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RETURN TO NATIONAL ORIGINS IN CONTEMPORARY CHINESE ART AND DESIGN

Abstract: This study explores the return to national origins in contemporary Chinese art and design through the revitalisation and reinterpretation of traditional cultural symbols, aesthetics and compositional methods. Drawing on François Jullien's concept of *dé-coïncidence*, the authors contrast Western ideals of fixed adequacy with Chinese process-oriented aesthetics, highlighting the role of spontaneity, interrelation and symbolic dynamism. The article analyses how traditional elements, such as motifs from Dunhuang murals, national colour symbolism, garden aesthetics and iconic forms, are adapted in modern graphic design, architecture, product branding and university logos. By examining these developments, the study demonstrates that modern Chinese visual culture maintains a dialogue with its cultural heritage, blending innovation with reimagined continuity of tradition.

Keywords: Chinese visual culture, national identity, traditional symbolism, contemporary design, François Jullien (*dé-coïncidence*)

Introduction

According to François Jullien, coincidence (*coïncidence* in French) originally carries a geometric meaning: the exact superimposition or overlap of two things¹. However, Jullien expands this notion within his philosophical framework, contrasting it with *dé-coïncidence*. He understands coincidence as a state of complete adequacy, conformity, adaptation and stability – for instance, the harmony between matter and spirit, the alignment of identity with itself, or fitting into the world and its established order².

In Western thought, especially in classical logic and ontology, such coincidence has traditionally been regarded as the foundation of truth and stability. In the arts, this ideal manifests as the pursuit of perfect resemblance and imitation of nature. In life and existence, coincidence may correspond to a state of full adaptation and satisfaction³.

Yet, Jullien argues that any form of adequacy or conformity that stabilises and settles becomes motionless, sterile, limiting and ultimately “deadly” to living dynamism. It represents an impasse, a dead end. This fixed coincidence creates a kind of positivity, which becomes self-sufficient and ceases to evolve or “work on itself”. In contrast, existence consists in continually stepping beyond this settled conformity, which Jullien refers to as *ex-sistere*, literally “standing outside.”

Jullien places this critique in sharp contrast with Chinese culture. In his reading, Chinese thought and aesthetics do not rely on the ideal of fixed coincidence or adequacy as understood in the West. Instead, they emphasize processuality, transformation, interrelation (*interaffectation*, or *gan-tong*)⁴, spontaneous arising (*xing*)⁵, the immanence of the world’s dynamism, and the subject’s integration within this continuous process⁶. Truth or reality is not defined as correspondence with a fixed entity (“Being”), but as coherence within ongoing becoming (*devenir*)⁷.

¹ F. Jullien, *De-coïncidence: D’où viennent l’art et l’existence*, Grasset, Paris 2017, p. 7.

² *Ibid.*, p. 10 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-16. F. Jullien not only posits a West-China contrast, but points to the potential of „reading” Chinese thought as an alternative without essentialism.

⁴ F. Jullien, *L’absence d’inspiration: Représentations chinoises de l’incitation poétique*, “Extrême-Orient, Extrême-Occident” 1982, no. 1, *Essais de poésie chinoise et comparée (4e trimestre)*, p. 69.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 44. In the Chinese philosophical context, the term *xing* has multiple meanings, e.g. „nature”, „intrinsic nature”.

⁶ F. Jullien, *Essai : «Fonder» la morale, ou comment légitimer la transcendance de la moralité sans le support du dogme ou de la foi (au travers du Mencius)*, “Extrême-Orient, Extrême-Occident”, 1985, no. 6, *Une civilisation sans théologie? (2e trimestre)*, p. 45.

⁷ F. Jullien, I. *La conception du monde naturel, en Chine et en Occident, selon Tang Junyi (La valeur de l’esprit de la culture chinoise, Zhongguowenhua jingshen jiazhi, chap. V, en*

Chinese conceptions of artistic creation (*xing*) are rooted not in transcendent inspiration⁸, but in a spontaneous impulse emerging from contact with the world. This leads to dynamic unfolding (*déploiement*) of meaning or feeling⁹, something not entirely fixed or exhausted¹⁰. Aesthetic values such as *fadeur* (blandness or subtle neutrality)¹¹ and the “aftertaste” (*reste de saveur*) reflect this ongoing dynamism and resist precise definition or perfect adequacy¹².

