

# Application of Minorities' Artistic Elements in Graphic Design

Wenhong Li<sup>1</sup>, Liheng Zhang<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tianjin College, University of Science and Technology Beijing, Tianjin, 301803, China

<sup>2</sup>Hebei Academy of Fine Arts, Shijiazhuang, 050700, China

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**Abstract.** Minorities' artistic elements express the characteristics of their traditional culture. To a certain extent, the visual elements of artistic elements represent the symbolic general term of minorities' cultural features in the aspect of visual art. To correctly apply the visual artistic elements of the minorities, it can effectively improve the national character and overall artistic level of the graphic design. Only after deeply understanding the connotations of the minorities' visual elements and actual expressive abilities of different visual elements, can the modern graphic designers actually improve the overall level of applying the national artistic elements in the graphic design, strengthen the artistic values and commercial values of the artistic works.

## Introduction

During the long historical evolution, our minorities have formed national cultures with characteristics, which contain abundant of artistic elements. Among which, visual elements of the minorities' art can highlight personalized cultural characteristics of different minorities. Therefore, by taking the visual elements of the artistic elements as the example, this paper analyzes the concrete application of minorities' visual elements to the graphic design. It is hoped to offer corresponding theoretical reference for other artistic designers, further to improve the personalized development level of graphic design in China.

## Basic Connotations of Visual Elements among Chinese Minorities' Artistic Elements

Modern artistic design mainly draws materials from the visual elements, which are those cultural artistic elements existing in visual state, such as image, character, appliance, color, pattern, architecture. For instance, Chinese knot, Chinese calligraphy, Chinese ink and wash painting, woolen New Year pictures, Chinese paper cutting, shadow puppet existing in Chinese cultural artistic field can represent visual elements forming in Chinese traditional cultural development. In production and life that people's vision can achieve, corresponding imagination and association will come to mind, further to form unique impressions on every related object. Being relative to non-visual cultural elements in Chinese traditional culture, visual cultural elements among the minorities' artistic elements are studied, which mainly highlight the overall characteristics of the minorities' culture and represents that China's cultural system possesses some collections of visual symbols with characteristics of the minorities. Such as the national character of Tibetan nationality, character and horse head string instrument of Thangka and the Mongol nationality[1]. Visual cultural elements of the minorities are special symbols representing the culture of minorities. When people see related visual elements in life, they must associate those with the minorities, further to deepen their impression on the culture of minorities. Visual elements in every national culture has been gradually formed during the long historic deposits and passed down from generation to generation. To a certain extent, it embodies the basic aesthetic concept and historical emotional sustenance of the minorities, which is the important cultural memory and symbolic logo generated during the development and recognition process. The important feature of the minorities' visual elements formed during the development refers to that, it has been widely recognized in the society out of the nationality, which is one of important criteria different from other nationalities.

## **Basic Categories of Visual Elements among the Minorities' Artistic Elements**

Usually, basic visual elements of the minorities' artistic elements during the development are mainly divided into three classifications, respectively are character symbol, color symbol and corresponding image symbol. Next, this paper shall make detailed analysis on these three major categories.

First of all, the character symbol. As an important carrier of the minorities' culture, the character is an important component of the national culture. To design the character symbol is actually to transfer the conceptual language of the national culture into the visual language. It is the process that people vividly treat the character language participating in the design through corresponding designing method and gradually construct visual and visualized symbol system<sup>[2]</sup>. Through designing the national character symbol, it can pass on cultural connotations represented by the character symbol to the public efficiently, and also express certain aesthetic significance based on the designed visual character symbol, further to generate the comprehensive efficiency. Innovation application of the character symbol to the graphic design can enrich the concrete connotations of the graphic design to a certain extent and fatherly expand the application scope of the graphic art, further to greatly strengthen the visual effects of graphic art.

Secondly, the color symbol. To the graphic design, the color symbol is one important element for drawing materials and designing method. The color has relatively important cultural connotations and symbolic significance in China's cultural art. Through collocation among different tones, saturation and hue by certain artistic means, it can bring different aesthetic enjoyment to the public. To a certain extent, it can express the spiritual qualities and aesthetic characteristics of the minorities. For instance, to most minorities, red represents being auspicious, besides, has certain function of driving the evil and warding off bad luck. Black represents being stable, solemn and sad. Part of Chinese traditional culture often use black to render the death and comparatively depressed atmosphere. However, what calls for attention is that, different nations have totally different preferences for the same color sometimes. Thus, the graphic designers need to make delicate inspections on the national connotations while applying the color symbol.

Finally, the image symbol. Essentially, the image symbol displays the external expression and solidification in the cultural layer of aesthetic flavor during the process people recognize the society. It has the identity with the character and color symbol. During the long historic evolution process, the image symbol is also aesthetic expressions of the nature, social life and the human beings, which represents the historic deposits of traditional culture<sup>[3]</sup>. Due to the natural geographical environment and historical development period, there are certain differences among different nations. Consequently, the minority culture with national characteristics have also been created during the development, specifically including architecture, service, music, catering, container, corresponding customs and religious ceremonies. Moreover, these elements have gradually become those image elements with national characteristics in the graphic art design under the interpretation of related designers. It can be said that, the image element is the most widely used national artistic visual symbol among the applications of graphic design.

## **Concrete Application of Visual Elements to the Graphic Design among Minorities' Artistic Elements**

With a vast territory and abundant resources, China possesses 56 minorities. During the thousands of historical cultural evolution, people of all nationalities use their own intelligence and labor to create quite abundant national culture for China, which has been passed down during the development and finally constituted such a profound, long-standing and well-established cultural artistic system--traditional civilization of China. Of which, there are inexhaustible materials of national culture that China's modern graphic design can draw from.

