

The Application of Traditional Chinese Tattoo Patterns in Modern Packaging Design

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Abstract. With the progress of the times and the development of the economy, people's spiritual culture has also developed and their aesthetic awareness has reached a new height. For the millennial generation, most people no longer have a prejudiced attitude towards people with tattoos, and some even want to have their own tattoos. These days tattoos speak to the individuality and beliefs of a new generation of young people, using their skin as a vehicle to leave a lasting memory in the form of a needle and ink combination, but for those who prefer it but cannot get a tattoo, they often opt for tattoo stickers instead. Inspired by traditional tattoo elements, this paper takes the application of traditional Chinese tattoo motifs in modern packaging design as its inspiration, categorising and outlining traditional tattoo motifs, as well as describing the artistic characteristics of tattoo motifs, and then applying these tattoo motifs to modern packaging design respectively. Modern packaging design is an important part of modern design and is more decorative in design, generally using bright colours and eye-catching text. The integration of traditional tattoo art and packaging design not only breaks through the tattoo stereotype at the same time, but also innovates the expression of modern packaging design, enriching the decorative nature of packaging design while inheriting the tattoo culture.

Keywords: Tattoo Art; Traditional Chinese Tattoo Patterns; Redesign; Modern Packaging Design.

1. Overview of Tattooing

Tattoo, nowadays known as tattoo, but the traditional name in the past is tattoo, is the tattoo master use with ink needle piercing the skin surface, the ink into the dermal tissue, to form some patterns or words. People often like to tattoo their bodies with a variety of auspicious designs to gain spiritual power, to paint their favorite images on the monotonous skin of the body, to preserve the memory and to make it a permanent part of the body for life. It is a product of the intersection of culture and faith, and is the reason why people seek such painful beauty.

A look at the Dictionary reveals how tattoos were explained in ancient times: a tattoo was a custom or form of ritual that was popular in the early days of many peoples or tribes. It usually involved the use of needles to tattoo the entire body or a part of it, either with natural objects or geometric figures. Not only does the content vary, but there is also a difference between dyed and un-dyed, and it is generally used as a totemic symbol. In addition, the British Encyclopedia Britannica explains that piercing the skin and applying pigment to the wound to give the body a permanent design, or to create a raised article on the skin, is called 'tattooing'.

2. The Current State of Tattooing

Ancient totem worship, modern rebellion and vulgarity, modern fashion and aesthetics. In the 21st century, as our modern cities become more and more popular and our social values more and more diverse, tattoos have gradually ceased to be a special symbol of the underworld and have come to embody the essence of art. Today there are more and more people who love tattoos, and the variety of people who love tattoos is increasing. They have the names of their loved ones or pictures of their loved ones tattooed on their bodies to express their fidelity to love, but some will choose a favorite design to highlight their personality, idolatry and add to their sense of beauty.

3. Overview of Traditional Chinese Tattoo Patterns

3.1 Geometric Tattoos

Geometric motifs were created early in the world's history, and these motifs were particularly popular in ancient human cultures and were often applied to the various tribes that had the practice of tattooing. In particularly early tattoos, animal characters and other objects with distinctive natural forms were transformed into geometric designs made up of straight and dashed lines, more often than not due to primitive production techniques and simple tools. The geometric patterns in traditional tattoo designs are highly abstracted summaries of natural objects by ancient man, similar to the more concise style of hieroglyphics, reflecting an ancestral quest for beauty and a strong expression of consciousness. In their fieldwork, anthropological historians have found that the geometric patterns in traditional tattoos originated as an integral part of productive life, such as lines like ropes, weaves and nets, while another type of pattern, different from the simple lines, was found, formed by ancient man's reverence for nature and the exploration and observation of various objects, such as the sun, the moon, the stars, the clouds lightning, clouds, waves of water, fire, human figures, and other simple forms of tattooing. The images of these things were found to be uncomplicated and were reworked by people's minds to give them a typical representation, while other, slightly more complex geometric shapes were transformed from animal and plant forms and simplified to form new patterns.

