Web of Science and Scopus. The search resulted in 188 papers, and nine papers were included in the systematic review based on exclusion criteria. The findings reveal that current research on ancient architectural colour paintings predominantly centers on the maintenance and restoration of historical buildings, while studies addressing their application in modern architectural design remain limited. Consequently, there is a need to explore innovative approaches for integrating ancient architectural colour paintings into modern design, thereby supporting cultural diversity in heritage conservation practices and fostering the continuity and development of traditional architectural culture.

**Keywords:** Systematic Review; Ancient Architectural Colour Painting; Modern Design; Architectural Design.

## INTRODUCTION

The term colour painting is first introduced during the late Northern Song Dynasty in the legal text Yingzao Fashi (Guo, 1998), which is issued by the government to standardize construction practices. This document provides the foundational definition used to discuss colour painting in ancient Chinese architecture. During the Song Dynasty, architectural painting remains in a phase of exploration and development. Over subsequent dynasties, it undergoes continuous transformation and refinement. Ancient architectural paintings are generally classified into two main types: murals, which cover large surfaces with complex scenes, and decorative patterns applied to specific architectural components. In traditional Chinese wood-based architecture, the latter is referred to as coloured painting (Zheng, 2012). These painted patterns serve not only as ornamental features but also function as protective layers that shield wooden structures from environmental deterioration. As shown in Figure 1, color painting in ancient Chinese architecture is primarily applied to wooden components such as beams, columns, doors, windows, walls, ceilings, and railings. Cool tones—particularly blue and green—are frequently used, often accented with touches of gold. In contrast, large areas such as eaves, columns, doors, and walls typically feature bold red tones, which stand out against white pedestals. This combination creates a striking contrast between light and dark, resulting in a vibrant and visually rich decorative effect. The content of traditional architectural color paintings is notably diverse. Common motifs include cloud patterns, pearl-embracing dragons, birds in flight, celestial beings, dragons, phoenixes, and curling floral designs.



Figure 1. Traditional Chinese Architecture Color Painting - Photography

The use of vibrant painted patterns became a distinguishing characteristic of traditional Chinese architecture (Liu, 2023). From an architectural perspective, coloured painting represents a sophisticated form of protective art, valued both for its aesthetic appeal and for its role in shielding structures from the deteriorative effects of wind and rain. Socially, coloured painting functioned as a manifestation of feudal social hierarchy, as colour choices and designs often indicated status. Additionally, these colourful decorations embodied cultural symbolism, often intended to invoke blessings and protection, reflecting the people's aspirations for safety and prosperity (Chen, 2021).

Over time, the development of architectural color painting evolves with each dynasty, reflecting distinct artistic characteristics. Since the Qing Dynasty, color painting styles have been broadly classified into two major genres: official-style color painting and local color painting, each exhibiting unique formal traits. Today, the term official color painting typically refers to the architectural painting style found in Beijing, while traditions from other regions are grouped under local color painting (Li, 2023). The preservation of these traditional forms faces significant challenges. Historical changes, climatic fluctuations, and the inherent fragility of construction materials contribute to the deterioration of existing works. These issues are further exacerbated by natural aging and human-induced damage. As a result, the protection and transmission of architectural color painting have become pressing cultural priorities (Luo, 2022).

In the late 1950s, with the introduction of new building materials, construction shifted away from primarily wood-based structures, and coloured paintings came to serve a more decorative function. This transition required the traditional art of architectural colour painting to adapt continuously, meeting the demands of modern decoration through innovation (Wu & Bi, 2021). The integration of ancient architectural decorative arts into contemporary design represents both an advancement in modern aesthetics and an inheritance of traditional culture (Shi & Deng, 2023).

Although numerous studies explore the application of traditional Chinese architectural color painting in modern design, comprehensive systematic reviews remain limited. A structured and in-depth analysis of these studies is essential to support the effective preservation and transmission of this significant cultural heritage. This paper conducts a systematic review of research on architectural color painting and its integration into design practices over the past decade (2014–2024). The review aims to identify critical research gaps and propose potential directions for future investigation, thereby establishing a foundation for the continued advancement of scholarship in this field.

## METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the methodology used to identify publications addressing the influence of traditional Chinese architectural color painting on modern architectural design. In light of the growing global emphasis on cultural sustainability and design innovation, this review focuses on literature published between 2014 and 2024. This timeframe captures the most recent decade of scholarly discourse and reflects current developments in architectural design and digital technology. The period also allows for the inclusion of recent efforts to reinterpret

traditional Chinese architectural color painting within contemporary design paradigms. The PRISMA methodology is employed to ensure a systematic and transparent review process. This approach involves establishing clear inclusion and exclusion criteria, conducting a structured review through the stages of identification, screening, and eligibility assessment, and performing data extraction and analysis.

