

Research on the Composition of Regional Logos and Cultural Symbols Based on Minimalism

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ABSTRACT

This paper probes into the composition of modern regional logos and cultural symbols based on minimalism and its design ideas and methods, and explores the development trend of modern regional logos design, so as to help modern designers have more design ideas for regional logos. Based on the current successful cases of minimalist logos in China and foreign countries, this paper analyzes the minimalist cultural symbol composition method and its intrinsic nature in specific regional logo design, and explores the various influences of minimalism on logo design in order to further outline the future trend and vision of regional logo design. It also takes the logo design of Jiang'an District in Wuhan City as practice to further demonstrate the feasibility of ideas and methods. The minimalist cultural symbols have diversified influences on modern regional logo design. This design method can provide a reference for regional logo design and innovation.

Keywords: minimalism, logo design, cultural symbols, visual design

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's globalization development trend, most regions have begun personalized development that highlights cultural characteristics. Whether it is a large intercontinental, a country, a city or a small area or a street, having a symbol that represents the local domain is the current demand and trend of personalized development. The minimalist design style is being widely used in the field of logo design through its unique advantages.

II. MODERN REGIONAL LOGO DESIGN

A regional logo is a visual condensed essence of a region. Many cities in China have begun to attach importance to logo design. It can represent the spiritual outlook, cultural characteristics and planning expectations of this region. Therefore, a clear and impressive design feature is very important. The condensing process of regional logos and cultural symbols is a systematic project guided by ideas, centered on characteristics, and rooted in culture.¹ It's needed to stand on the basis of the traditional past and present as well as the future of construction and development, and express the image of a region as a whole from the aspects of geography, architecture, and humanity. Therefore, regional logo design can be raised to the height of development strategy. It is conducive to

the beneficial dissemination of the external image of the region, promotes the active development of the region, and forms a unique cultural character and cultural connotation exclusive to this region.

The concept of regional logos can be analyzed firstly. It needs a kind of recognition to convey the characteristics of the city, which is condensed by the public based on the existing locality, such as architecture and natural landscape, and traditional experience and aesthetics. It can help the viewer to identify the identity and structure of the region². Second, starting from its cultural characteristics, it can be extracted from its national character. National culture encompasses social, spiritual and material aspects, revealing the richness and complexity of the region, but it also has regular inheritance. While promoting local characteristics and culture, it also allows local people to deepen their confidence in local culture, which is conducive to the inheritance of the new generation. Finally, from the point of view of value, the composition of cultural symbols needs to be based on the previous content, and then the future planning and development direction of the city should be taken into consideration. While spurring a clear self-recognition, it forms a global, international, and diversified exchange and communication symbol.

¹ Li Li. Analysis of Shanghai regional logo design [J]. Many Schools of Art, 2012, 28(S1): 103-104+153.

² Wang Xuesong. Cultural factors of logo design [J]. Packaging Engineering, 2019, Vol. 40 (14):311-314.

III. MINIMALISM

When local logo design is based on minimalism, flattening is its essential feature. It reduces the barriers to understanding, and also greatly reduces the cost of dissemination. Therefore, logo design begins to consider the method of maximizing its functionality and value. This is what is lacking in current design, but it is also a very important point in the future trend of regional logo design. Tanaka Ikko expressed to the world the possibility of blending modern design and traditional art with a pure modeling concept³, and gradually highlighted the advantages of minimalism in practice.

From the perspective of design vision, minimalism is more geometric and symbolic. It is a more intuitive and more informative way of expression. After discarding the decoration and excessive repetition, through collision and screening, it finds the unity of maximum information function and the most simplified form. From the perspective of design function, the minimalist logo improves the efficiency of user information access, and effectively reduces the viewer's getting lost of the information in the logo.⁴ The regional logo design produced in this way will have a clear sense of cultural belonging and confidence in inheritance and development in the eyes of locals; for viewers in other regions, it will enhance or accelerate the links of attracting curiosity, understanding and paying attention to, and finally contacting consumption. This is the added value of concise beauty to the logo, and it is a form that follows function to use the few to defeat the many.