3.2 Animal Tattoos

In primitive societies, where the power of the people was relatively weak due to the lack of developed tools, powerful or agile animals were often worshipped, and because they were deified, animal figures were often used for decoration, and in most cases tribal groups used the animal they believed in as a symbolic totem. In a few cases, by contrast, plants are also worshipped as totems, almost always out of awe at their unfamiliarity and, in a few cases, because of their hierarchical significance, such as power and wealth.

3.3 Tattoo Design of the Li Ethnic Group

Some experts have said, "Totem worship or religious beliefs like turning good fortune into good luck and praying for good fortune and peace are one of the important reasons why people once chose to have tattoos, and tattoos are one of the important carriers and expressions of primitive religious beliefs, while primitive religious beliefs in turn serve as motivation and spiritual support for people's tattoos." The Li people almost universally believe that frogs are associated with rain and fertility, and worship the mysterious power of the 'frog god', believing that it can bring good weather and a happy life for the people, so the complex tattoos of Li women often feature frogs. The traditional tattoos of the Li people are rich in frog designs, mainly among the Mei Fu Li and the Stop Li, and frog designs account for a large proportion of the tattoos. The frog motifs of the Mei Foo Lai are mainly on the limbs, usually in the form of geometric lines, with a degree of realism, while the frog motifs of the Stop Lai are mainly on a single lower leg, with a simple repetition of the frog motif. The symbolic meaning of the frog tattoo is mainly twofold: firstly, it is a wish for a happy life for the ancestors of the Li people and a desire for a harvest of food; secondly, it is a wish of the Li ancestors to have many descendants and a prosperous and strong community.

3.4 Textual Tattoos

In the traditional history of tattooing, tattoo designs in the form of scriptural symbols are usually presented in a single form, usually as large scriptural passages. The uniform size of the script and the close distribution of the forms create a certain rhythmic beauty. In China's Yunnan province, individual ethnic minorities still have tattoos on their bodies, which include plant and animal totems that bestow good wishes, as well as mystical religious symbols and texts that pray for happiness and peace. In discussing examples of tattooing with written motifs, it is important to mention the great national hero Yue Fei, whose almost household name 'Jingzhongzhongguo' is also a tattoo with good

wishes, and in Yue Fei's time the act of tattooing was socially acceptable, reflecting the design and application of writing in the act of tattooing. Talking of modern times, the use of text as a tattoo design, as shown in Figure 1, also influenced the foreign football star David Beckham - 'Life and death have a destiny, wealth and prosperity are in the hands of God'. One of the features of text tattoos that distinguishes them from graphic tattoos is the clear message they convey.



Figure 1. The use of text as a tattoo design

4. Artistic Features of Traditional Chinese Tattoos

The artistic features of traditional Chinese tattoo patterns are mainly in the form of symbolic, symmetrical and rhythmic beauty, each of which has its own characteristics. The characteristics are as follows.

Symbolic beauty is for the tattoo patterns sought by modern people, part of the population only cares about the decorative effect being good or bad, whereas in the case of the traditional Chinese tattoo patterns handed down in the present day, they are often endowed with a profound symbolic meaning. The symbolic culture of the early civilisations had little aesthetic value, for what was needed was the most straightforward conveyance of meaning, and the meanings conveyed by the tattoos varied from time to time, from totemic worship, to racial symbolism, to class distinctions, while the majority of people gave the traditional tattoos symbolic meanings of good hope, such as The majority of traditional tattoos have been given a symbolic meaning of good hope, such as to turn good fortune into good fortune or to pray for peace, while others have been derived from religious beliefs and the worship of 'gods' and 'Buddhas'. In short, most of the traditional Chinese tattoos are imbued with spiritual pursuits and good wishes, and are rich in cultural connotations.

Symmetrical beauty, even in modern art, is one of the most common forms of expression in painting techniques. The human form is symmetrical, and imagining a person with only one eye or only one ear is usually not considered beautiful. The human preference for symmetry is not difficult to understand; even the English poet Blake said that symmetry was a form of beauty, and poets looked for rhythmic counterpoint and neatly stacked lines out of a desire for formal beauty in poetry. In traditional tattoo patterns, the majority of the criteria for symbolic symmetrical beauty are geometric tattoo patterns, where the order of the pattern structure is arranged according to the principle of symmetry, allowing for a unique effect of visual balance.