### **The Review Protocol - PRISMA**

This document adheres to the review process outlined by Xiao and Watson (2019), encompassing the planning, execution, and presentation phases. The PRISMA methodology was referenced to develop this systematic literature review (SLR), incorporating a four-stage flow diagram and a 27-point checklist to guide the review process (Selcuk, 2019). Although this SLR is within the design domain, PRISMA remains suitable, This is because it helps to improve the reliability of research results and develop a systematic search strategy. Additionally, the PRISMA approach offers several advantages over other literature analysis methods, particularly in enhancing the accuracy of systematic reviews. It enables a focused examination of relevant literature based on clearly defined research objectives and contextual eligibility criteria. PRISMA also improves the transparency of the review process and helps minimize potential bias (Swartz, 2021). To ensure comprehensive coverage and cultural relevance, four major academic databases were searched: Web of Science, Scopus, CNKI, and Google Scholar. Both English- and Chinese-language sources were included, thereby reducing language bias and increasing the diversity of the data. These measures contributed to the overall accuracy of the selected studies and enhanced the methodological rigor of the review process.

### **Source of Reference**

To locate articles for this systematic literature review (SLR), four major databases were utilized: Web of Science, Scopus, CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure), and Google Scholar. Web of Science is a comprehensive, multidisciplinary core journal citation index that includes three major citation databases—Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE), Conference Proceedings Citation Index–Science (CPCI-S), and Conference Proceedings Citation Index–Social Science & Humanities (CPCI-SSH)—along with two Current Chemical Reactions databases (collectively referred to as IC). Hosted on the ISI Web of Knowledge platform, Web of Science indexes over 9,200 leading journals across 178 scientific fields. With records dating back to 1900, it comprises more than 53 million articles and 1.18 billion references (Web of Science Collection, 2024), offering a comprehensive and secure view of over 115 years of high-quality research.

The second database used in this review was Scopus, the world's largest abstract and citation (A&I) database. Scopus covers 27 subject areas across four major categories and indexes over 15,000 journals in science, technology, and medicine from publishers such as Elsevier, Springer, and Nature. It also includes numerous significant Chinese journals. Scopus provides access to nearly 50 million records dating back to 1823, with approximately 5,500 entries updated daily, offering users one of the most extensive and forward-looking collections of scientific and technical literature globally (Scopus, 2024).

China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), established by Tsinghua University and Tongfang Co., Ltd. in June 1999, is China's leading authoritative encyclopedic knowledge service platform. Utilizing advanced digital library technology developed in China, CNKI integrates a wide range of resources, including journals, theses, conference proceedings, newspapers, patents, and international literature. Updated with over 50,000 items daily, CNKI serves as a comprehensive digital learning platform, providing a rich repository of knowledge and information resources (CNKI, 2024).

Google Scholar (GS) is the final database utilized in this review. It is a powerful academic search tool that enables researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of the literature on a specific topic in a timely manner. Google Scholar allows users to assess an expert's contributions to their field and to see how many times their work has been cited or further developed. This transparency enhances the visibility of scientists' work, helping to prevent academic fraud and unfair evaluations, thereby addressing significant shortcomings in the research community.

The review methodology for this study is grounded in an analysis of four major journal databases: Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), and Google Scholar. Scopus and WoS were selected for their robust features, covering over 256 research areas, including communications (Mohamed Shaffril et al. 2021). CNKI is a well-known source that provides extensive materials on traditional Chinese architectural paintings and modern architectural design, offering vital literature support for this study. Google Scholar serves as a supplementary database for research on traditional Chinese architectural paintings, enhancing the comprehensiveness of the review.

### Systematic Search Strategy

Conducting a systematic review entails multiple independent steps organized into five main stages: identification, screening, eligibility, quality assessment, and data extraction and analysis. The detailed process for each of these five stages in the systematic search methodology employed in this study is illustrated in Figure 2.

