



The Connecting Link Between Chen Zhifo'S "Sixteen-Characters-Formula Design Principles" and Chunghwa Traditional Design Thought

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June 24, 2021

The Connecting Link between Chen Zhifo's "Sixteen-characters-formula Design Principles" and Chunghwa Traditional Design Thought

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Abstract—With his own research, education and practice, Chen Zhifo and other early pattern educators made a creative and arduous exploration of Chunghwa modern design. Chen Zhifo put forward the "sixteen-characters-formula design principles" about pattern creation, with which as the center, the core of Chunghwa modern design constructed and developed. It was Chen Zhifo that opened up the precedent of Chunghwa modern design, which will continue to carry forward in the new era of inheritance.

Index Terms—Chunghwa design thought, design innovation, pattern culture, design teaching

I. INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the 20th century of Chunghwa modern design, the early pattern education paid attention to the absorption of traditional visual schema, based on the comparative study and integration of Chunghwa and Western cultural ecology, breaking through the boundaries between new learning and old learning, making the past serve the present, making foreign things serve China, learning from the past and making innovations. Inspired by the ups and downs of western modern design, Chen Zhifo, on the basis of inheriting the Chunghwa design tradition, adhering to the concept of "Western design as the body, Chunghwa tradition in the use", observing the source of Chunghwa design tradition, integrating Chunghwa and foreign countries, put forward the concept of "pattern culture". Chen Zhifo systematically studied "beauty in form" and "methodology", carrying out in teaching and practice of pattern design, with which as the center, Chen Zhifo put forward the "sixteen-characters-formula design principle" about pattern creation, "the meaning of vision, the image of freedom, the order of grid, the formation of evolution". Chen Zhifo constructed and developed the core attainments of Chunghwa modern design, and opened up the precedent of which. Mr. Chen Zhifo has undoubtedly become one of the most important and representative founders of Chunghwa modern design education. Just as Feng Zikai [1] called him "the earliest researcher of pattern culture in Chunguo". His ex-

planation on pattern culture is the wealth of Chunghwa modern design education, and contributing an excellent cultural and artistic heritage of our nation.

II. PIONEER AND INVENT

In his decades of design education career, Chen Zhifo has always adhered to the educational concept of "let the student know better than his teacher" and trained a group of experts of pattern culture theory such as Zhang Daoyi [2], who still has a profound impact on art design teaching today. Especially in today's rapid development of design education, more and more students who study abroad and are deeply influenced by the contemporary western postmodern design trend. After they come back from their studies, they are more or less with the brand of Western art and design teaching. Some people enter colleges and universities and become teachers of art design teaching, many of whom have grown into teaching backbones. However, among them, also some young teachers who do not know the Chunghwa design tradition, only respect the foreign culture, and even despise the design tradition. These people's thoughts more or less affect the students. Today, Chunghwa contemporary design, which is in line with the world, seems to be more and more "systematic". In fact, it is more and more in the shadow of western design. In recent years, an Academy of fine arts has put forward the concept of "Oriental design" and established the Oriental Design Institute. Literally, "Oriental design" seems to have great ambition to get rid of the western design. But we should be alert that if the "Oriental design" can not return to the "spiritual source of Chunghwa design tradition" and return to the origin of "the road of Chunghwa design tradition". We can't get rid of the dilemma of just coming out of the tiger den of western design worship and entering into the wolf's nest of Japanese design worship. Chunghwa design should not be "shrouded" and "show timidity" again by Japanese culture after losing our Chunghwa design tradition confidence of more than 100 years. Since the new culture movement, Chunghwa design has

experienced the exploration from “pattern culture” to “Oriental design” today. The concept of “pattern” is constantly updated and changed. Although from “pattern” to “graphic design”, “contemporary design”, from “pattern culture” to “decoration art”, “Arts and crafts”, to “art design” and “design science”. There has been a change in the name, but we are getting away from “Chunghwa design”. Looking back, in the teaching of art design, the pattern theory system created by the older generation of graphic experts such as Chen Zhifo, still plays a pivotal role in guiding. In the 21st century, we should return to the lineage of “pattern culture” to continue and develop, recover cultural self-confidence as soon as possible, re-examine the irreplaceable basic position of “pattern” in the teaching of Chunghwa arts and crafts and art design, seriously think about the reconstruction of Chunghwa modern “pattern culture” system, and find out the road of “Chinese design culture”, which is becoming increasingly important and urgent.

