

The Fusion and Collision of Ethnic Cultural Language and Font Graphic Design

Tingting Huang

School of Art and Design, Wuhan Textile University, Wuhan, China

Abstract: Through the market questionnaire survey of Chinese national culture, font graphic design, creative font and other related contents, the survey results show that the strong emotion for our national culture is people's aspiration, and the need for creativity in design has been unanimously recognized; The successful cases of "canned packaging of 56 ethnic groups in Wangzai" and "stamp design of 56 ethnic groups" are analyzed. The results show that it is necessary to inherit national culture and keep pace with the times; At the same time, the relevant literature was collected and studied in detail. Through the different analysis and comparison of the attitudes of scholars and market consumers towards national culture, we tend to draw the conclusion that our national traditional culture is like a gold mine, which is worth mining. The font should be dynamic and meaningful, not pure beautiful but indifferent. Adding the traditional elements of our national culture to the font design is undoubtedly a perfect blend of innovation and inheritance.

Keywords: Traditional national culture; Traditional auspicious characters; Graphic design of font; Creative font design.

1. Sketch

China is a country with numerous ethnic groups, with 56 ethnic groups forming China's vast territory. Each ethnic group has its own unique cultural customs and regional characteristics, and with the emergence and development of Chinese characters, each ethnic group is invisibly and closely connected. Chinese characters, as a pictographic symbol, play a role in communication and exchange with people, while also marking the entry of humanity into the era of civilization. Good design should be a design that inherits and innovates traditional culture. In today's developing metropolis, this information tells us that monotonous and uninteresting font promotion can no longer meet the aesthetic needs of the public. Therefore, creative fonts with rich ethnic characteristics can catch people's attention and leave a deep impression. This article mainly focuses on questionnaire surveys, analysis of relevant excellent cases, and research on scholars' attitudes. The questionnaire survey starts from two aspects: the public's attitude towards font design and their views on ethnic design. The survey results show that the public likes innovative and distinctive font designs, and has a strong sense of belonging and respect for their own ethnic culture. Through the analysis of excellent cases of ethnic design, a conclusion has been drawn that ethnic design is the right path to design, and it can effectively inherit and promote the culture of our own nation. It is a very meaningful design, and the public has a strong interest and love for this type of design. At the same time, we also collected the attitudes of relevant scholars towards the nationalization of font design. Although different students hold different attitudes, the vast majority of scholars believe that their own national culture should be inherited. National culture is a gold mine worth mining, and innovation is the eternal theme of design. It is also the only law to keep design products youthful. In summary, combining ethnic cultural elements with font design is a very meaningful move. This article will be divided into several chapters to elaborate on the content discussed above.

2. Font Design and Inheritance of Traditional Culture

2.1. The Story of Chinese Characters

Chinese characters are one of the oldest written languages in history, a cultural fruit that has been passed down to this day, and the soul of the Chinese nation's culture. Chinese characters, as a cultural phenomenon, have undergone continuous evolution from pictographic to abstract, from complex to concise, while also recording the transformation process of Chinese character art forms. The rich forms of Chinese characters have been a fascinating chapter in the art of Chinese writing for thousands of years, and the colorful writing forms have been a source of inspiration for font design.

2.2. Chinese Characters and Colorful Ethnic Culture

As scholar Nancy (2014) said, "Chinese characters and national culture are mutually reinforcing and achieving relationships." Chinese characters play an important role in China's national culture, and their production and development are closely linked to the culture of the 5000 year old civilization of the Chinese nation. China is one of the four ancient civilizations. Compared to ancient Babylon, ancient Egypt, and ancient India, where fonts and even culture have disappeared and only left some historical footprints, Chinese culture has not only been passed down from generation to generation, but also developed well. Chinese characters are essentially a visual form that transforms the sound symbols of language into graphic symbols. They record a rich historical and cultural context, serve as a language symbol carrier for a period of history, and gradually evolve into a tool for recording language and exchanging ideas. National culture also uses Chinese characters as a carrier to continuously inherit and continue, so that more people can feel the beauty of Chinese fonts and the soul of the Chinese nation.