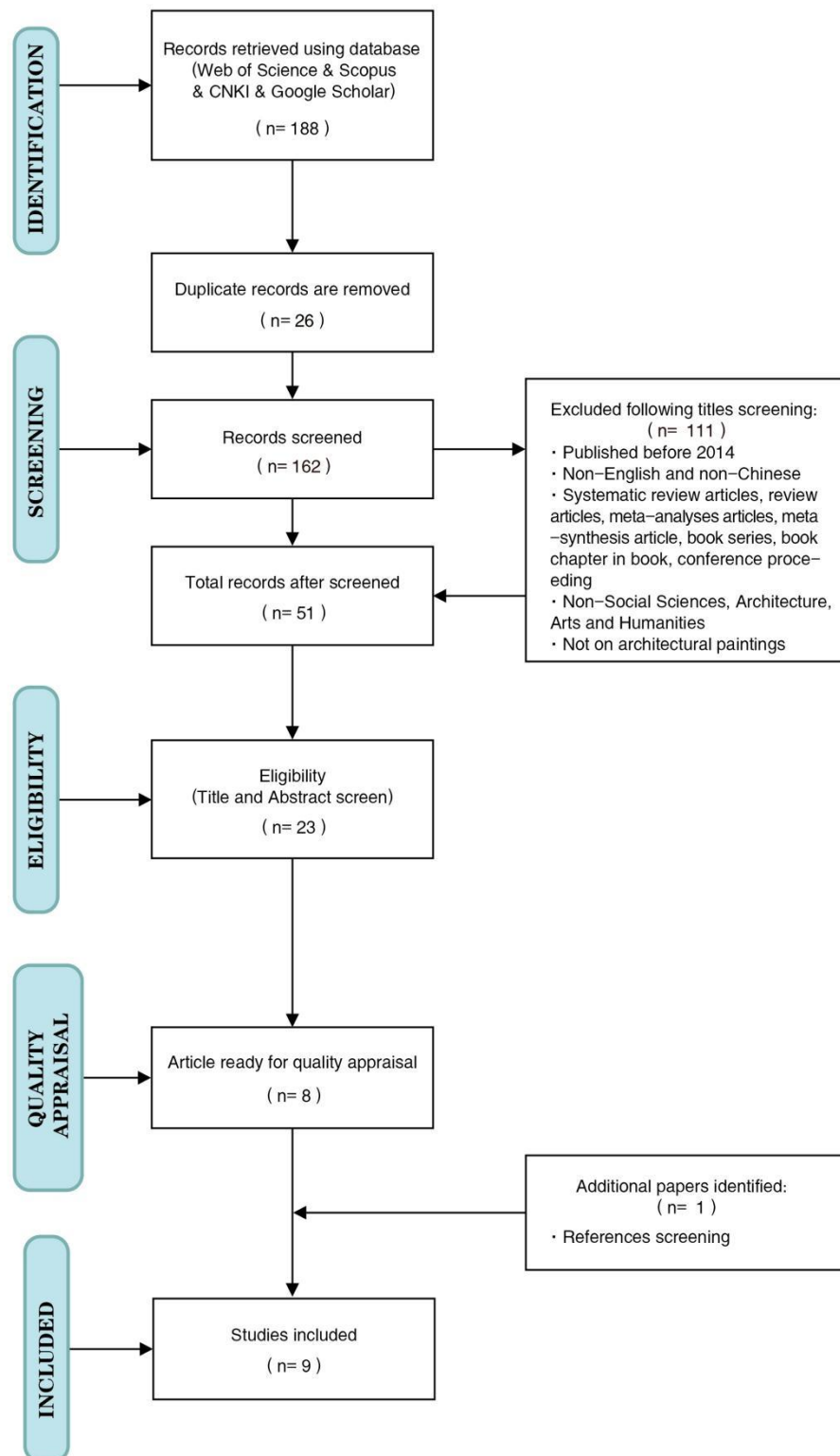


Figure 2. PRISMA Flow Diagram of the Systematic Research Strategy



## Identification

Identification involves selecting and diversifying the keywords used in the systematic literature review (SLR) article search process. The selection of practical keywords is essential, as they help narrow down the pool of articles and improve the accuracy of references for the SLR. Based on our research focus, we identified two primary keywords: "architectural colour painting" and "architectural design." To enhance the range of available keywords, we also searched for synonyms, related terms, and variations of the main keywords, utilizing an online thesaurus and the Summit Keyword Graph database. The relevant keywords identified in this search are listed below:

1) architectural colour painting \*OR architectural patterns \*OR mural paintings \*OR architectural motifs \*OR Wall painting

2) architectural design \*OR building elevation \*OR built environment spaces \*OR architectural surfaces

Using the selected keywords, we conducted a reference search across the four chosen databases. By searching each database individually for each keyword, we identified a total of 188 articles. After removing 26 duplicates, 162 unique articles remained. The distribution of these articles was as follows: 56 from Web of Science, 39 from Scopus, 35 from CNKI, and 32 from Google Scholar. These articles will advance to the second stage of the systematic search strategy: screening.