Rhythmic beauty, tattoo patterns are similar to painting forms, the rhythm of the pattern picture is also one of the important factors affecting the effect of the picture. Through the point, line, surface of the sparse changes, the formation of rhythmic laws, the picture of the light and heavy to form a change of rhythm, can make the whole picture is rich in uniform decorative effect. For example, in the traditional frog tattoos of the Li people in Hainan, the scaled or curled lines of the tattoos express the rhythmic effect through changes in reality, incremental changes, and the orderly arrangement of lines of different thicknesses.

5. The Application of Traditional Chinese Tattoo Patterns in Modern Packaging Design

The most important feature of the tattoo pattern is that it is combined with the human body. When the pattern is established on the human body, it is accompanied by the pain signal to the brain, so it is deeply engraved in people's memory. For those who cannot have tattoos but love the art of tattooing, we have extended the culture of tattooing to the packaging of products that are closely related to people's lives. Tattoo patterns have a strong expressive power, and when combined with traditional Chinese tattoo patterns we make the packaging have a strong visual impact. At the same time, we recreate the meanings given by common tattoos and imitate the forms of tattoo expression.

5.1 The Application of Geometric Tattoos in Modern Packaging Design

Geometric tattoo patterns are simple in shape, basically composed of straight lines and folding lines, and through the change of lines, forming a rich geometric pattern, although the basic style is simple, but according to certain rules for the systematic arrangement, such as large in the set of small or repeated arrangement can form a rich composite graphics. As shown in Figure 3, the border of the box is decorated with a straight line forming a rectangular strip of trim while using a circular arrangement of a large centre over a small set, and adding a circular pattern to each rectangular contact point for added decoration. From the overall observation, the geometric pattern makes the packaging picture more flexible and rich, while making the structure of the packaging picture sense more stable.

5.2 The Application of Animal Tattoos in Modern Packaging Design

Generally speaking, traditional animal tattoo patterns are usually reflected in shadow painting techniques in accordance with the form and posture of the animal, which is different from modern realistic techniques, mostly in abstract form. As shown in Figure 3, the symmetrical form of the tattooed cat as the central visual centre is established, and two symmetrical tiger patterns are designed in imitation of the animal tattoo patterns, while drawing on the beautiful symbolic meaning given to the tattoo, "the tattooed tiger is not a tiger on the mountain" means that the tiger on the lower mountain is a food-seeking tiger, rich in momentum, while the tiger on the upper mountain is usually driven up the mountain by people. The tiger is usually driven up the mountain. The combination of the dragon and snake motifs in Figure 5 is intended to convey the theme of this project: 'tattooing or not tattooing' and 'the right and wrong of tattooing' as discussed by the Tattoo Research Community. As shown in Figure 4, the canvas bag packaging is made up of animal tattoos imbued with good intentions, and the style of the painting draws on the Japanese ukiyo-e style, which is like the traditional Japanese tattoo style, but the Japanese tattoo culture was passed on from China, something that is easily forgotten. In imitating the tattoo style, stencils are made using paper-cutting and carving methods, and then airbrushing is used to imitate the expression of tattoo fogging, while at the same time drawing on the bold coloring of tattoo patterns.



Figure 2. The 'tattoo research commune'



Figure 3. The effect of a single abrupt structure

5.3 The Application of Textual Tattoo Patterns in Modern Packaging Design

The effect of textual and geometric tattoo patterns is similar, with some having a single abrupt structure, while others are arranged systematically according to a certain pattern, giving them an overall unified appearance. As shown in Figure 2, the 'tattoo research commune' has been redesigned with an artistic font, which appears to have a single structure throughout the black image, but with the curved English text TATTOO, the effect of a single abrupt structure is greatly reduced. As shown in Figure 3 and 5, the text is arranged in an orderly circle with uniformly thick and thin lines, forming a rhythmic spatial contrast that is rich and varied, yet at the same time harmonious and unified in expression. Viewed from a distance, the overall form is generalised and simple and beautiful. The textual tattoo pattern not only reflects the love of folk culture and religious beliefs of the people of the time, but to a certain extent also brings together the design wisdom of the people of that era and contains a rich cultural connotation. As shown in Figure 4, the combination of good wishes and the addition of the textual slogans 'turn good fortune into good fortune' and 'have fun in time and laugh' makes the message conveyed by the packaging clearer.

