



Application Problems and Forms of Chinese Elements in the Context of Contemporary Visual Communication Design

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Abstract. More and more attention is paid to the use of Chinese elements in contemporary visual communication design, and the application of Chinese elements is also followed. Under this background, the application of Chinese elements is discussed and analyzed. This paper firstly expounds and analyzes the application status of Chinese elements in graphic design from two aspects: the application of Chinese elements in graphic design and its application connotation. Secondly, it conducts longitudinal research on the traditional and contemporary forms of Chinese elements. The text aims to give some inspiration to Chinese visual communication design to become a new vocabulary of Chinese culture under the background of the new era.

Keywords: Visual communication design; Design review; Chinese elements

1 Introduction

With the development of new media, more and more Chinese elements have appeared in contemporary visual communication design, and many new types, new materials and new forms have appeared in the background of contemporary visual communication. The summary of these contents has now become a so-called "Chinese style" style design. It makes the public's understanding of Chinese culture and spirit become a stereotype. Chinese elements have outstanding problems in graphic design in graphic language, color language and cultural communication.

2 The Application of Chinese Elements in Graphic Design

Chinese elements are contained in the visual symbol system. Chinese elements are produced by the continuous evolution and progress of Chinese culture since ancient times, and they reflect the daily production and life, culture and customs, psychology and spiritual outlook of the Chinese people [1]. Since the reform and opening up, Chinese designers have actively adopted various forms of Chinese elements and applied them in visual design to show "Chinese style", forming China's own unique design style

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C. Lin et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the 2024 9th International Conference on Modern Management, Education and Social Sciences (MMET 2024)*, Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research 880,

https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-309-2_15

and design trend on the world visual communication design stage. However, more and more problems have emerged in the application process of Chinese elements in contemporary visual communication design. It is mainly reflected in the application of Chinese elements in graphics, colors and culture.

2.1 Application of Chinese Graphic Elements

There are many kinds of traditional Chinese graphic elements with a wide range of themes, so it is worth thinking and exploring which ones can present the traditional Chinese culture through contemporary visual communication design. In the performance of Chinese visual art, more attention is paid to "advocate", "abstract", "long-term" and "harmonious". Chinese people are more inclined to symmetry, majestic, bold, and find the balance of Chinese style in these keywords. For example, in Muji designed by Kenya Hara, we can intuitively feel the "white, plain and clean" of his works. Japanese design pursues simplicity, which is very different from the European design pursuit. Japanese art and culture pursue "Buddhist mood" and "wabi-sabi", so we can feel the philosophy of "Buddhist mood" and "wabi-sabi" in Japanese design works. On the contrary, the style of our Chinese design today is "a hundred flowers blooming". A search of Chinese-style design works on the Internet, out are flowers and birds, mountains and rivers, the four treasures of the study, pavilions, red lights and clouds elements piled up at random, the abuse of Chinese traditional symbols, over time these elements not only can not reflect the spirit of Chinese design, but also fail to show the profound connotation of our traditional Chinese culture. Therefore, in the context of contemporary Chinese visual communication design, the application of graphic elements should select and design those elements that can reflect Chinese culture and Chinese spirit. For example, the cross-border design of Baiqueling X Forbidden City deeply explores the connotation of Oriental aesthetics, establishes a positive interactive relationship between the brand and traditional culture, and brings the brand into the life of the people through the communication of Chinese aesthetic philosophy and expresses the concept of the brand **Figure 1**.



Fig. 1. The cross boundary design of Baique Antelope × Forbidden City

For the visual design of "Chinese style" piled up with Chinese elements, what we should do now is to break these rigid thinking patterns, break through the stereotypes of "Chinese style" graphic elements, and walk out of the industry cycle of flowers and birds, ink painting, and landscape elements.