In summary, while Western thought has often sought truth and stability in fixed coincidence, Jullien shows how Chinese thinking privileges dynamism, process, and continuous change. In doing so, it enacts a dé-coïncidence, breaking away from the Western ideal of fixed adequacy, thus revealing the limitations that this fixation imposes.

In the era of globalisation, the use of traditional Chinese elements is becoming an important cultural marker of China’s national identity. Against the background of international trends in architecture, art, and design, China has been using traditional visual images and symbols, calligraphy and ink painting motifs, polychromy with colour symbolism, and established decorative techniques of fine arts. In this case, the source of imitation can be ancient wall paintings of a secular and ritual nature, which are the quintessence of the national style¹³. However, it is worth noting that the use of stylized images of celestial apsaras – *feitian* or modernized motifs of Dunhuang shrines in modern design¹⁴ and works of art is devoid of ritual context and is perceived only as a tribute to tradition, just as the approach to contemporary Chinese landscape design is freer¹⁵.

particulier § 2-3-4-5, *Taiwan, Zhengzhong Shuju*, 75 s.q.), “Extrême-Orient, Extrême-Occident” 1983, no. 3, *Le rapport à la nature : notes diverses (4e trimestre)*, p. 120.

⁸ F. Jullien, *Essai : «Fonder» la morale...*, p. 37.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹⁰ F. Jullien, *Éloge de la fadeur : à partir de la pensée et de l'esthétique de la Chine*, Philippe Picquier, Paris 1991, pp. 37-41.

¹¹ A value positive aesthetic quality in the Taoist tradition.

¹² F. Jullien, *Éloge de la fadeur...*, p. 74.

¹³ Y. Ding, I. G. Sandu, *Genesis of Images and Technique of Ancient Chinese Wall Painting*, “International Journal of Conservation Science” 2021, vol.12, iss. 4, pp. 1309-1326.

¹⁴ I. Sandu, S. Wang, B. Boros, Y. Ivashko, A.V. Sandu, P. Tišliar, *Analysis of the Wall Painting of the Dunhuang Fresco as a Basis for Its Preservation and Restoration*, “International Journal of Conservation Science” 2024, vol. 15, pp. 371-388.

¹⁵ S. Wang, I. Sandu, *The Influence of Political Events and Ideology on the Formation of the Picture Concept of Dunhuang Caves Frescos*, “International Journal of Conservation Science” 2023,

The aim of the presented study was to explore the defining features of Chinese art and design, determined by the religious syncretism of Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism in combination with Feng Shui, and to trace the use of national motifs in contemporary Chinese art and design. This necessitated the use of the following source base:

- publications dedicated to the national and regional characteristics of Chinese art and architecture¹⁶,

vol. 14, iss. 4, pp.1443-1462; S. Wang, I. Sandu, K. Paprzyca, O. Ivashko, O. Kravchuk, T. Yevdokimova, *Genesis of the Planning Structure and Ceilings of Dunhuang Sanctuaries*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2024, vol. 15, spec. iss., pp. 349-370; M. Żychowska, Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, A. Dmytrenko, N. Kulichenko, X. M. Zhang, *The influence of traditional Chinese landscape architecture on the image of small architectural forms in Europe*, "Landscape Architecture and Art" 2021, vol. 18, no. 18, pp. 59-68.