IV. THE INFLUENCE OF MINIMALISM ON THE CORE ELEMENTS OF CULTURAL SYMBOLS IN REGIONAL LOGO DESIGN

A. Minimalism and color elements

In visual communication, color is always in the first place, and it will make people form an intuitive impression, with a unique visual language and emotional voice. Minimalism can be achieved through "no color" — for example, black and white, or simplified color relationships.⁵ In the composition of cultural symbols, the minimalism or simple use of colors will allow viewers to form a single impression to convey. The simpler the color is, the more vivid and strong the viewer's impression will be. The psychologist Arnheim pointed out: "In visual

perception, once the simplest understanding of a certain paradigm is reached, it will appear more stable, have more meaning, and be easier to grasp."⁶ As shown in "Fig. 1", it is the logo of Kawasaki City, Japan. It is located in the northeast of Kanagawa Prefecture. Its development has benefited from industries such as steel, mining, electronics, and food, and has become one of Japan's well-developed industrial cities. Its logo is composed of three colors of red, blue and green and the Chinese character "川". These three colors are the three primary colors of colors. The three primary colors can mix all the colors, which also conveys the urban charm of the diverse development of Kawasaki City. While the logo of Xi'an, China (as shown in "Fig. 2") uses the colors of red and black. As a traditional revolutionary city, it fully conveys the historical background, traditional culture and humanistic spirit of Xi'an, and highlights the urban cultural connotation of Xi'an as a "famous historical city in the world" and "the world's top ten ancient capitals".



Fig. 1. The logo of Kawasaki City, Japan.



Fig. 2. The logo of Xi'an, China.

B. Minimalism and primary vision graphics

The primary vision graphic is the symbol itself. Minimalist graphic design uses more image expression, and it advocates "theme" is "function".⁷ In psychology, the human brain consciously minimizes the complex visual stimulation. Therefore, in the design process, what a designer should do is to simplify and abstract complex information, summarize and condense the impression and essence of the region, and combine it with the creativity of the form. For example, the logo of Guangzhou (see "Fig. 3") extracts elements of the famous landmark Canton Tower. The Canton Tower is

³ [Japan] Tanaka Ikko. The awakening of design [M]. Nanning: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2009: 1.

⁴ Du Hemin. Research on pan-flat design based on minimalism [J]. Packaging Engineering, 2017, Vol. 38 (4): 143-147.

⁵ Yang Shuguang. The expression of minimalism style in graphic design [J]. Grand Stage, 2014(11):84-85.

⁶ [the United States] Rudolf Arnheim. Art and visual perception [M]. Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1984: 15.

⁷ Zhu Changzheng. Brief Talk on the application of minimalism in graphic design [J]. China Press, 2011(16):85-86.

across the river from Zhujiang New Town and Haixinsha Island, 125 meters from the south bank of the Pearl River. The logo design mainly uses the form of the simplified Chinese character "广州", nested in each other, combined into the primary visual graphics, with rich details but not being onerous. Another example is the Jinniu District of Chengdu, the central city of Chengdu ("Fig. 4"). Its logo combines the Pinyin abbreviation "J and N" of Jinniu with the shape of a cow. The designer subtly integrated the energetic cow shape into the symbol. The designer combined the ox horn with the "J" artistically, which was born with the momentum of the cow pattern. It also contains concepts such as the strategic development of rail transit and technological research and development in the Jinniu area of Chengdu.



Fig. 3. Logo of Guangzhou, China.



Fig. 4. Logo of Jinniu District, Chengdu, China.