2.2 The application of Chinese Color Elements

The traditional Chinese color system is mainly based on the three-color system, the five-color view and the black and white two-color system, and is based on the spontaneity of the original color, focusing on the color of the object itself. Since the reform and opening up until today, the application of traditional Chinese colors has gradually transformed from extensive to fine, and its integration with contemporary graphic design can be roughly divided into three categories. First, the use of black and white elements in ink painting; Second, the use of red elements; Thirdly, the reference of Chinese traditional color system. In this refined process, some designs are difficult to escape the traditional genetic genes - the conceptualization of traditional colors. Now, if you search for Chinese-style design on Baidu, most of the pictures that appear in Chinese colors are filled with red, or the graphic design color application forms dominated by red, which can not help but lead us to think that China's traditional color system is so diverse, and China's traditional color philosophy is so profound. However, the works displayed in China's graphic design are also filled with a large number of "good start" and "Chinese red", so development, we not only have aesthetic fatigue but also visual fatigue. The designers of excellent graphic design works in contemporary China often express the deepest national emotions with the simplest and simplest color combinations. For example, we can find the inspiration of colors from the four seasons, and learn the color rules based on spring, summer, autumn and winter and 24 solar terms. These colors can not only represent the Chinese wind, but also convey the connotation of traditional Chinese color culture and express the folk customs of Chinese people.

Chinese traditional color philosophy is a cultural system with Chinese characteristics, which is formed by combining the ritual system of Confucianism, the philosophical thoughts of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. For the application of Chinese color elements in contemporary visual communication design, we should integrate the current Chinese environment, Chinese spirit and Chinese contemporary culture into People's Daily life, establish a contemporary Chinese color system and establish cultural self-confidence.

2.3 The Application of Chinese Cultural Elements

Chinese culture originates from Confucianism and Taoism. Confucianism is close to the mean and Taoism is conservative, which gives birth to the characteristics of "harmony" in Chinese culture. This "harmony" is in essence harmony. When emphasizing the relationship between man and the environment, it stresses the unity of heaven and man and the overall balance. Chinese element design in addition to the graphics, color and other factors to consider, more important is to pay attention to Chinese element design software - culture, from another point of view can also be called the visual communication design under the sense of cultural aesthetic.

Contemporary Chinese graphic design has gradually realized the significance of cultural aesthetic for design. However, due to the superficial knowledge level of Chinese culture, many designers only care about the "form" of Chinese element design

and do not pay attention to the "meaning" of Chinese element design. Founded in 2013, we focus on the brand identity design of copper Master, a high-end copper craft brand **Figure 2.**



Fig. 2. Copper master brand identity

The design uses the traditional Chinese lion image and traditional moiré pattern together, so it can be seen that the visual image conveyed by the logo is not relevant to the moral that the brand wants to convey, which is a typical design that only focuses on "shape" and does not care about the expression of "meaning". [2].

Design educator Yin Dingbang pointed out in his article "On the Meaning of Graphics" that there are four ways to combine graphics and meaning: one is to create graphics by meaning; Second, graphics to attract meaning; Third, in the process of observation, analysis, comparison and selection of graphics, those who need graphics judge the meaning of graphics according to their own knowledge and experience; Fourth, the function of graphics lies in the process of use, and the meaning can be realized [3]. Today, expressing the meaning of China is not a simple pile of graphic elements of China, but to integrate the spiritual connotation of Chinese people, cultural connotation, and characteristics of The Times into Chinese design. Traditional culture with national, regional and social characteristics not only affects the modern art movement, but also directly affects the modern design movement. The whole consciousness, ecological consciousness, humanistic orientation, elegant and vulgar view, pluralistic tendency in Chinese classical aesthetics have a good enlightenment to modern design.

3 Connotation of Application of Chinese Elements

3.1 Cultural Connotation

At present, few local visual communication design works in China have the application concept of Chinese elements. This requires us to cut into the traditional Chinese culture from the graphic elements, color elements and cultural elements to create a new design vocabulary that reflects the beauty of national cultural artistic conception.[4]

For example, the Chinese knot represents the traditional culture of the Chinese nation, has a unique Chinese color, and fully contains the wisdom of the Chinese people. Beijing 2008 Olympic Games and China Unicom's perfect innovation of Chinese knot **Figure 3.**



Fig. 3. Chinese Olympic knot

Giving it a new interpretation, the Chinese knot, a symbol of unity and peace, sends hope to peace-loving people.