## Screening

A total of 162 articles that passed the previous validation process were subjected to screening. Screening involves establishing inclusion and exclusion criteria to identify suitable references for this systematic literature review (SLR) (Mohamed, Samsuddin, & Abu Samah, 2021). To further refine the selection, the following inclusion criteria were applied: Type of Literature, Only journal articles (research articles) were considered as the primary source of scientific evidence, while review articles were excluded, resulting in the removal of 7 articles; Publication Year Range, The search was limited to articles published between 2014 and 2024 in the fields of social sciences, architecture, and arts and humanities, This criterion led to the exclusion of 52 articles; Relevance to Architectural colour Painting, Selected articles needed to focus specifically on the impact of architectural colour painting on modern architecture; Articles that claimed relevance to other areas of design (e.g., apparel, packaging) were excluded, which accounted for the removal of 27 articles; Language, This review considered only publications in English and Chinese, resulting in the exclusion of 25 articles; Relevance of Findings, All included articles were required to present research findings pertinent to this SLR. For detailed information on the inclusion criteria, please refer to [Table 1](#). After the screening process, a total of 111 articles were excluded for not meeting the established criteria, leaving 51 articles available for the next stage of the review.

**Table 1.** Search String Formed for Articles / References Research

Item	Inclusion Criteria
Year Published	10 years (2014 to 2024)
Document Type	Journal article
Language	English and Chinese
Research Area	Social Sciences, Architecture, Arts and Humanities
Focus of Finding	Application design based on architectural colour painting

## Eligibility

All selected articles that passed the previous steps proceeded to the eligibility screening process. This step ensures the relevance and appropriateness of each article based on their titles and abstracts. If the relevance of an article could not be determined from the title and abstract alone, the discussion section of the article was reviewed for additional context. A total of 28 articles were excluded because they focused on the origins of architectural painting or specific aspects of the craft itself. The focus of this review is to explore how architectural painting can be integrated with modern architecture to revitalize historical culture. After removing duplicates and conducting a review of the remaining articles, 23 articles were deemed suitable for quality assessment.

## Quality Assessment

To ensure the high quality of the articles, a quality assessment process was conducted. For an article to advance to the next stage, it must meet both of the following criteria: 1. Is the research question clearly defined? 2. Do the findings adequately address the stated research question? Only those articles that fulfilled these criteria were considered quality usable articles. As a result, a total of 8 high-quality articles were selected through this assessment process.

## Included

The remaining papers were analyzed and evaluated, and one additional relevant paper was identified through reference cross-checking. Consequently, the final number of usable papers included in this study is 9.

## RESULTS

This section analyzes the contexts and trends identified in the reviewed literature. The analysis is based on nine high-quality studies selected according to PRISMA criteria. Key patterns are examined in terms of publication frequency, regional distribution, research methodology, and areas of design application. Additionally, this section discusses developments in the field of modern architectural design as influenced by traditional architectural color painting.

### Publication Trends

As shown in Figure 3, among the nine selected articles, two were published in each of the years 2014, 2019, and 2022, while one was published in 2015, 2016, and 2021. This distribution indicates a sporadic but sustained scholarly interest in the topic over the past decade. Notably, the increase in publications in recent years suggests growing academic recognition of traditional color painting as a valuable design resource within modern architectural contexts. This upward trend may be influenced by global efforts to promote cultural preservation and by contemporary design movements that seek to integrate traditional aesthetics into modern built environments.