¹⁶ M. Krupa, Y. Ding, V. Tovbych, L.Gnatiuk, *Sakralność, mitologizm i realizm. Malarstwo ścienne dynastii Han i jej wpływ na dalszy rozwój chińskiej sztuki i architektury*, "Wiadomości Konserwatorskie - Journal of Heritage Conservation" 2020, no. 63, pp. 116-124; Y. Ding, M. Orlenko, Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, M. Krupa, K. Kusnierz, I. G. Sandu, *The Specificity of the Restoration and Monument Protective Measures for the Preservation of Historical Chinese Gardens*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2021, vol. 12, iss. 3, pp. 1003-1026; Y. Ding, I. G. Sandu, *Genesis of Images and Technique of Ancient Chinese Wall Painting*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2021, vol. 12, iss. 4, pp. 1309-1326; Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, A. Dmytrenko, T. Kozłowski, D. Mykhailovskyi, *Influence of structural schemes on the shaping of historical wooden buildings: On the examples of traditional chinese pavilions, pavilions of the chinoiserie style and ukrainian wooden churches | Wpływ układów konstrukcyjnych na kształtowanie zabytkowych obiektów drewnianych na przykładzie tradycyjnych pawilonów chińskich, pawilonów w stylu chinoiserie oraz ukraińskich kościołów drewnianych*, "Wiadomości Konserwatorskie - Journal of Heritage Conservation" 2021, no. 67, pp. 49-60; Y. Ivashko, D. Kuśnierz-Krupa, P. Chang, *History of origin and development, compositional and morphological features of park pavilions in ancient China*, "Landscape Architecture and Art" 2019, vol. 15, no. 15, pp. 75-82; Y. Ivashko, D. Kuśnierz-Krupa, P. Chang, *History of origin and development, compositional and morphological features of park pavilions in Ancient China*, "Landscape architecture and Art" 2020, vol. 15, no. 15, pp. 78-85; Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, P. Zueva, Y. Ding, T. Kuzmenko, *Continuity of traditions and innovation in modern landscape design in China*, "Landscape architecture and Art" 2021, vol. 18, no. 18, pp. 94-103; Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, *Modern "Chinese-Style" Arbours: Image Authenticity or Distortion?*, in: *Defining the architectural space. The truth and lie of architecture*, W. Celadyn, ed., Oficyna Wydawnicza Atut, Wrocław 2020, pp.19-31; S. Wang, I. Sandu, *The influence of Political Events and Ideology on the Formation of The Picture Concept of Dunhuang Caves Frescos*, "International Journal of Conservation Science" 2023, vol. 14, iss. 4, pp. 1443-1462; S. Wang, I. Sandu, K. Paprzyca, O. Ivashko, O. Kravchuk, T. Yevdokimova, *Genesis of the Planning Structure...*, pp. 349-370; M. Żychowska, Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, A. Dmytrenko, N. Kulichenko, X. M. Zhang, *The influence...*, pp. 59-68; Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, A. Dmytrenko, J. Kobylarczyk, M. Krupa, *Specifics of stylised shapes of chinoiserie-style pavilions as the basis of their restoration*, "Muzeologia a kultúrne dedičstvo" 2024, vol. 12, iss. 2, pp. 27-41, doi: 10.46284/mkd.2024.12.2.2.

- works that interpret style as an expression of national identity and regional characteristics¹⁷,
- publications devoted to the meaning of the terms “art” and “artistic”¹⁸,
- works in the field of conservation and restoration of cultural heritage¹⁹,
- research into the specifics of professional training²⁰.

The scientific novelty of the research lies in the following:

- contemporary Chinese works of art and their correspondence to authentic samples are analysed;
- trends in the development of contemporary graphic design and methods of using modernised elements of Chinese national culture in it are characterised.

The range of questions outlined by the study, the purpose, and the objectives of the study determined the choice of scientific methods. The methods of historical analysis, culturological analysis and art historical analysis made it possible to present traditional Chinese culture as a holistic phenomenon that

¹⁷ Y. Ivashko, T. Kuzmenko, S. Li, P. Chang, *The influence of the natural environment on the transformation of architectural style*, “Landscape architecture and Art” 2020, vol. 15, no. 15, pp. 101-108; A. Korniev, S. Rybalko, Z. Zhang, *The Art of Chinoiserie of the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries in Museum Complexes of Ukraine*, “Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo” 2025, vol. 13, iss. 1, pp. 27-45, doi: 10.46284/mkd.2025.13.1.2.