III. SEEKING IN TRADITION

Throughout the history of Chunghwa design, pattern culture, not only graphic design, is undoubtedly the most important. Ji Cheng [3], the originator of Chunghwa design culture, said in “Xiangdi-Yuanye”, “in the design of any building, we should first consider the connection with the water source, and the site selection of the foundation should first investigate the source. Check the source of water, and reasonably arrange the buildings along the natural flow direction of water source.” If we carefully “investigate the source and flow” of art design, we will find that no matter which special needs or special direction of art design can be summed up as “pattern design”. The so-called design science, in the final analysis, is pattern culture. In other words, pattern design is the premise and condition of all creative design, or the foundation of creative design. The “stability” and “accuracy” of pattern design determine the possibility of expansion and success of a “good design”. Chen Zhifo’s theory of “pattern culture” and the “sixteen-characters-formula design principle” of pattern creation summed up in the teaching of “pattern culture”, have always been the important theoretical basis of modern Chunghwa design education. It is also the inheritance and extension of the four characters design principle of “Following”, “Borrowing”, “Composition” and “Appropriateness” advocated by Ji Cheng, the originator of Chunghwa design. The meaning of vision comes from “Following”, which is to find out the exact cause of a design and skillfully to follow. In Ji Cheng’s view, the success or failure of a design work depends on the craftsman 30 percent and the designer 70 percent. In other words, 30 percent depends on whether the craftsman (the maker) implements the design concept well, and 70 percent depends on the design concept of the master (the designer) and the success or failure of the “pattern” produced by this concept. Chen Zhifo also believes that art and crafts are not simply “archaic”, but a combination of industry and art. Its development is “closely related to human life”, which has both practical and aesthetic functions, and “practicality” is “force”, and “aesthetic” is the “cause” to follow. In other

words, the pattern is the result of the designer balancing the “potential” of practicality with the “cause” of aesthetics, which constitutes the duality of design. The composition of patterns must have two elements of “practicality” and “Aesthetics”, the so-called “Aesthetics” includes the beauty of content and form. The beauty of form can be divided into the beauty of shape, color and decoration. It is through the interaction between the beauty of content and the beauty of form that the designer creates the “image state and visual meaning” of the pattern closely around the “practical” (potential) elements - safety, convenience, pleasure and adaptation, as well as the stimulation of the desire to use. Therefore, “under the guidance of” practicality of “force”, the “Aesthetics” show the tension of beauty in form, in shape, color, volume, line, etc., and display it in lofty, beautiful and joyful emotions, from “image” to “artistic conception”. The image of freedom lies in “Borrowing”, in which everything that already exists can be the object of your free use. Ji Cheng believes that the so-called “borrowing”, “regardless of distance no matter it is far or near”, “all become the object of expression”. “where defect or indecent place, should be cleverly weakened or covered, where good place, should have a panoramic and integrated view”. It is the heart and soul of the designer to combine heaven and earth with human beings. Similarly, Chen Zhifo thinks that patterns are design with changes, and this change itself is an exploration of “free design”. Change is the feeling of things of different nature when they are adjacent to each other. No matter concrete or abstract patterns, they are all “valuable because of change”. This change lies not only in the beauty of the style itself, but also in the richness of forms. It is the intertwining of formal beauty and design method that constitutes Chen Zhifo’s “artistic life” design. In this “aestheticization” design, the subjective emotion and objective nature do not stick to the realism of nature, but build a new visual order, and create a free kingdom of patterns higher than life and supernatural by the inevitable kingdom of life. The order of grid lies in its “Composition”. According to Ji Cheng, the “Composition” of design does not come into being out of thin air, nor does it exist independently, which comes out of design culture of “Following” and “Borrowing”. It is when design enters a certain stage, from “towering mountains” to “holy heaven”, whether it is direct or indirect either “Following” or “Borrowing”, on the basis of the visual meaning and the “so-called” skillful and appropriate “Composition”. Similarly, in the pattern of Chen Zhifo, the so-called “grid order” is not so much the result of the pattern, but rather a visual structure built before the design, or directly a pattern method. The purpose is to achieve free deployment and control through the “relationship” processing of this grid design method, so that the whole design can be carried out orderly. After using a clear “free design” to express disorder, the “grid design” to express order, the “Composition” will achieve a space balance between order and disorder. “Appropriateness” in evolution. The evolution of environment structure, visual scene, space field, psychological atmosphere and overall construction should be appropriate. The so-called “Appropriateness” here in Ji Cheng is not so