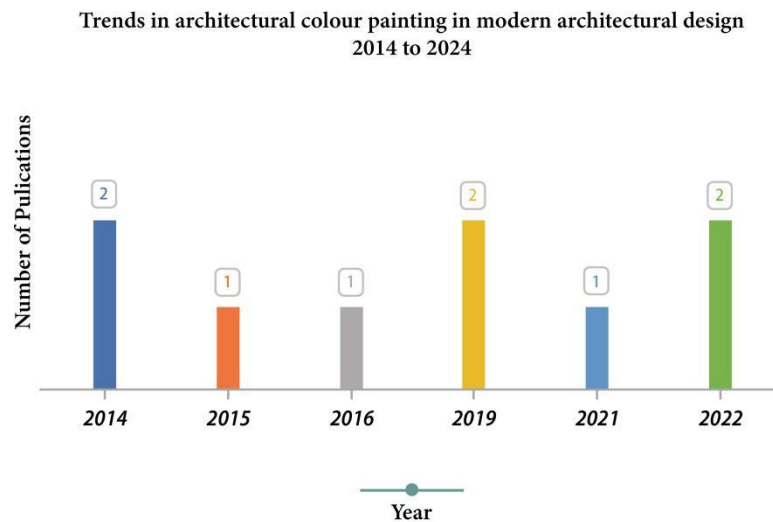


Figure 3. Number Of Articles Published Each Year From 2014 To 2024

### Geographical Distribution

Figure 4 illustrates the geographical distribution of the selected studies, with the majority originating from Asia. China leads the field, contributing seven of the nine studies. The remaining two are from Indonesia and the United Arab Emirates. This regional concentration is expected, given the subject's deep roots in traditional Chinese culture. However, the inclusion of international contributions indicates a growing cross-cultural interest in the integration of traditional decorative arts into contemporary architectural contexts. This trend underscores the global relevance of design heritage, particularly in multicultural and culturally inspired design environments.

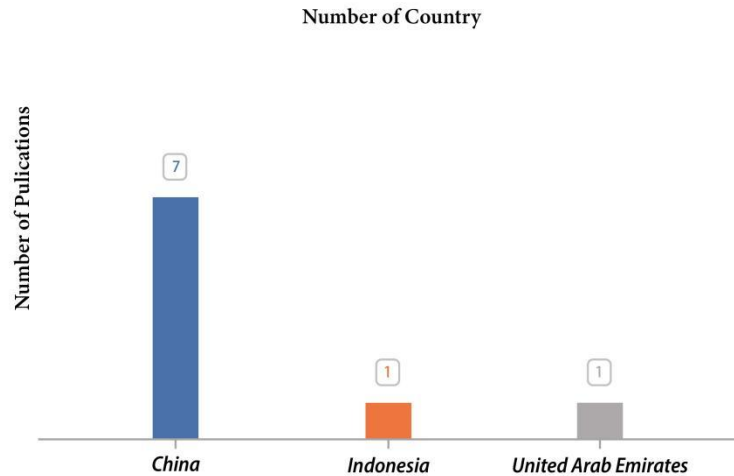


Figure 4. Number of Articles Published Based on the Countries

### Research Design and Fields of Application

Table 2 summarizes the characteristics of the references included in this review, including the authors, year of publication, research methods, and thematic focus by field of study. Based on the search results, a total of nine studies met the eligibility criteria. Of these, eight employed documentary research methods, most of which followed a qualitative approach. Three studies adopted mixed methods, incorporating case studies, interviews, and field observations. The predominance of qualitative methodologies suggests that the field remains in an exploratory and conceptual phase, with a focus on theoretical development and aesthetic interpretation rather than empirical evaluation.

These studies are categorized into three main areas of application:

5 articles in the field of interior design: exploring how traditional architectural paintings influence spatial atmosphere, cultural expression and symbolism.

2 articles in the field of interior furnishing design: study of the adaptation of motifs for modern furniture and soft furnishings.

2 articles in the field of landscape architectural design: study of the integration of frescoes and painted motifs into public or garden spaces.

This distribution indicates that researchers are placing greater emphasis on the interior and decorative aspects of space, where traditional motifs can be more readily reinterpreted within controlled design environments. To synthesize the findings, the first author systematically reviewed the results of each included study and conducted a thematic analysis to identify common patterns and emerging themes.

Table 2. Summary of Identified Papers

Study	Country	Research Methods	Study area	Thematic Categories	Outcomes
Li Hua (2014)	China	Qualitative methods	Interior Design	Cultural Symbolism	Four principles to be followed in modern interior design of traditional color painting decorative elements in Huizhou.
Yang Rui (2014)	China	Qualitative methods	Landscape Design	Cultural Symbolism & Material Application	Four principles for the application of traditional painted colours in modern garden architecture are proposed.

