Research on Traditional Graphic Elements in Visual Design

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Abstract: Traditional Chinese graphic elements have a unique and rich cultural connotation in graphic design, which is of great help to the development and diversity of graphic design in the world. However, there are relatively few systematic studies on the specific application and influence of these elements in graphic design. Using literature review and case analysis, this study aims to explore the examples of the use of traditional Chinese graphic elements in the history of graphic design in the world, and analyze their application methods and effects. Through the collection of relevant literature and cases, this study conducts an in-depth study and analysis of traditional Chinese graphic elements used in design works. The survey results show that three quarters of people love and support the design with Chinese style elements. Traditional Chinese graphic elements have been widely used in graphic design and have a significant impact on design works.

1. Introduction

As an important way of visual communication, graphic design shows rich creativity and expression in different cultural backgrounds. As an important part of Chinese culture, Chinese traditional graphic elements have their unique aesthetic characteristics and rich cultural connotations, which have attracted wide attention and interest in the world. However, there are relatively few systematic studies on the specific application and influence of Chinese traditional graphic elements in graphic design. Therefore, this paper aims to deeply explore the application of traditional Chinese graphic elements in graphic design, and analyze its influence and significance on design works.

By means of literature review and case analysis, this paper collects and analyzes the relevant works and designers' practical experience of using traditional Chinese graphic elements in the world graphic design history. By systematically combing and studying these cases, we can deeply understand the application ways and effects of traditional Chinese graphic elements in graphic design, which will help to reveal the influence of these elements on the aesthetic value and cultural transmission of design works, further inspire designers to better use traditional elements in creation,

and provide new ideas and methods for cross-cultural design.

This paper first introduces the background and importance of traditional Chinese graphic elements in graphic design, this part will emphasize the cultural value of these elements and the aesthetic contribution to design works. Then this paper describes in detail the research methods adopted in this paper, including the steps and principles of literature review and case analysis. Through these methods, we can fully understand the application of Chinese traditional graphic elements in the world graphic design. Finally, this paper summarizes the research results, sums up the influence and significance of traditional Chinese graphic elements in graphic design, and puts forward the prospect of future research and practice.

2. Related Work

Many scholars have studied the application of traditional Chinese elements in graphic design. Among them, Lu Yan briefly expounded the artistic characteristics and basic classification of traditional Chinese auspicious patterns, then analyzed the correlation between auspicious patterns elements and modern graphic design, and expounded the specific expression means of auspicious patterns in graphic design, so as to study the practical application of Chinese excellent traditional auspicious pattern elements in the field of modern graphic design, in order to provide certain references for the graphic design industry [1]. Zhang Xuepei combined the color and graphic elements in Nuo mask to carry out cultural and creative redesign, and set up a new image for Nuo culture from the aspects of graphic elements, function and sense of form as well as the dramatic combination of Nuo mask with modern culture, helping to attract people's attention to traditional culture, promote traditional Chinese culture and increase the sense of cultural belonging [2]. Jia Ru believed that in the practice of graphic design, if we want to obtain an ideal visual communication effect, we must make a reasonable use of color. She said that in the current process of color application, many designers did not fully combine the traditional Chinese art colors, resulting in certain deviations in the actual application, which not only affected the visual communication effect of graphic design, but also reduced the artistic value of the works [3]. Wang Ruijuan introduced the innovative application strategy of ink and wash elements in graphic design to help designers make better use of ink and wash elements to inject more creativity and inspiration into design works, on this basis, the quality of works carried more cultural forms, put national culture on the world stage, improved national confidence, and provided a new channel for the inheritance of traditional excellent culture [4]. Yang Shuai pointed out that the integration of traditional cultural elements represented by Chinese characters into the visual design of packaging could effectively enrich the appearance of packaging and enhance the matching of packaging. Moreover, he found that the application of Chinese character elements in packaging visual design was not only conducive to the long-term development of Chinese character culture, but also conducived to the improvement of packaging visual design effect, which gave consumers visual impact and promoted the realization of higher-level consumption behavior [5]. Pan J discussed the ways and effects of integrating traditional Chinese elements in contemporary design, and he analyzed the traditional elements used in design works through case analysis [6]. Yang C M studied the application of Vietnamese products in packaging design and analyzed the impact of these elements on product cognition and consumer sentiment [7]. Li X discussed the influence of traditional Chinese culture on contemporary college students, and discussed the application ways and effects of traditional Chinese cultural elements in grammar [8]. Zhang K discussed the application of traditional architectural elements in interior design, and discussed the role of these elements in artistic expression and cultural transmission of fashion design [9]. Xiang F studied the integration ways and effects of traditional Chinese elements in contemporary interior design [10]. These studies all reflect the design methods of traditional

Chinese culture. This paper will discuss the application of Chinese wind elements in graphic design.