¹⁸ P. Gryglewski, Y. Ivashko, D. Chernyshev, P. Chang, A. Dmytrenko, *Art as a message realized through various means of artistic expression*, “Art Inquiry. Recherches sur les arts” 2020, vol. XXII, pp. 57-88; S. Kowalska, *Intangible Cultural Heritage: Social Memory and the Axiology of Protection*, “Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo” 2024, vol. 12, iss. 3, pp. 63-75, doi: 10.46284/mkd.2024.12.3.5; A. Pawłowska, M. Pabich, O. Ivashko, A. Dmytrenko, T. Kozłowski, P. Bigaj, *Problems of preservation, protection and restoration of cultural heritage objects and museum collections in the conditions of war*, “Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo” 2023, vol. 11, iss. 2, pp. 17-40, doi: 10.46284/mkd.2023.11.2.2.

¹⁹ S. Baiandin, Y. Ivashko, A. Dmytrenko, I. Bulakh, M. Hryniewicz, *Use of Historical Painting Concepts by Modern Methods in the Restoration of Architectural Monuments*, “International Journal of Conservation Science” 2022, vol. 13, iss. 2, pp. 381-394; M. Orlenko, Y. Ivashko, *The concept of art and works of art in the theory of art and in the restoration industry*, “Art Inquiry. Recherches sur les arts” 2019, vol. XXI, pp. 171-190; M. Orlenko, M. Dyomin, Y. Ivashko, A. Dmytrenko, P. Chang, *Rational and aesthetic principles of form-making in traditional Chinese architecture as the basis of restoration activities*, “International Journal of Conservation Science” 2020, vol. 11, iss. 2, pp. 499-512; M. Orlenko, Y. Ivashko, P. Chang, Y. Ding, M. Krupa, K. Kuśnierz, I. G. Sandu, *The Specificity of the Restoration and Monument Protective Measures for the Preservation of Historical Chinese Gardens*, “International Journal of Conservation Science” 2021, vol. 12, iss. 3, pp. 1003-1026.

²⁰ D. Kuśnierz-Krupa, J. Kobylarczyk, J. Malczewska, Y. Ivashko, M. Lisińska-Kuśnierz, *Qualitative analysis of architectural education in the protection of a historic city | Analiza jakościowa edukacji architektonicznej w zakresie ochrony miasta zabytkowego*, “Wiadomości Konserwatorskie – Journal of Heritage Conservation” 2021, no. 65, pp. 20-25.

arose and was formed under the simultaneous influence of external and internal factors, and to argue the origins of certain images, plots and colour symbolism in the colour palette. The method of systemic analysis made it possible to systematise the defining features of traditional Chinese art and design, as well as their manifestations in modern art and design. The method of comparative analysis made it possible to compare modern samples with authentic works, highlighting what is common and different between them. The iconographic method and the method of photofixation made it possible to create a visual evidence base for the conclusions obtained as a result of the study.

The defining characteristics of traditional Chinese art and design as the quintessence of national style

First of all, it is necessary to determine the presence of traditional images and symbols with a certain meaning in traditional murals, paintings, sculptures, furniture, ceramics, fabrics and jewellery. The list of such elements is very diverse: landscapes, geometric and phytomorphic ornaments, and decorative inserts. Traditionally, decor was assigned the role of a factor of aesthetic pleasure (as, incidentally, the Chinese garden was the personification of the “ideal world”). Along with ritual and religious subjects, the genre of secular art is gradually developing. Even in the sanctuaries of Dunhuang in the heyday, saints and deities are depicted in traditional robes and, along with ritual scenes, numerous portraits of benefactors with their families, battle scenes, etc., appear. Chinese culture turned out to be so resistant to external influences that it gradually transformed the traditions brought from outside, following local traditions. This happened to Buddhist temples and murals, and even to European modernism of the early 20th century in colonial cities in China, which was modified and acquired certain features of Chinese architecture.