C. Minimalism and modern media functions

From a functional point of view, the reason for designing a regional logo is to hope that it can be applied and promoted to bring better positive benefits to the spread of regional image. The media methods of modern regional logos include: magazines, television, movies, books, the Internet, etc., while emerging media scenes include, for example, official web pages, urban apps, peripheral products of regional tourism, etc. The emergence of new scenes means that in so many different occasions, it is necessary for logos to have the function that perfectly fits the scene. On the one hand, the complicated design limits the application of the logo, and on the other hand, it also increases the communication cost between the designer and the

audience.⁸ In the design process, designers should change positions and think in different scenarios. It is necessary to consider the curiosity, group memory, common experience and other acceptance effects of the audience or users⁹. This is also a problem of communication efficiency and user access efficiency, and there is no doubt that minimalism can greatly improve efficiency.

V. TAKING THE LOGO DESIGN OF JIANG'AN DISTRICT IN WUHAN CITY AS AN EXAMPLE

Jiang'an District is an important urban area of Wuhan City, Hubei Province. It is located on the north bank of the Yangtze River and is a core component of the Hankou Plate. It is also the site of the former Wuhan site of the CPC (Communist Party of China) Central Committee and the former site of the Wuhan National Government. Tu Wenxue, deputy director of the Advisory Committee for Policy Decision of the Wuhan Municipal People's Government, believes: "Jiang'an District is the starting point of the modernization of Wuhan City, an important window for opening to the outside world, an important heritage site of Wuhan's red blood, and the political center of Wuhan City. Its four distinctive features are enough to make it a veritable area of the best." Jiang'an District is a starting point for the modernization of Wuhan City with the unique charm of the integration of eastern and western cultures. Here is the gathering place of the red culture, where the revolutionary road is explored, chosen and struggled. Here is the political center of Wuhan City and the seat of the municipal party committee and municipal government. Regardless of its geographical, political, economic, cultural and other aspects, Jiang'an District exists as a humane and warm central city in Wuhan. Therefore, in the design of the logo of Jiang'an District in Wuhan City, the author takes the concept, characteristics and culture as the direction of the design thinking, lays the roots in the tradition, nationality, locality and worldwide nature of Jiang'an District, makes its expression characteristics clear, and optimizes multi-scene applications and modern communication efficiency based on the minimalist style.

After understanding the clear design requirements and collecting many cultural information materials, the author practiced and designed the logo as shown in "Fig. 5". The logo extracts the shape of the Pinyin abbreviation "J·A" of "Jiang An" and the shape of the Chinese character "江" as the main visual elements, and after repeated adjustments, they are cleverly combined.

⁸ Lei Qing. Research on the application of minimalist style in layout design [J]. A Vast View on Publishing, 2017, (1):50-52.

⁹ Jing Lina, Wang Haifeng. The influence of media fusion on the design of modern urban cultural logo [J]. Packaging Engineering, 2019, Vol. 40 (6): 75-79.

It seems to be both the Pinyin abbreviation and the Chinese character "江". First of all, its appearance looks like a loving heart shape as a whole, and it is also an extended arrow shape, expressing the positive and infinite development of Jiang'an District as the central city area of Wuhan City. In addition, it is accompanied by the propaganda slogan "Jiang cares for the world, and An hides the ancient and modern", and in the form of a acrostic pair, it fully reflects the meaning of Jiang'an District as the "heart" of Wuhan. In terms of color, it chooses the combination of red front view and black text, which is both strong and warm. It also expresses the meaning of Wuhan as a historically revolutionary city and Jiang'an District as the center of urban development.



Fig. 5. Logo design of Jiang'an District, Wuhan City, Hubei Province.

VI. CONCLUSION

Geographical logos reflect people's feelings and expectations for a piece of land. It can help the region to promote the image of the city in a lasting and in-depth manner, thereby enhancing its influence. It is not blindly pursuing the best and the must, but using a rational attitude to measure the "reasonable value of the world."¹⁰ At the same time, in this new era, how to make the design of regional logos not get lost in the trend of information explosion, and how to create logos with both aesthetic value and functional value are worthy of every designer's thinking.

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¹⁰ Cheng Peng, Li Yajun. On minimalist design trends [C]. World Chinese Design Academic Association: Tianjin Association of Design, 2010: 2.