Study	Country	Research Methods	Study area	Thematic Categories	Outcomes
<b>Hou QiYue (2015)</b>	China	Mixed methods	Furnishing Design	Material Application & Technical Methods	Four principles and design methods for integrating ancient architectural color painting elements into furniture design.
<b>Song WenTing (2016)</b>	China	Qualitative methods	Furnishing Design	Cultural Symbolism & Technical Methods	With the help of colorful painting elements, we explored the soft decoration scheme of “New Chinese” style.
<b>Dea Aulia Widyaevan et al., (2019)</b>	Indonesia	Qualitative methods	Interior Design	Material Application	Murals play an important role in constructing interior themes and infographic media.
<b>Zhu ManNing (2019)</b>	China	Mixed methods	Interior Design	Cultural Symbolism & Technical Methods	Summarizes the main development ideas and basic principles and design methods of architectural color painting in interior decoration.
<b>Ding Lei (2021)</b>	China	Qualitative methods	Interior Design	Cultural Symbolism	The new expression and practice of Huizhou traditional colour painting decorative art in interior design.
<b>Zhou WeiHua (2022)</b>	China	Mixed methods	Landscape Design	Cultural Symbolism & Public Engagement	The analysis summarizes the design principles of murals in urban public landscape applications.
<b>Wael Rashdan et al., (2022)</b>	United Arab Emirates	Qualitative methods	Interior Design	Cultural Symbolism & Spatial Aesthetics	Islamic interior decorative aesthetics induces projective behavior through a system of visual metaphors.

### Thematic Patterns and Implications

As shown in Figure 3, among the nine selected articles, two were published in each of the years 2014, 2019, and 2022, while one was published in 2015, 2016, and 2021. From the analysis of these studies, several key themes emerge:

**Cultural continuity:** Designers seek to preserve the essence of historical tradition within contemporary design environments.

**Material transformation:** There is an emphasis on reimagining traditional motifs using modern materials, such as printed textiles and digital wall panels.

**User experience:** Several studies explore how architectural color paintings can enhance user engagement through narrative elements and immersive spatial design.

**Design integration:** The focus lies in harmoniously blending traditional and contemporary styles, rather than directly replicating historic forms.

These thematic patterns suggest that architectural color painting is increasingly regarded not as a static heritage artifact but as a dynamic cultural resource capable of adaptation to diverse design contexts. However, the



findings also highlight a notable gap: the absence of standardized tools for evaluating the functional effectiveness and cultural relevance of such design integration.

## DISCUSSION

A systematic review is a structured method for the comprehensive and critical appraisal of a large body of studies within a specific context, yielding evidence-based conclusions (Akhter, Pauyo, & Khan, 2019). This approach facilitates an extensive search for studies and references pertinent to the research topic, followed by a systematic integration of the results. Of the hundreds of articles retrieved based on this study, only nine applied the art of architectural colour painting to architectural design. Four of these nine articles have Chinese official colour painting as the independent variable (Yang, 2014; Hou, 2015; Song, 2016; Zhu, 2019), two have mural painting as the independent variable (Widyaevan & Setiamurti, 2019; Zhou, 2022), one each with Chinese local colour painting and Islamic geometric patterns as independent variables (Li, 2014; Wael & Ashour, 2022), and the exploration of applications in modern architectural design as dependent variables, where architectural design is divided into several sub-fields, such as interior design, furnishing design, and landscape design, etc., and the journal literature in these relevant fields are included in the range of available literature. We can conclude that most of the research in this field has focused on the practice of Chinese official colour painting in modern architectural design, which suggests that there is an urgent need for more empirical research in local colour painting and the culture of colour painting in other countries and regions.

According to the aspect of the research results of this systematic review, we can see that most of the research results are mainly focus on the research of design principles, methods and practical solutions for integrating architectural colour painting into modern architecture, Li. H (2014) and Ding. L (2021) have collate the methods of borrowing the decorative elements of the traditional houses of Huizhou and the principles of using them in modern interior design. In Yang. R (2014) and Zhou. W (2022) studies, the principles, internal rules and aesthetic connotations of the application of traditional painted colours in modern garden architecture (landscape architecture) were proposed. Hou. Q (2015) summed up the four basic principles of ancient architectural painting elements into the design of furnishings, and after practical exploration, to find out the practical design methods, Zhu. M (2019) analyzed and summarized the main ideas and basic principles of the development of architectural paintings in the interior decoration, and respectively from the ‘shape’, ‘meaning’, ‘realm’ of the three perspectives into the interior decoration design methods. The findings of Widyaevan and Rahardjo (2019) point out that murals play an important role in constructing the medium of interior themes and infographics, where murals become an immersive medium that draws the viewer to immerse themselves in the spacious artwork. These results provide good ideas for our future design practice activities, for example, architects are encouraged to preserve the essence of traditional arts, select suitable modern materials, and combine art with function, among other design principles or approaches, helping us to make less detours in our future research in related fields, and to make modern architectural designs that can conform to the aesthetics of the times as well as inherit the traditional art and civilization.

## LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite growing recognition of the need to preserve traditional culture and the increase in studies addressing the modern redesign of traditional architectural colour paintings, the primary limitations of existing studies selected through PRISMA are evident.