The figurative system of China is diverse, symbolic and complex. Just as a Chinese character may have several meanings in different combinations, an element or plot may have different meanings in different contexts. However, along with this, a list of elements and colors with fixed unchanging meanings was created, forming components of the expression of status. One of the oldest examples of status expressed through a set of symbols is the funeral banner of Lady Dai of the Han imperial dynasty (206 BC–220 AD) with traditional symbols of the empire in realistic plot scenes of Chinese life, surrounded by symbolic images of the sun, a toad on a crescent moon, dragons and other immortal celestial beings.

The theme of a sacred creature – a totem – was important. For example, the dragon and the phoenix act as symbols of imperial power and good luck. In particular, there are many images of the dragon in imperial objects, since it

was also a symbol of China. Such images in the interiors and on the facades of palace pavilions, on flags and coins, on roofs and gates, were supposed to contribute to the unshakability of imperial power and served as a protective amulet for the ruling dynasties.

The phoenix symbolized the cyclical nature of life, rebirth and immortality, embodied through the legend of rebirth from the ashes. Thus, it was a symbol of eternal rebirth, renewal, peace, harmony, well-being and prosperity. The phoenix also symbolized the ideals of kindness, nobility and justice.

The spread of images of the natural world in various artistic techniques was due to the peculiarity of the local religion of Taoism in combination with the belief in Feng Shui. Motifs of flowers, trees and plants are found in paintings, murals, carvings, clothing ornaments, etc. In particular, the canons of traditional garden and park art were not accidental, where the garden was the personification of a changing ideal Universe. That is why the garden was created not as an element of entertainment, but as an element of improving human nature by observing ideal landscapes, where lakes, artificial slides, gazebos and plants had a certain symbolic meaning. It is worth noting that the traditional genre of Buddhist ink painting “shan shui” (“mountains-waters”) also appeared in landscape paintings of traditional Chinese gardens, the standard of which is considered to be the gardens of Suzhou.

Let us look at some of the most common symbols. For example, bamboo means stability, flexibility and longevity. In addition, in Chinese philosophy, bamboo is associated with moral purity and modesty, and its hollow stem symbolizes openness and honesty. Bamboo, which always grows in groups, also symbolizes friendship and endurance.

The wild plum is a symbol of resilience and hope, the arrival of spring, and the awakening of nature. In traditional painting, the flowering plum tree is often depicted alongside bamboo and pine, as these three elements combine to form the “Three Friends of Winter” – a composition symbolising resilience and longevity.

The peony is a symbolic image of virtue, wealth and prosperity, so the motif of this flower was widely used in painting, textiles, ceramics, embroidery, clothing and furniture. The peony is the imperial flower of China.

The lotus, according to Buddhism, is a symbol of purity and spiritual enlightenment, as it grows out of murky water, remaining pure and untainted. At the same time, the lotus is a symbol of longevity and health.

The orchid flower is also a symbol of inner spiritual purity, which at the same time embodies refined moral qualities. The image of the orchid is especially widespread in traditional style painting (guó huà 中國畫), calligraphy, porcelain products and clothing ornaments.

In ancient religious and secular art, images of clouds in the form of spirals and Chinese fans became widespread. Such clouds were the embodiment of wishes for harmony, happiness and prosperity. Often, the image of clouds (especially in religious murals) symbolized the spiritual path or the search for truth. The image of a fan symbolized wealth, power and status, and it was also supposed to protect one against evil spirits coming from the sky (the same role was played, by the way, by folding screens).

The most concentrated signs of China's national identity were reflected in the artistic genres *shān shuǐ* 山水 (“mountain-water”), *rénwù huà* 人物畫 (images of people), and *huā niǎo huà* 花鳥畫 (“flowers and birds”). These genres were subordinated to local religious and philosophical concepts.

Similarly, these concepts, together with local cultural and artistic traditions, were also subordinated to traditional polychromy with the symbolic meaning of colours, which has remained unchanged for millennia. The colour palette was formed on five primary colours associated with five elements: red (fire); yellow (earth), blue/green (wood), white (metal) and black (water).

Red symbolised energy, happiness, celebration and fire, and was a colour that protected one against evil forces. That is why it has long been the most common colour in China.