3. Method

3.1 Integrate Traditional Chinese Graphic Elements into the Historical Figures of the Work

The Fragrant Hill Hotel is one of Ieoh Ming Pei's classic works [11]. In the specific design of the Fragrant Hill Hotel, Ieoh Ming used many traditional elements in the architectural design. Among them, Fang Sheng pattern is one of the traditional Chinese auspicious decorative patterns, composed of two juxtaposed concentric overlapping diamond patterns, named "Fang Sheng". In mythology and history, it is the hair ornament worn by the "West Queen Mother", which has auspicious meaning, showing the ancient people's unity of heaven and man, the hope of seeking good luck and avoiding evil, and the meaning of life cycle, "concentric and double, mutual understanding". Figure 1 shows the front view of Xiangshan Hotel:

Figure 1: Real view of Xiangshan Hotel

Hong Kong illustrator Ni Chuanjing, whose illustrations perfectly blend Eastern and Western cultures and artistic traditions [12], has conquered the illustration world in New York with her unique painting style, and has become the youngest winner of the Forbes Art list. In her works, the image of rooster, one of the twelve zodiac signs of China, constructed by lines, is impressive, the picture is rich in content, full of colors and skilled techniques, and the Oriental style is just right, while adding modern fun elements, full of good wishes for the New Year. Figure 2 shows her work:

Figure 2: Works by Ni Chuanjing

3.2 Examples of the Use of Traditional Chinese Graphic Elements in the World Graphic Design History

The Chinese seal Dancing Beijing is a very famous case. With the design theme of the character "Jing" and the seal as the main form of expression, this logo combines the traditional Chinese seal and calligraphy and other art forms with sports features [13-14]. Through exaggerated deformation of artistic techniques, it skillfully transforms into a moving human figure running forward and dancing to meet the victory. It vividly expresses the enthusiasm and sincerity of Beijing to welcome guests from all over the world with open arms, while the running gesture conveys the idea and spirit of Olympic friendship, peace and progress, faster, higher and stronger. Figure 3 shows the Dancing Beijing logo:

Figure 3: Dancing Beijing

A notable collaboration is Louis Vuitton's limited edition custom hand-painted travel hardcase with de Gournay, a British handmade wallpaper and fabric brand that specializes in hand-painted traditional Chinese patterns, this collaboration with LV brings its unique hand-drawn art to travel hardcase design. This co-branded limited edition travel hardcase uses LV's signature hard case and is covered with a traditional Chinese pattern embroidered by de Gournay [15-16]. The patterns include scenes of Chinese dragons flying through the clouds, and each travel hardbox is hand-embroidered by de Gournay's craftsmen with attention to detail and precision. This joint limited edition travel hardcase showcases the joint efforts of Louis Vuitton and de Gournay in design and craftsmanship. It combines LV's classic travel hardbox with Chinese dragon elements [17-18], presenting a unique fusion of luxury and art. This limited edition hardcase is not only a practical travel tool, but also an item with collectible value and artistic taste, which shows respect and tribute to traditional Chinese pattern elements [19-20], while highlighting LV's status and quality as the world's top luxury brand. Figure 4 shows the physical display.

Coca-Cola has launched the 2017 Spring Festival limited packaging design in the Chinese market, this packaging design is to celebrate the traditional Chinese Spring Festival, while conveying the blessing and happiness of the festival to Chinese consumers. Red symbolizes luck, prosperity and happiness in Chinese culture, and is also one of the traditional colors of the Spring Festival. Coca-Cola's Spring Festival limited edition packaging uses bright red as the main color to reflect the happy atmosphere of the Spring Festival. The packaging is printed with a golden swallow,