Firstly, the existing literature primarily focuses on official-style color paintings and Huizhou-style color paintings, while architectural color painting traditions from other regions — such as Sichuan, Yunnan, and Guangdong — remain significantly understudied. This limited scope overlooks the rich diversity and regional cultural symbolism inherent in Chinese architectural color painting and risks producing an imbalanced understanding of the nation's architectural heritage. Such neglect is particularly concerning, as the forces of modernization and the lack of systematic documentation have accelerated the decline and disappearance of many local artistic traditions, resulting in a substantial loss of cultural heritage. The preservation and transmission of regional architectural features not only strengthen national identity and social cohesion but also cultivate public appreciation for local aesthetics and cultural literacy. Therefore, the safeguarding of local architectural color painting traditions warrants urgent scholarly attention. Future research should prioritize comparative analyses of regional styles and incorporate fieldwork, artisan interviews, and community-based documentation to help preserve these endangered cultural forms.

Secondly, in terms of methodological quality, there is a general lack of rigorous empirical research within the existing body of literature. Many of the reviewed studies lack clearly defined research questions, coherent research designs, and robust procedures for data collection and analysis. A prevailing reliance on literature reviews and descriptive case studies — without the support of empirical data such as stakeholder interviews, surveys, or evaluations of constructed projects — limits the depth and applicability of the findings. Furthermore, the absence of longitudinal studies and user-centered feedback hinders understanding of how architectural color painting is perceived, experienced, and sustained over time within modern built environments. To address these gaps, future research must critically examine the quality of color painting applications in contemporary architectural contexts. This includes the development of new methodological approaches, the exploration of innovative design strategies, and the adoption of evaluation tools that enhance the validity, reliability, and relevance of research outcomes. Such efforts are essential to ensure that the art of architectural color painting is meaningfully inherited, adapted, and advanced in today's society.

Another significant limitation is the absence of a standardized framework or assessment tool for evaluating the integration of color painting in contemporary architectural contexts. Without consistent criteria to assess cultural authenticity, design effectiveness, user experience, and material compatibility, meaningful comparison and generalization across case studies remain challenging. To address this gap, future research should focus on developing multidimensional evaluation models. These models may draw on approaches from heritage science, design thinking, and post-occupancy evaluation to generate more objective, replicable, and actionable conclusions.

In addition, the reviewed literature seldom reflects interdisciplinary collaboration. Most studies are confined to architectural or design perspectives and overlook opportunities to incorporate insights from fields such as cultural studies, digital humanities, and urban sociology. Adopting a more integrated research approach would enable a more comprehensive understanding of both the tangible and intangible dimensions of traditional color painting within modern architectural environments.

Finally, future research may benefit from the use of emerging technologies such as digital restoration tools, parametric design platforms, AI-based pattern analysis, and immersive VR/AR visualization. These tools can aid in both the preservation and reinterpretation of traditional color painting for contemporary architectural applications. Equally important is the implementation of participatory research models that actively involve artisans, designers, and community stakeholders in the co-creation of culturally grounded and innovative design solutions. By addressing these critical gaps, future studies can more effectively advance the cultural sustainability, functional relevance, and aesthetic development of traditional Chinese color painting within modern architectural design.

## CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review reveals that, over the past decade, research on colour painting in modern architectural design has remained relatively superficial. While the number of relevant journal publications has shown erratic growth since 2014, recent fluctuations indicate a growing interest in the field. Advances in science and technology have recently enabled studies focused on the processes and materials of colour paintings; however, exploration of the aesthetic principles and architectural applications remains limited. To effectively preserve and develop the tradition of architectural colour painting, new entry points must be identified that leverage its aesthetic principles and cultural significance for contemporary redesign. This approach would enhance the appreciation for cultural heritage diversity in preservation practices, fostering the continuation and evolution of traditional architectural culture.

This literature review offers valuable insights for architects, designers, educators, and cultural policymakers by synthesizing key principles, design strategies, application contexts, and cultural significance identified over the past decade. It serves as a foundational reference for professionals seeking to integrate traditional Chinese architectural color painting into modern design in a thoughtful and context-sensitive manner. For educators, the review provides a systematic overview of how cultural heritage can be incorporated into contemporary design education, highlighting its pedagogical value. Cultural policymakers may also draw on the review's findings, particularly its identification of research gaps and regional disparities, to develop more inclusive, targeted, and forward-looking strategies for heritage preservation and revitalization.