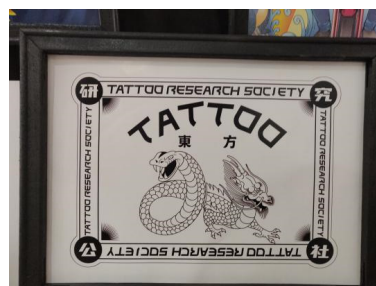


Figure 4. The combination of good wishes Figure 5. Contains a rich cultural connotation

6. The Significance of Traditional Chinese Tattoos in Modern Packaging Design

The addition of tattoo art to modern packaging design can lead to better development of modern packaging design. The traditional Chinese and Japanese tattoos explored in this study are rich and varied, providing a rich resource for modern packaging design and adding character to modern packaging design, giving it a new style that combines tradition and modernity. Although tattoos come in a variety of styles, the role is much the same. While people pierce colours into their skin, they are also expressing their attitude to life, an attitude that rarely occurs in life and is extremely determined, and on the other hand, the act of tattooing is also a pursuit of aesthetics. The inclusion of tattoo elements or expressions in modern packaging design is also a way of passing on the culture of tattooing, increasing the decorative effect while also conveying the formal and symbolic beauty of tattoo culture. With the development of the times, modern packaging design cannot remain unchanged. Unlike the old days when packaging could simply have the role of holding goods, modern packaging design requires more bold changes and innovations.

6.1 Theoretical Significance

With the development of the times, the influence of China's economy and culture is on the rise, and with it, people's consumption choices. Contemporary traditional art design has become an inseparable part of people's daily lives, and we can easily find the shadow of traditional design everywhere in our lives, while for traditional design as a whole, we can see that tattoo-style packaging products are almost non-existent. The use of traditional tattoo expressions in modern packaging art design is a way of understanding and drawing on the elements of tattooing to design works with bold colours and exaggerated shapes. On the one hand, the original intent of the subject is promoted, from the study of tattoo culture to the redesign and eventual application to the packaging for cultural

transmission. On the other hand, a comprehensive and in-depth study of the traditional patterns of tattoos has important implications for modern packaging design.

6.2 Practical Significance

The culture of tattooing is a medium of belief born out of the context of the times, and the whole culture of tattooing records the pursuits and aspirations of the people of that era. However, after more than 5000 years of dissemination and many ups and downs, it still retains the rich content and deep cultural heritage of traditional Chinese tattoo patterns. Packaging design has the function of cultural communication, and the combination of tattoo art and modern packaging design is a process of innovation. To show its own characteristics, modern packaging design should not only learn from advanced modern design theories, but also be based on the traditional culture of the country, and innovate packaging with modern national characteristics. We hope to accumulate more good design practice, deepen people's understanding of traditional Chinese culture and develop modern packaging design with our own cultural characteristics.

7. Conclusion

The application of traditional Chinese tattoo patterns in modern packaging design has given us a deeper understanding of traditional Chinese tattoo patterns, and is the first time that traditional Chinese tattoo elements are combined in modern packaging design, making modern packaging design have a certain cultural and historical significance. Each country has a different history and culture, which makes for a different style of packaging design, and our country has a rich and colourful culture with over 5000 years of history. Modern packaging design has a distinctive uniqueness, but is more decorative in terms of usability. Good packaging design can increase the value of a product, thus increasing the number of sales and satisfying the needs of consumers. Modern packaging design needs not only to be colourful, but also to convey the message of the product to the consumer, to show the design culture and style on the packaging and, more importantly, to convey the designer's ideas, understanding and perception of the artistic image. It is hoped that traditional Chinese tattoo patterns can be used not only on merchandise packaging but also in other areas.

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