much the “unity of the bamboo in the eyes, the bamboo in the heart and the bamboo in the hand” [4] of the designer, but rather the “opportune time” of the designer to “close when it is good”.As Ji Cheng said, “if it’s suitable to build a pavilion, build a pavilion. If it’s suitable to build a viewing platform, build a viewing platform. The road between them can be designed to be tortuous and graceful. This is what we call ‘delicate and just right’.”The beauty of “appropriateness” in a design is that everything when you say nothing at all. Chen Zhifo’s “sixteen-character-formula design principle” is a summary of Chinese design methodology, which provides an effective design basis for patterns (Arts and crafts).It not only does not cut off the tradition, but also requires innovation, seeking the image of pattern design from visual meaning to freedom.In the “irregular” symmetry and change, there are both “free design”to explore the local space change of the pattern, and “grid design” to grasp the rhythm of the whole pattern and the continuity of time, and seek the concrete and abstract artistic state in the unity.It can be called “poetic dwelling” of Chunghwa design.

IV. TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Following Chen Zhifo’s “sixteen character formula design principle”, I have made several rounds of tests from theory to practice in the teaching of graphic design application, trying to make contributions to the gradual formation of modern Chunghwa pattern culture design system. FirstStrengthen the study of traditional Chunghwa arts and crafts theory, consolidate the theoretical basis of students, expand their thinking of art design. The course of “new folk pattern cultural and creative product design” was set up.In practice teaching, students are encouraged to summarize the laws of design aesthetics and find out the basic methods of art design innovation.On the basis of understanding and mastering the characteristics, features, styles and forms of folk patterns, students are required to summarize and select and extract design elements.In accordance with the principle of taking the essence and removing the dross, students are asked to imitate traditional patterns, and a typical representative unit pattern is designed based on the combination principle of geometric shape and point line and surface.The pattern of each unit is synthesized and arranged in the way of plane composition, and the arrangement mode can be selected by students independently, such as repetition, emission, variation, dislocation, etc. In combination, the students are required to add a variety of forms with artistic imagination space, and design a complete and innovative folk pattern from rhythm, size, rhythm, contrast, coordination and other forms.

Teaching example 1

Our students designed a new pattern for Nanjing brocade. Taking these unit patterns as new elements and integrating them into a new suitable form is a brand-new national image with the characteristics of folk patterns and the style of the times Figure 1 innovative design of “Moire”. Second, new ideas, new measures and new techniques are systematically introduced into teaching. In teaching, from the perspective of

modern art design, I analyze and draw lessons from traditional Chunghwa aesthetics, highlighting the transmission of Chunghwa culture in design. I think these innovative graphics and patterns represent the fission and reconstruction in the changing times, and they are in pursuit of an innovative design concept.(Figure 1 innovative design of cloud pattern of Chunghwa cloud brocade) The accumulation of Chunghwa cultural spirit has been integrated into all aspects of our life, thinking and concept. In teaching, I encourage students to pay attention to the creation of artistic conception of Chunghwa painting, the establishment and expression of artistic language program, compare the differences of Western painting concepts, make rational analysis, and extract Chunghwa art design concepts.