It is a more effective and economical method to extract patterns with the characteristics of The Times and symbolic significance from traditional culture.[5] Chinese traditional culture has profound connotation and a long history, which makes it very natural and easy for outstanding designers in China to integrate traditional culture into their works under the background of contemporary visual communication design. The traditional totem element is also one of the effective ways to carry out the innovation of contemporary visual communication works and realize the innovation of Chinese style. This is also a very meaningful way for the inheritance of our art and culture, and it can present our excellent traditional culture to the people of the world in a new way.

3.2 Value Connotation

"Oriental beauty" is a kind of spirit and value connotation, which is a cultural spirit based on "Oriental beauty", taking traditional Chinese art forms as the carrier, and giving Chinese elements new meaning and value. Through the research, it can be found that the application of Chinese elements in the background of contemporary visual communication design should pay attention to two basic aspects: one is to combine the connotation of local ethnic culture with the art form. The second is to have Chinese traditional cultural characteristics and artistic heritage. In addition, in the context of contemporary visual communication design, Chinese elements are not completely equivalent to completely traditional elements, but should also be integrated into contemporary people's pursuit of beauty and yearning for the spiritual world to enrich its development connotation and value connotation.[6]

Under the background of contemporary visual communication design, the application of Chinese elements should pay attention to its own value connotation and innovation inheritance. One is to integrate national characteristics into art forms. The application of Chinese elements should reflect the Chinese national spirit, while the creation should be based on western modern scientific methods, combined with the

application of contemporary new media technology, and pay attention to the integration of traditional art forms and modern art forms. The second is to carry forward and inherit the connotation of excellent traditional culture. On the one hand, through the integration of modern technology to carry out innovative inheritance and innovative design, so that it can better integrate into the current era; on the other hand, in the design process, through the combination of traditional art forms and contemporary design language elements to create excellent works. The third is to spread and promote traditional cultural connotation under the background of contemporary visual communication design. On the one hand, the traditional artistic spirit can be integrated into the contemporary visual communication design, so that people can better feel the charm of the traditional Chinese artistic spirit; On the other hand, it will spread the excellent traditional Chinese culture to all parts of the world. Fourth, actively carry out international exchange activities in relevant fields. It plays a good role in promoting international communication in the field of modern visual communication design.

4 The Mining of Traditional and Contemporary Forms of Chinese Elements

4.1 Traditional Form

The forms of Chinese traditional elements mainly include three forms of expression: graphics, characters and symbols. From the point of view of graphics, there are some classic graphics in ancient Chinese culture, such as Tai Ji, eight diagrams, etc. In the application of traditional elements in contemporary visual communication design, we must combine the characteristics of contemporary elements and traditional elements to explore and apply them. In the process of specific creation, we should pay attention to the following aspects: First, extract the most representative cultural elements of our country and combine their characteristics to create; The second is to refine and redesign the extracted Chinese traditional elements; The third is to fully show the connotation of Chinese traditional culture contained in it; The fourth is to explore the Chinese elements in the visual communication design of the new era under the background of traditional culture, which provides a new way of visual presentation with the characteristics of The Times and national characteristics for contemporary visual communication design.

4.2 Contemporary Form

The application of Chinese elements in contemporary visual communication design is mainly reflected in two aspects: on the one hand, the inheritance of traditional elements, and on the other hand, innovation on the basis of inheritance. In terms of inheritance, it is mainly to retain and innovate the excellent traditional culture, so as to meet the needs of the development and change of contemporary visual communication design. In terms of innovation, it is mainly reflected in the appropriate and reasonable reference and absorption of Chinese elements from Western developed countries, so that Chinese elements collide with Western modern design concepts, and integrate them.

5 Concluding Remarks

In the context of contemporary visual communication design, the application of traditional Chinese elements can be seen everywhere, some of which have many problems, but there are still excellent designs that can represent Chinese culture and the spirit of The Times. However, Chinese design should have a unique Chinese style, and Chinese style should not only be limited to the heritage brought by history, but also require Chinese designers to change their thinking. Standing on the level of having a broad global vision and a rich framework of Chinese cultural knowledge to bring forth the new Chinese culture. The exploration and discussion of Chinese elements need to start from the perspective of "people", uphold the design concept of "making art the language of culture", use today's developed technology and multi-culture to reasonably enhance the dissemination and influence of excellent Chinese cultural design, and leave an ideological inspiration worthy of reference and learning for contemporary design education and cultural inheritance.

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