which represents auspice and good luck and fits in with the celebratory atmosphere of the Spring Festival. The packaging design cleverly blends Coca-Cola brand elements with traditional Chinese patterns to create a unique visual effect [21-22]. This limited edition packaging design highlights the combination of art and packaging, Coca-Cola invited artists and designers from China to participate in the design process, through their creative and artistic expression, to make the packaging design more unique and cultural connotation. Figure 5 shows the package.
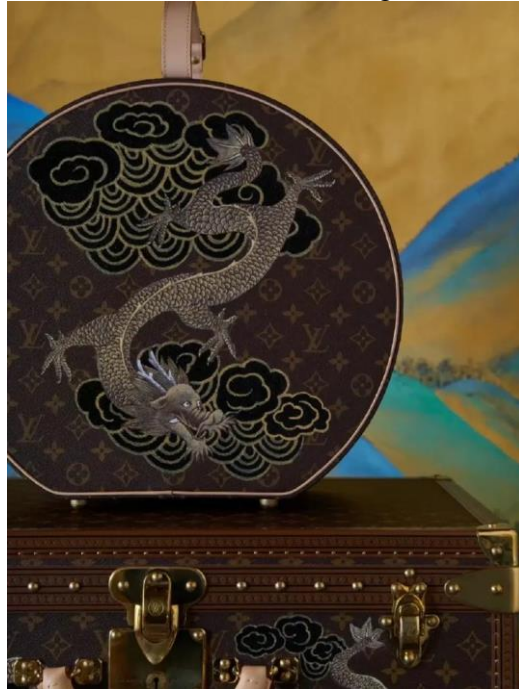

Figure 4: Chinese-style LV &de Gournay limited edition custom hand-painted travel hardcase

Figure 5: Coca-Cola 2017 Spring Festival limited packaging

Table 1 shows more specific examples of the use of traditional Chinese graphic elements in the world graphic design history.

Table 1: Specific examples

Year	Design Work	Designer/Brand	Chinese Traditional Graphic Elements Used
1990	"China Chic" Magazine Cover	Francesco Clemente	Chinese calligraphy
2008	Beijing Olympics Emblem	Guo Chunning	Chinese traditional patterns
2014	Louis Vuitton Chinese New Year Collection	Louis Vuitton	Chinese traditional floral motifs and cloud patterns
2017	Coca-Cola Chinese New Year Limited Edition Packaging	Coca-Cola	Chinese traditional "Fu" character and decorative patterns
2020	Nike Chinese New Year Collection	Nike	Chinese traditional floral motifs, cloud patterns, and dragon-phoenix symbols

3.3 Evolution of Chinese Graphic Elements in World Graphic Design

At the beginning of the 20th century, Oriental culture and art began to attract attention in the West, and traditional Chinese graphic elements were gradually favored by Western designers with their unique aesthetics and fine craftsmanship. These graphic elements, including flowers, moire, dragon and phoenix, landscape paintings, etc., have had an impact on the world graphic design through their elegance and mystery [23].

In the middle of the 20th century, some western artists and designers began to deeply study and learn from traditional Chinese graphic elements, and they introduced Chinese pattern elements into their design practice by learning Chinese calligraphy, painting and traditional crafts. With the acceleration of globalization, cultural exchanges become more frequent and convenient. Traditional Chinese graphic elements began to spread around the world through media, Internet and social platforms. Designers obtain inspiration and information through these channels, and integrate Chinese graphic elements into their own designs. At the same time, the rise of cross-cultural design also promotes the application and transformation of Chinese graphic elements in the world graphic design.

In contemporary graphic design, designers innovate and reinterpret traditional Chinese graphic elements, and they combine traditional elements with modern design languages to create new visual effects and expressions. This innovation includes the reconstruction of patterns, the use of colors, the change of forms, etc., which makes Chinese graphic elements maintain vitality and fashion sense in the world graphic design.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Audience Survey

In order to understand the audience level of graphic element design in China, interviews and field investigations will be conducted in this chapter. Survey 1 is to go to Starbucks stores for field

investigation, and conduct a 30-day survey on the sales volume of ordinary insulated paper packaging and insulated paper packaging with Chinese style for the same drink. Taking latte as an example, we communicate with Starbucks merchants offline to obtain the actual sales volume of two different lattes every day. By comparing the sales of the same drink in two different packages, we can understand the audience level of Chinese graphic element design. Survey 2 is to contact a hand-drawing blogger on Tiktok, who often posts his hand-drawn works and has a certain number of followers. He was asked to hand draw two works every day for a week, one of which was a normal hand-painted work, and the other was a normal hand-painted work with some elements of Chinese style. The two works were released at the same time, and the number of pageviews and likes of the works were counted, through which we could understand the audience's degree of Chinese style. Survey 3 is to issue questionnaires, the contents of which are opinions and evaluation on the design works with Chinese graphic elements. The evaluation is set as: A. Very like, B. approve and support, C. not interested, D. hate. There were 200 questionnaires in total, of which 100 were distributed in China and the other 100 were distributed abroad. After that, the questionnaires were collected and counted.