Teaching example 2

Kunqu Opera is known as the living fossil of Chunghwa drama. Kunqu Opera as the theme of cultural and creative art design, is not only a tribute to Chunghwa ancient traditional culture, but also draw nutrition from Chunghwa traditional culture. Kunqu Opera is the originator of traditional Chunghwa opera, but it is also a living fossil to be excavated in this era. I guide the students to create “Kunshan Tune”, extract the typical representative elements of Kunqu Opera, such as clothing, musical instruments, names of the opera tunes, modeling performance and so on, trying to visually present the different associative artistic space brought by the singing tune of Kunqu opera art Figure 2 Kunshan Tune) Third, we should learn from the old and bring forth the new, pursue the unique expression of Chinese cultural and creative art design, and explore the charm of reconstruction. Design itself is a kind of language, it can make people’s understanding and communication more convincing. The inheritance, development and innovation of design language is the mission of modern design. It has been a long-term topic in the design field to transform, refine and use the traditional art language with modern aesthetic concepts, so as to make it rich in the characteristics of the times and apply it to modern design. Let the traditional cultural elements become inevitable by chance, such as flipping, superposition, size, displacement, etc. all new forms are practiced in the design, and many ideas are realized, enriched and completed in the design. To bring forth the new through the old, to take on a new look, to form a new system with national characteristics and life, which represents the new vitality given to it by this era.

Teaching example 3

The graphic replacement in “the Phase of Cloud”. The topic of “the phase of cloud” is based on Nanjing Yunjin, which makes a great contribution to the shape of cloud. It breaks the routine of traditional auspicious cloud pattern, finds a breakthrough from the elements, and explores the creative design of visual sense from shape similarity to spirit similarity. From complexity to simplification, from appearance to interior, we can transform, modify and adjust in many aspects to achieve the ideal state, and carry out different forms of combination and layout design, and finally create a new visual image of Nanjing Yunjin (Fig. 3 “the Phase of Cloud”

) Teaching benefits teachers as well as students. We should strive for mutual benefit and win-win results. We should find the roots of traditional Chinese art and design in the long run of Chinese arts and crafts, and dig the beauty of art design in the long stream of Chinese aesthetics.

REFERENCES

- [1] Feng Zikai, formerly known as Fengrun, is a modern Chunghwa painter, essayist, art educator, music educator, cartoonist, calligrapher and translator. Feng Zikai published more than 170 paintings, works and translations in his life. He is the beginning of Chunghwa modern comics and is praised as "the most artist like artist in modern Chunguo" by international friends.
- [2] Professor Zhang Daoyi is a famous historian of Arts and crafts, folklorist, educator and patternist in Chunguo. He is the main founder of the discipline of contemporary art in Chunguo, the founder of the Department of art in Southeast University, and the convenor of the art discipline evaluation group of the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council. Zhang Daoyi's research covers a wide range, especially pays attention to the research of folk art, pays attention to the connection with social humanities, folk customs, production and life, comprehensively analyzes the complex phenomenon of art, and puts forward the law of art development from unitary culture to diversified culture.
- [3] Ji Cheng, the word Wu Pi, assumed name Pi Taoist. Born in the 10th year of Wanli (1582), the year of death is unknown. His native place is Songling (now Tongli Town, Wujiang District, Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province). Ji Cheng, garden builder, designer, design theorist in Ming Dynasty, considered as the originator of Chunghwa design culture. His gardening theory contributes the earliest and most systematic gardening work in Chunguo—— "Yuan Ye ", also is known as the earliest and the first monograph on the theory of garden art in the world. It not only influenced Chunguo, but also spread to Japan and Western Europe, and became a classic work of gardening. "Yuanye" is consists of three volumes, which are divided into 12 chapters: Theory of creation, theory of garden, phase of land, foundation, building, installation and demolition, doors and windows, walls, paving, piling, stone selection and landscape borrowing.
- [4] The three stages of Zheng Xie's bamboo painting in Qing Dynasty were as follows: he got up in the morning to see the bamboo, got the "bamboo in the eyes", created the "bamboo in the heart", and finished painting to become the "bamboo in the hand".