2.2.1. The importance of font ethnic design

Font design has extremely high artistic and ornamental value in the field of graphic design. Many excellent and

innovative art and design works in the market today are increasingly inclined towards nationalized design, all of which are due to the profound cultural connotations and ethnic characteristics of traditional Chinese visual elements. As scholar Meng Hao (2013) put it; Chinese characters have undergone a long history of development, forming a unique font structure that contains profound Chinese cultural connotations. The types of ethnic minority characters in China are extremely rich, and the font forms and structures of each ethnic group have unique personalities. Integrating some features and elements from ethnic minority fonts into the design of Chinese character fonts and designing new Chinese character fonts is a new direction for the nationalization of Chinese character font design.

2.3. Visualization of auspicious characters

Tracing back to a long time ago, due to the different traditional customs and cultural backgrounds of various countries or ethnic groups, auspicious culture also emerged. The form and content reflected in auspicious culture vary greatly due to the differences between different ethnic groups. When people in China pursue the wishes of happiness, beauty, and peace, auspicious culture is created. In China, auspicious symbols and patterns may seem inconspicuous, but they are ubiquitous and unknown to everyone. The scope of the role of auspicious culture is also widely distributed, with its external image extending from race, tribe, totem to all aspects of people's daily life; Its implicit meaning extends and sublimates from the simple and intuitive pursuit of good wishes to profound meanings that indicate good luck, happiness, longevity, wealth, promotion, and the abundance

of descendants. This auspicious culture, with its unique meaning, stands out in traditional Chinese culture. As a special folk art, the auspicious character is a cultural symbol located at the intersection of Chinese characters, folk customs, calligraphy, traditional decorative patterns, auspicious culture, and Chinese character visualization. It is a cross reflection of these vibrant art forms. It is a Chinese character extracted from concrete reality, and highly condensed into new Chinese character graphics that still possess the beauty of calligraphy and Chinese character rhythm through regular disassembly and reorganization. Therefore, It must also be a unique perspective and entry point for us to observe traditional Chinese culture. Although Jiyu characters are indeed at the edge of these major cultural types and have not received much attention to them, they still permeate every aspect of our daily lives. Their unique expression, storytelling, fun, and highly condensed patterns all demonstrate the tension, aesthetic value, and application value of these text graphics. Therefore, it is necessary to explore their application in contemporary graphic design, Combining it with contemporary graphic design is believed to generate interesting chemical reactions. At present, there are many designers in the field of graphic design who use the "Hewen" design method for text and graphic design. As shown in Figure 1, Xu Bing's "Tian Shu" showcases and promotes Chinese culture through English calligraphy design. Another example is a series of works by Gu Wenda, which use "auspicious elements and auspicious characters" for graphic design and are widely used in graphic design. I believe taking auspicious culture as an example can fully illustrate how interesting and memorable the collision between these traditional ethnic cultures and font design is.

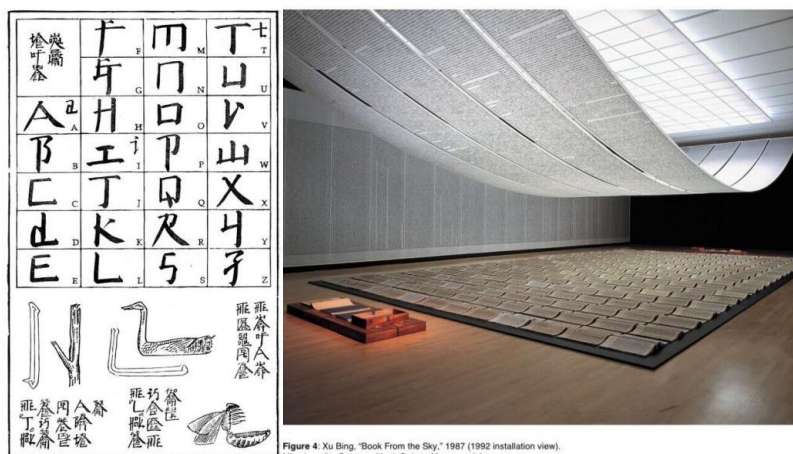


Figure 1. Xu Bing's Works - "Heavenly Book", 2020

3. Scholars' Cognition of Ethnic Culture in Font Design

3.1. Different Attitudes of Different Students towards Ethnic Culture in Font Design

The survey results show that many people have strong emotional support for their own traditional culture, believing that these cultures are symbols of an era. Although they have become "outdated" with the continuous development of society, the public still holds a nostalgic and unwilling attitude. Therefore, most consumers believe that traditional ethnic elements should be utilized and innovated, rather than completely abandoned. This is consistent with most of the relevant literature I have searched and read. For example,

Zhai Ji (2005) mentioned in his article "How to Activate Old Time Brands" that "local ethnic cultural elements are gold mines that we need to explore." Scholar Peng Bo (2012) also stated that "Chinese traditional culture has a profound impact. Cultural heritage is an important carrier of Chinese commercial culture. Chinese famous brands have strong economic strength and strong historical, cultural, and economic value. But there are also some differences, such as scholar Qi Han (2017) who holds the opposite view, believing that traditional Chinese time-honored brands and traditional elements should be replaced by new star elements. He believes that in today's era, those 'old' are outdated. They are symbols of the past, not the present, and should be eliminated by the times.