Since the middle of last century, as an important artistic discipline, China's modern art graphic art design has gradually emerged. On the basis of further development of China's modern scientific

technology and gradually improved economic development level, it has gradually become an emerging comprehensive discipline. Moreover, the main theoretical researches include production technology, art and social life, which have comparatively close relationships. The modern graphic art design hopes that, through corresponding researches and practice, it can finally design and create products which can both have excellent performances and conform to the society's basic aesthetic rules, so as to satisfy all relevant needs of human in the social life. It can be seen that, modern graphic design is closely related to the life and production of the public, which represents human's corresponding assumptions, plans and conceptions in the daily life. Consequently, it has a certain future, which plays an assistant role in transforming people's production and life and creating more comfortable living environment<sup>[4]</sup>.

From the above discussion, it can be seen that, visual elements among the minorities' artistic elements have been gradually developed during the historic evolution of all minorities, which aim at satisfying their own material and spiritual requirements. These minorities' artistic elements have visible color, image pattern and corresponding social customs, create corresponding conditions for integrating the minority culture into the modern art design field and offer certain opportunities for the minority culture to face the whole world. Thus, in the graphic design field of China's modern society, related designers can fully analyze and sort out visual cultural elements of the minorities and make reasonable utilization in the design, gradually increase the national characteristics of China's graphic art design. On the basis of inheriting the essence of China's traditional civilization, it can promote further development of localized graphic art design of China.

To apply the visual elements of the minorities' artistic elements into the graphic design, it is a comparatively complex and systematic project. During this process, what calls for attention is that, according to the traditional artistic design philosophy, application of minorities' visual elements to the modern graphic design is not merely a simple simulation of all characters, colors and images of the minorities' visual elements, but to integrate the minorities' traditional culture and aesthetic flavor deeply rooted in traditional culture into the graphic design by piling, collocating and combing various elements. Moreover, during such a process, it needs to pay attention to the exploration and creation of all minorities' visual elements. Therefore, to apply minorities' visual elements to the graphic design, modern graphic designers need to make scientific innovations of the traditional visual culture. Except for attaching great importance to the spiritual layer, they should also pay attention to the following aspects during the design and practice application:

### **Correctly Understanding Basic Cultural Connotations of Visual Elements among Minorities' Artistic Elements**

During the long historic period, China's minorities have created colorful artistic cultures, which have endowed the national artistic elements with unique connotations to a certain extent. Therefore, to apply the visual elements of the minorities' cultural art to modern graphic design, related designers must strengthen their understanding about the connotations of the minority culture, so as to avoid wrong expression of design language caused by wrong understanding, further to improve the innovative thought and national cultural atmosphere of the graphic design<sup>[5]</sup>. For instance, in the traditional thought of Yi nationality, black is no longer a negative image according to the tradition, which just becomes the color advocated by that nationality; while the Mongol nationality generally considers that the orange and purple are more auspicious. Classical visual elements of Xinjiang Uygur-- "Aidelaishi" takes blue as the basic tone. In addition, it applies the red, yellow, blue and green to make coordination, which not only possesses quite strongly visual effects, but also heavy national atmosphere. The external wall of Arklaishu Musuem (quite famous in the graphic design circle) just properly adopts the relatively typical "Aidelaishi" visual elements, with unique national flavor.

### **Paying Attention to Organic Integration Among Design Form, Content and Element**

Graphic art design not only has to attach importance to organic combination of all related visual elements, but also emphasizes on the harmonious unification between the form to be expressed and spiritual connotation of the product. For organic integration among all visual elements, people should

organically integrate the minorities' visual elements with other related elements in the graphic design, pay attention to the harmonious communication among all elements and avoid mechanical application, in case of affecting the design effects. However, as the content and form, designers should emphasize on highlighting deep connotations of the product by external form, and try to avoid the phenomenon of merely paying attention to the form and neglecting spiritual connotation of product. Only by actually guaranteeing harmonious unification among all related design elements, form and content during the design process, can it actually improve the actual quality of graphic artistic product. The cover of the Koran translated by Ningxia People's Publishing House just combines the visual elements of traditional culture of the Hui nationality, which takes light green as the background color, white Islamic grain as the basic element. Thus it seems rather solemn and steady, with vivid characteristics of Arabic culture, which brings strong visual impact on human. It not only fully expresses the coordination of aesthetic spirit between the Han culture and Arabic culture, but also highly integrates the external form with content through graphic design, further to show the dignified and serious features of the Koran.

### **Correctly Mastering the Proportion of Application**

During the concrete application process, according to spiritual connotations of different elements and aesthetic demands of appreciators, people need to determine the proportion of visual elements among the minorities' artistic elements, so as to avoid excessive packing and affecting the design effects. Meanwhile, to apply all related visual elements, people should make reasonable allocation of different elements, and then try to bring enjoyment of beauty for people through scientific allocation as much as possible. For instance, in the architectural and clothing design, China's Tibetan nationality just pay attention to the allocating proportion of all related visual elements. They usually select the four colors during the design process, respectively are red, black, white and yellow. Moreover, most colorful lines are arranged horizontally. With bright colors integrated with each other, it brings quite strongly visual effects.

### **Conclusion**

"The nationality is the world as well". In the modern society with consistently changing aesthetic requirements of the public, it is every graphic designer's responsibility and obligation to make an organic integration of different aesthetic concepts and artistic cultural elements of all nationalities in China, complement each other's advantages, so as to strengthen the overall development role of China's graphic design industry. The main pursuit of related graphic designers is to integrate China's national spirit into the spirit of world, integrate the ancient spirit into the future, further to promote the national traditional culture. Meanwhile, it can enrich its own designing characteristics and promote itself to develop better in the future.

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