## REFERENCES

- Akhter, S., Pauyo, T., & Khan, M. (2019). What is the difference between a systematic review and a meta-analysis? *Basic Methods Handbook for Clinical Orthopaedic Research*, 331–342.
- Chen, Z. (2021). The art of colour painting in ancient Chinese architecture. *Popular Colours*, 10, 58–60.
- CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure). (2024, April 20). Baidu Encyclopedia. Retrieved from [https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E4%B8%AD%E5%9B%BD%E7%9F%A5%E7%BD%91?fromtitle=%E7%9F%A5%E7%BD%91&fromid=7109947&fromModule=lemma\\_search-box](https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E4%B8%AD%E5%9B%BD%E7%9F%A5%E7%BD%91?fromtitle=%E7%9F%A5%E7%BD%91&fromid=7109947&fromModule=lemma_search-box)
- Ding, Lei. 2021. *Research on the Decorative Art of Colour Painting of Traditional Residential Buildings in Huizhou Area* (Master's dissertation)., Jiangsu University.
- Guo, Q. (1998). Yingzao Fashi: Twelfth-century Chinese building manual. *Architectural History*, 41, 1–13.
- Hou, Q. (2015). *Research on the application of colourful painting of ancient buildings in the design of furnishings* (Master's dissertation). Beijing Architecture University.
- Li, H. (2014). *The use of decorative elements of Huizhou traditional folk houses in modern interior design* (Master's dissertation). Anhui University of Architecture.
- Li, K. (2023). *Study on the characteristics and restoration design of architectural colour paintings of Kulun Three Temples in Inner Mongolia* (Master's dissertation). Inner Mongolia University of Technology.
- Liu, M. (2023). Scientific knowledge of colour painting materials in ancient Chinese architecture: Current status, research progress, and future directions. *Natural and Cultural Heritage Research*, 4, 49–59.
- Luo, P. (2022). Past colours are now ancient for today's use: Architectural decorative coloured paintings in the interior space design application. *Journal of Screen Printing*, 15, 72–74.
- Mohamed Shaffril, H. A., Samsuddin, S. F., & Abu Samah, A. (2021). The ABC of systematic literature review: The basic methodological guidance for beginners. *Quality & Quantity*, 55(4), 1319–1346.
- Scopus. (2024, April 20). Document search. Retrieved from [https://cn.service.elsevier.com/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/16251/supporthub/scopus/#tips](https://cn.service.elsevier.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/16251/supporthub/scopus/#tips)
- Shi, Y., & Deng, Q. (2023). The living use of Leizhou ancient folk houses architectural decoration patterns in modern designs. *Journal of Guangzhou City Vocational College*, 1, 45–51.
- Song, W. (2016). *Exploration of ancient painting into space furnishing* (Master's dissertation). Beijing Architecture University.
- Swartz, M. K. (2021). PRISMA 2020: An update. *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*, 35(4), 351.
- Wael, R., & Ashour, A. F. (2022). Aesthetic interpretation for Islamic geometry in interior design. *WIT Transactions on the Built Environment*, 211.
- Web of Science Collection. (2024, April 20). Web of Science platform. Retrieved from <https://clarivate.com/products/scientific-and-academic-research/research-discovery-and-workflow-solutions/webofscience-platform/>
- Widyaevan, D. A., & Rahardjo, S. (2019). Mural and graffiti application on hostel interior design. In *6th Bandung Creative Movement 2019* (pp. 265–269). Bandung, Indonesia: Telkom University.
- Wu, S., & Bi, F. (2021). The application of Huizhou architectural colour painting decorative art in modern interior design heritage. *Journal of Huainan Normal College*, 23(6), 123–126.
- Xiao, Y., & Watson, M. (2019). Guidance on conducting a systematic literature review. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*.
- Yang, R. (2014). *Research on the decorative beauty of Chinese traditional painted colour paintings in classical garden architecture* (Master's dissertation). Chongqing University.
- Zheng, H. (2012). *Research on wooden colour painting of traditional architecture in Chaozhou* (Doctoral dissertation). South China University of Technology.
- Zhou, W. (2022). The application and development of mural art in urban public environment landscape design. *Journal of Environmental and Public Health*, 2022, 3346648.
- Zhu, M. (2019). *An analysis of the shaping of architectural colour painting art forms in interior decoration* (Master's dissertation). Nanjing Forestry University.

---

### ETHICAL DECLARATION

---

**Conflict of interest:** No declaration required. **Financing:** No reporting required. **Peer review:** Double anonymous peer review.

.