3.2. Commonality and Differences in Attitudes among Scholars

Whether scholars who support national culture or oppose it, their understanding of the importance of creativity for a brand is consistent. As scholar Wang Jin (2015) said, "Only innovation can promote development." Developing students' creative thinking in visual communication design teaching will greatly help them in design creation. The difference is also evident in different opinions on the use of ethnic cultural elements. In fact, in my opinion, the historical and cultural connotations of a nation and the touching history or legends behind them have accumulated tremendous energy in people's hearts. People want and hope to inherit these traditional Chinese cultures. What we as designers need to do is to effectively ignite these cultural energies under market economy conditions, rather than blindly abandoning traditional elements. Moreover, applying these traditional elements is not necessarily a new creation. Transforming advantageous resources into brand power is the biggest goal of using design to inherit culture, and it is a very meaningful thing.

4. The Significance and Manifestation of Graphic Design of Text

4.1. The significance of font and graphic design

Text graphic design not only accelerates the speed and effectiveness of information transmission, but also has its unique form beauty. Whether in logo design, packaging design, web design, or other design fields, it demonstrates its unique charm. Therefore, it plays an important role in modern graphic design and is an indispensable element in graphic design. The transformation of text and graphics into highly decorative ideographic symbols has been widely used in the fields of logo design, packaging design, and web design. Compared to thin text, graphical text not only plays a role in accurately expressing information, but also showcases its unique aesthetic and artistic characteristics, which are more ornamental. It makes the text no longer cold text, but also presents a unique form of aesthetic text with temperature and color. Therefore, it is necessary to study the specific application and expression methods of text graphics in graphic design. Let's start with the advantages of text and graphics in graphic design, and discuss some insights into their expressive techniques and specific applications in graphic design. Text, as an important element of graphic design, has strong plasticity. It has independent forms and can express rich forms in graphical language. It can also be combined with multiple characters to form meaningful graphics through font changes. The graphical representation



Figure 2. Visualized font design, 2019

of text holds a significant proportion in the text. Compared with ordinary printed text, graphical text not only has the advantages of quick information transmission, but also has the advantages of rich expression forms and high aesthetic taste. Specifically, the advantages of text and graphics in graphic design are mainly manifested in the following three aspects: firstly, the quick efficiency of information transmission. A good graphic design should convey information to the audience intuitively and vividly, clearly expressing the design content and intention. Text, as the best tool for conveying information, officially possesses this characteristic, and graphical text also has a unique way of conveying meaning through form. This is completely in line with the graphic design thinking mode that focuses on form. The graphical expression of text will become the focal point of graphic design if it can be fully and reasonably applied. The second is the form of beauty. Whether it is a simple Latin alphabet or a Chinese character with a glyph structure, the proportion between each part is harmonious, the structure is rigorous, and it is highly aesthetic, making it the highest level of abstract beauty. Pictography is the basic principle for the graphical formation of Chinese characters. Chinese characters are the only surviving hieroglyphs in the world, and their strong "graphic" meaning enables those who are not familiar with Chinese characters to "understand meaning through their form". Text and graphics are two important elements in graphic design. If perfectly integrated together, I believe it will collide and create exciting sparks. Text is the carrier of culture, containing rich cultural forms, infinite imagination and creativity, and possessing unique artistic charm. Modern graphic design should not only be limited to the manifestation of visual effects, but should also pursue unique designs that are novel, vivid, vibrant, and have national characteristics, striving to be emotional and moving.

4.2. Presentation Form of Font Graphical Design

The visual design of fonts includes stroke visualization, overall visualization, adding images, and labeling images. Image design is the most important feature of Chinese characters, as shown in Figure 2. Visualization design should pay attention to the position of specific images in the text and the relationship between graphics and text. Subsequently, there is the intentional design of fonts, as shown in Figure 3. When designing "mountain" characters, "fruit" characters, "door" characters, and "fish" characters, the intentional design of fonts is used. It emphasizes typical features or prompts to artistically process the text, that is, to associate the characters to be designed to form an abstract intention of the font.