For a long time, yellow (gold) was considered the imperial colour, so it was used to a limited extent as the emperor's colour. Blue and green were symbols of life, harmony and development. The colour of mourning was white as a symbol of sadness and purity. Black, as a symbol of winter and the north, also did not become widespread. So, the main colours in the colour palette of ancient China were red and yellow, where yellow, a symbol of the Sun, was the centre of the cosmological order of the world and the main one for all other colours. Although now yellow no longer represents the emperor's power, it still symbolises wealth and high status.

In addition to traditional polychromy, contemporary Chinese art and design are also influenced by the compositional and figurative techniques of traditional Chinese art, among which we will identify the following features:

- the principle of “empty space” for balance and harmony of composition,
- the technique of perspective using different points of view to depict space and objects, in contrast to the linear perspective in Western art, for a sense of continuity of space and temporal transition,
- the technique of supplementing images with symbolic elements (dragons, cranes, wild plum blossom),
- the technique of gradation with colours, types of lines, and combination of line and colour,
- the technique of combining images with poetry and philosophical statements, which corresponded to the philosophy of Taoism.

It is worth quoting the following postulate of Tao here: “Man follows the laws of the earth. Earth follows the laws of heaven. Heaven follows the laws of the Tao, and the Tao follows itself”²¹.

The use of national motifs in contemporary Chinese art and design as a factor of “return to the origins”

It should be noted that today in China, there is a certain trend in art and design, which is a “return to the origins”, that is, the use of stylised iconic elements that embody the national identity of China.

A unique example of the direct influence of ancient art on the design of modern products is the use of ornamental motifs derived from the ornaments of the Dunhuang sanctuary on silk scarves at the 1952 Asia-Pacific Conference in Beijing. The ornament on the scarf is similar to the “zaojing” (“artesonado”) pattern in the Dunhuang sanctuaries. Similarly, Dunhuang ornaments become models for tableware and jewellery (Fig. 1). In the case of clothing, bags, lamps, etc., such motifs of Dunhuang frescoes as flying apsaras-feitian, animals, birds and flowers are often stylised (Fig. 2).



Fig. 1. A brooch with ornaments from Dunhuang murals. Photo from S. Wang's collections

²¹ Н. С. Николаева, *Художественная культура Японии XVI столетия*, Искусство, Москва 1986, p. 41.



Fig. 2. Women's bags with a print on the theme of Dunhuang murals. Photo from S. Wang's collections

Dunhuang frescoes are also a source of inspiration for women's clothing designers. One example is the collection "Frescoes - a Thousand Years at a Glance" by Heaven Gaia, where the main motifs are Dunhuang feitian and bodhisattvas.

Dunhuang fresco motifs are also used in packaging design (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Elements of Dunhuang murals in modern packaging design. Photos from S. Wang's collections

The unique murals of Dunhuang are actively used in modern graphic poster design (Fig. 4). Moreover, the Buddhist mythology of Dunhuang has been used in modern Chinese computer games.



Fig. 4. Examples of modern posters with modernized scenes from Dunhuang murals. Photos from S. Wang's collections

Elements of national culture are also used in the logos of Chinese companies (the logos of the oil corporation CNPC (Fig. 5a), the environmental company Sinochem Holding Co. Ltd., China Reform Holding Co., Ltd., Air China (Fig. 5b) and China Unicom (Fig. 5c) airlines, the China National Building Material Group Co., Ltd. (Fig. 5d)). These may include fan, knot, lotus and star motifs using traditional red and yellow colours. In the logo of the China National Building Material Group Co., Ltd., the red octagonal background reproduces the Bāguà (八卦), an important element of Chinese philosophy, Taoism and the practice of feng shui. The Bagua traditionally represents the fundamental principles of reality related to cosmology, nature and society, and in the practice of feng shui it is used to analyze energy in space and helps to arrange objects in a home or office to promote harmony and good luck.

The Air China logo features the image of a phoenix, which symbolizes high quality, reliability, safety, and the desire to reach new heights. The horizon line, combining typography with the image, emphasizes the idea of flight.