4.2 Survey Results

4.2.1 Starbucks store survey

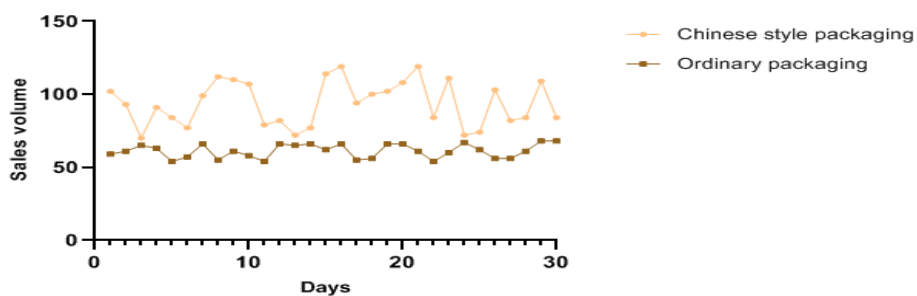Figure 6 shows the results of Starbucks sales survey:

Figure 6: Sales survey results

In the Starbucks coffee sales survey, the daily sales volume of lattes with Chinese wind insulated paper packaging is 70-119 cups within 30 days, of which No. 16 and No. 21 have the highest sales volume, while the sales volume of ordinary packaging lattes is 54-68 cups. It is obvious that the sales volume of lattes with Chinese-style packaging is much higher, indicating that Chinese-style packaging is more popular.

4.2.2 Illustration likes and page views

We conducted statistics on the likes and page views of illustrations posted by illustration bloggers on Tiktok, and the statistical results are shown in Figure 7.
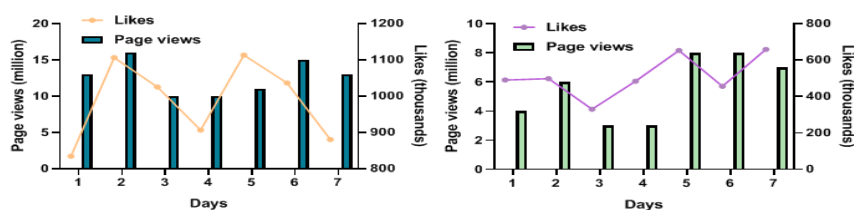

Figure 7: Likes and views

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In Figure 7, the left figure is an illustration with Chinese style, and the right figure is a normal illustration. According to the data analysis, the number of likes of illustrations with Chinese graphic elements ranges from 83.4 million to 1.113 million, and the page views range from 10 million to 16 million. The extent of audience can be imagined. The number of normal illustrations is between 33-659,000 likes, and the number of page views is between 3-8 million. Through comparison, we can know that illustrations with Chinese style are more loved by the audience.

4.2.3 Questionnaire survey results

The 200 published questionnaires were recovered, and the recovered results were visually analyzed, as shown in Figure 8:
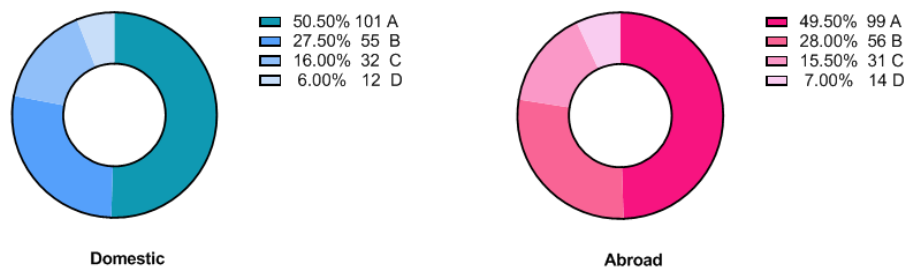

Figure 8: Results of questionnaire survey

The results of the questionnaire survey in China show that 101 people like Chinese style elements very much, 55 people approve and support it, and a total of 156 people express their love for it. The questionnaire survey in foreign countries shows that 99 people like Chinese style elements very much, 56 people support and approve, a total of 155 people like it. The results show that Chinese graphic elements are popular with three-quarters of the population.

5. Conclusion

The application of traditional Chinese graphic elements in graphic design is rich and diverse, which has a positive impact on the development of graphic design in the world. These traditional graphic elements have unique aesthetics and rich cultural connotations, giving design works unique visual charm and cultural heritage. In the history of graphic design in the world, we can see that many designers and brands use traditional Chinese graphic elements for innovation and practice. They combine traditional elements with modern design languages, blending elements from different cultures to create unique visual effects and expressions. This cross-cultural design exchange and integration has enriched the diversity and internationalization of graphic design works. Through the application of traditional Chinese graphic elements, the design works are not only artistic and beautiful, but also convey rich cultural information and emotional resonance. At the same time, the application of traditional Chinese graphic elements has also promoted the inheritance and development of traditional culture, providing new creative inspiration and visual language for the world graphic design.

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