Figure 3. Visualized font design, 2019

integrating ethnic culture into it and giving the public a sense of belonging. Such a design is undoubtedly the inheritance and promotion of our own national culture. Good design should not be like this, packaging can be like this, and logo can also be like this. Therefore, font design can also integrate national culture into it, giving the font a new national significance. In addition, there are stamp designs from 56 ethnic groups, as shown in Figure 9. The illustrations on the

stamps showcase the different characteristics and customs of China's 56 ethnic groups, fully showcasing the beautiful scenery of China's 56 ethnic groups to the public, in order to convey Chinese ethnic culture to the world. The value of this set of stamps in the market today is also significant, indicating the profound respect and love of the public for China's national culture.

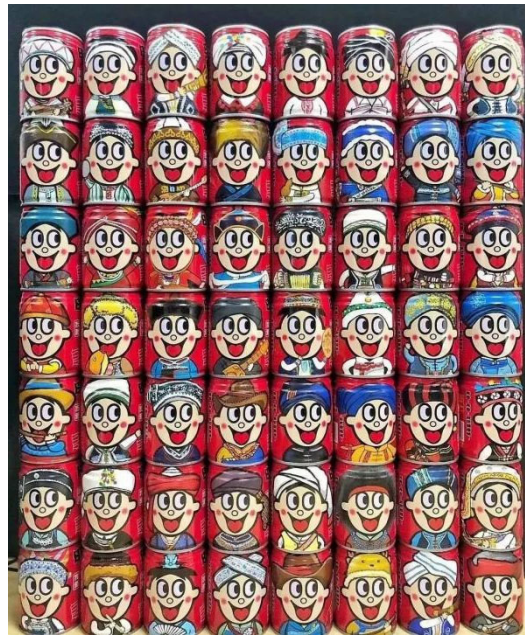


Figure 8. Canned Packaging Design of 56 Ethnic Groups in Wangzai. 2020



Figure 9. 56 Design of Ethnic Stamp Patterns, 2019

6. The Collision Between Creative Font Design and Ethnic Language

6.1. Creative font design

Creative design, which is clearly composed of two words: creativity and design, is the process or result of extending, presenting, and interpreting creative ideas and concepts in the form of design. In today's society, creativity should be able to create wealth in response to market demand. In my opinion,

it is customary to associate the term 'innovation' with pleasure. Because a design needs to give people an interesting feeling, it must have its own originality, which can be said to be novel. In today's society, only by constantly innovating can brands stand alone and invincible in competition. Innovation is a systematic project, and enterprises not only need technological innovation as support, but also need conceptual innovation as a guarantee. Creativity is precisely one of the elements that provides this new concept, new concept, new thinking, and new method for innovation. Therefore, in font

design, it is not just about pursuing accurate and effective expression of meaning, but also about studying its form of expression. In today's market, font design is constantly emerging, some font designs give people a dazzling visual effect, while others do make people forget in a blink of an eye. A major reason for the difference between these two current situations lies in the concept of "creativity". It is necessary to constantly engage in creative associations, study the profound meaning of the word, and innovate boldly. Only creative writing can make viewers remember it vividly and vividly.

6.1.1. Expressions of Creative Font Design

The creative design of text should grasp the meaning and structural form of the text itself, that is, a deep understanding and grasp of "meaning" and "form". Good creative ideas require vivid, effective, accurate, and reasonable forms of expression. Appropriate forms of expression can give new vitality to the text and add to the content expressed by the text. Its manifestation can be divided into two forms: "subject first, creating form with meaning" and "based on words, conveying emotions with form". The former requires creative writing to express a clear meaning, deeply demonstrate the connotation and meaning of the text, take "meaning" as the center of research and design, and treat the meaning contained in the text and the degree of expression with a sense of form, that is, "create form with meaning". This form of expression is suggestive and associative, which is worth the viewer's contemplation and contemplation, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of words. This creative method of "creating form with meaning" emphasizes the expression of the inner spiritual meaning of the text, and its form only serves as an auxiliary role. As shown in Figure 10, when designing the character "door", starting from the meaning of the text itself, it fully demonstrates the openness and vastness of going out. The latter approach, which focuses entirely on the form of characters and conveys emotions through form, is completely opposite to the former. It attempts to create a font style that combines form and spirit by starting from the form of characters and starting with form. Place the shape of the font in the first place, express meaning through shape, convey emotions through shape, and conduct creative font design through in-depth analysis and research on the structure of the font.