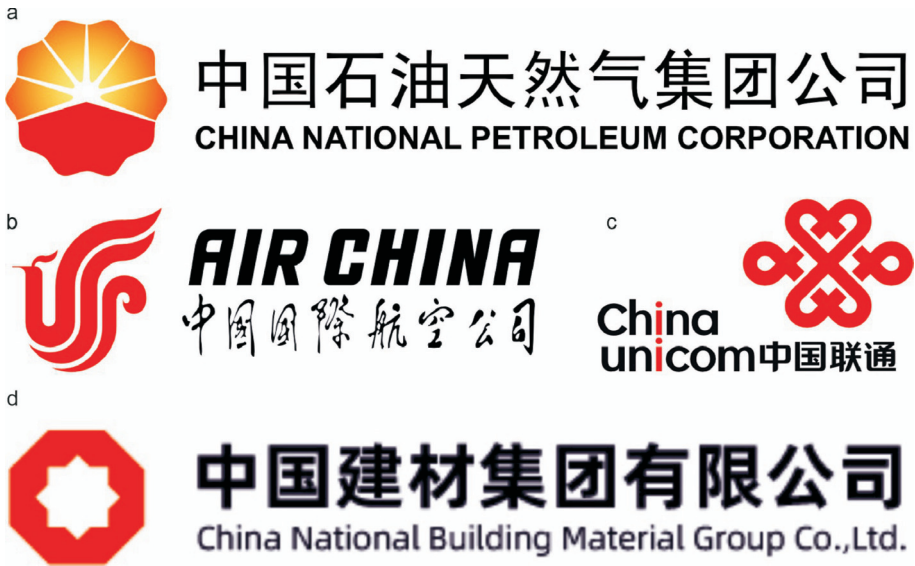


Fig. 5. Examples of logos of Chinese companies: a - China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) (source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China_National_Petroleum_Corporation#/media/File:China_National_Petroleum_Corporation_logo.svg); b - Air China (source: https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Air_China#/media/Fichier:Logo_Air_China.svg); c - China Unicom (source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China_Unicom#/media/File:China_Unicom.svg); d - China National Building Material Group Co., Ltd (source: <https://www.cnbm.com.cn/images/logo.png>)

National elements are also used in the logos of educational institutions in China. In particular, the following groups of national symbols are highlighted.

1. Traditional visual images and symbols: a) architectural monuments of historical significance (Sun Yat-sen University (Fig. 6a); Lanzhou University, 1909; Nanjing Normal University, 1902; Agricultural University of Herabri, 1902, etc.); b) elements of “bronze writing” (Tongji University, 1907 (Fig. 6b); Premium University of China, University of Science and Technology, 1952; Beijing Normal University, 1902; Changan University), bone carvings; national images and auspicious symbols (dragon, phoenix, Bāgǔ, 8 auspicious symbols, lotus blossom, plum, bamboo, etc.).

2. Calligraphy and water-ink elements in the central part of the emblem also form a communication based on tradition and capture elements of the name of the university, city, specialty or industry in a symbolic calligraphic form (Fudan University (Fig. 6c), Ningxia Medical University (Fig. 6d), Hunan Vocational College of Science and Technology; Hunan College of Science and Technology; Shijiazhuang University, Shangchun Normal University).

3. Colour symbolism. In most cases, university logos are monochrome, and red is used most often. Its traditional symbolism is fully consistent with the values and goals of educational institutions. Blue is also predictably found very often, carrying a wide range of positive meanings: from wisdom and peace to growth and harmony with nature.

4. Traditional form-making and compositional techniques. Logos of cultural institutions in China express China's national values, traditions and cultural heritage. There are many important cultural institutions in China: Palace Museum (Fig. 6e); National Museum of China (Fig. 6d); National Art Museum of China; National Centre for the Performing Arts; National Library of China; Shanghai Museum; Suzhou Museum; National Theatre of China; Guang Dong Museum, etc.