Figure 10. Based on Characters and Starting with Shape - Design of the "Door" Character, 2019

6.2. Combination of Creative Font Design and National Language

In modern design, creative font design should adhere to the principle of personalization. Only when fonts appear as a specific image can they stand out, gain the maximum understanding, attention, and love from viewers, and aim to pursue visualization, personalization, cultural connotations, and unique aesthetics. In the process of personalized font

creation and design, sometimes the way the text strokes are changed, and sometimes the structure of the reconstructed font is reorganized to start innovation. Creative font design is a creative thinking activity that involves a series of creative processes of visual thinking, such as refining and reshaping font structure, determining style, and selecting expression forms. Association and imagination are very important and widely used in creative thinking, and they are also one of the important conditions that determine the success of font design. In the process of font design, association and imagination are the refinement and sublimation of memory. Continuously expanding and creating is a concrete manifestation of creative font thinking representation. The visual expression of Chinese characters is the visualization of the meaning of the text. It refers to further conveying the meaning of the text through the visualization, overall visualization, and addition of visualization of strokes. By organically combining graphic and font elements, visual graphics are utilized to improve the transmission function of text based on the content of text information, thus achieving the goal of recognition. This creative approach creates a new visual context while also adding joy to conveying meaning. Freehand brushwork is an innovative way of thinking in Chinese character design, which also includes specific styling ideas. Generally speaking, people's understanding of the unique meaning of "form" is often through pictographs, which are translated into homophones and synonyms. Through the combination of graphics and graphics, the purpose of communication and exchange has been achieved. In the process of font design, the appearance of different fonts can bring different visual effects. As designers, we should further break the rigid image of traditional fonts and consciously strengthen the stylization and personalized characteristics of Chinese characters. To maximize the new and unique display of Chinese characters. In creative design, the idea and concept of combining graphic elements in the visual form of hieroglyphs should be innovatively designed, striving to create a new aesthetic realm. However, in artistic design, ethnic characteristics often bring a warm and profound meaning to the design. Each ethnic group has its own unique architecture, cuisine, music, customs, and so on, and they are all unique. As scholar Liu Guohui (2007) put it: "We have such high-quality cultural resources, we should make good use of them." Suggesting a set of unique and local creative font designs that belong to our own nation is a task that contemporary designers cannot ignore. Art comes from life, and design also comes from our daily lives. As designers, we should have a pair of eyes that are good at observation and exploration, constantly exploring the unique culture of our own ethnic group. Combining creativity with ethnic elements is undoubtedly a memorable action.

7. Conclusion

In summary, the author has obtained a large amount of discourse related to the paper from the collected literature and the attitudes of scholars. We have gained an understanding of the background of Chinese characters and traditional auspicious characters, as well as the related content of creative graphic font design. We have also found some core viewpoints on the organic connection between ethnic culture and font design from a large number of literature. Although there are two distinct views on whether traditional ethnic culture is worth using in design, it is worth confirming that scholars hold a consistent view on the importance of

creativity in design. Innovation is the only way to maintain the vitality of design forever. I believe that these two different perspectives can be merged into a better perspective, which is to find elements worth exploring in local ethnic culture, and combine them with contemporary creative elements to reshape, rather than blindly abandoning traditional elements, as some scholars believe, which is a wise move.

References

- [1] Tamami Komatsu Cipriani, Reaserch on Monolingual Font Recommendation based on Target Perception, London 2021.
- [2] Blanka Brzozowska, Graphic design - Steve Caplin on faking it with fonts, London 2011.
- [3] Keith Martin, Graphic design - Observe the font dress code, London 2015.
- [4] Laxmi Parida, A computational technique for general shape deformations for use in font design, London 2012.
- [5] Karl Moore, New fonts, England 2014.
- [6] Hello B. Dooley,Font design and graphic exploration, England 2013.
- [7] Blanka Brzozowska, Font design and graphics,London 2012.
- [8] McCoy, Katherine,Research on font design, England 2013.
- [9] Meredith Davis,History of font design, England 2011.
- [10] Unemi, T.; Soda, M.,Combination of creative font design and graphics, England 2009.