Fig. 6. Logos of educational and cultural institutions in China: a - Sun Yat-sen University (source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun_Yat-sen_University#/media/File:Sun_Yat-sen_University_Logo.png); b - Tongji University (source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tongji_University#/media/File:Tongji_Uni_logo.svg); c - Fudan University (source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/44/Fudan_University_Logo.svg/512px-Fudan_University_Logo.svg.png); d - Ningxia Medical University (source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ningxia_Medical_University#/media/File:Ningxia_Medical_University_logo.png); e - Palace Museum (source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palace_Museum#/media/File:The_Palace_Museum_Logo.svg); f - National Museum of China (source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Museum_of_China#/media/File:NATIONAL_MUSEUM_OF_CHINA.png)

The features of most logos include:

- a red-yellow (gold) colour scheme,
- an image of a landmark or historical ensemble,
- lines that resemble ancient calligraphy.

One of the most famous and important sporting events, the identity of which has already become a classic of graphic design, is the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, where the logo resembles a traditional Chinese seal (Fig. 7a).

The Chinese Olympic Committee's commercial version of the logo features red elements of the Chinese flag and yellow stars, visually resembling the Yin and Yang shape (Fig. 7b).



Fig. 7. Emblem of the 2008 Summer Olympics (a) (source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_Summer_Olympics#/media/File:2008_Summer_Olympics_logo.svg) and the commercial logo of the Chinese Olympic Committee (b) (source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_Olympic_Committee#/media/File:Chinese_Olympic_Committee_logo_\(commercial\).svg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_Olympic_Committee#/media/File:Chinese_Olympic_Committee_logo_(commercial).svg))

Authentic art forms are becoming a source of inspiration for modern graphic designers. Hong Kong designer Alan Chan used certain symbolism in the “Hello Hong Kong” poster (1987), changing the style of the dragon with a computer pixel head, which is also a certain symbol of Hong Kong’s evolution.

A feature of modern Chinese graphic design is the modernization of national elements using the latest graphic programs (an example is the poster for the exhibition “Oriental Summer” by Bi Xuefen, where the designer used the image of a fan in a modernist composition).

There are examples of grotesque reinterpretations of traditional elements of Chinese culture, e.g., outlines of walking legs form the visual form of the “man” character in the poster “Graphic Design in China 92” (designer Chen Shaohuahe). One leg is in a trouser leg with elements of the national Chinese costume and traditional ornamentation as a tribute to tradition, and the other leg is represented by a black unified silhouette without national features as a symbol of globalism, in which China is also included. Thus, the poster raises a discussion topic about the national and international in the context of globalism.

The centerpiece of another poster from the same exhibition was the head of a terracotta warrior arranged in a modernist composition.

The poster with the walking legs served as a model for another poster at a 1996 graphic design exhibition. In the latter, the intertwined shapes in the centre are not legs but by chopsticks and a fork, which are completed at the bottom by a computer mouse and an inkwell.

A poster at the 2005 GDC 05 graphic design exhibition combines the international style and elements of Chinese culture, where the focus is on a traditional Chinese bamboo mat and paper, a classic material for calligraphy.

Conclusion

The study of contemporary trends in Chinese art and design has shown that trends aimed at using traditional “iconic” elements of Chinese culture exist alongside international trends. Similar trends are observed in contemporary Chinese architecture, where modernist forms are combined with the completed volumes of traditional pavilions.

Authentic forms can be used in different ways in modern architecture, art and graphic design:

- literal repetition of historical examples (a negative manifestation of such copying in architecture is the opposition of the modern part of a building to a pseudo-historical pavilion added on the roof or in the form of an entrance);
- limited citation of historical examples of murals or ornaments in painting, design of clothing, bags, graphic design (in such cases, inconsistencies are less evident, as architecture imposes several, not only architectural and urban planning, but also functional and constructive restrictions),

- modernisation of iconic elements of Chinese culture using modern techniques and graphic programs (the most modernist trend in modern design, when historical references are not repeated literally, but the technique of allusion to them is used).

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POWRÓT DO NARODOWYCH KORZENI WE WSPÓŁCZESNEJ SZTUCE I DESIGNIE CHIN (streszczenie)

Niniejsze studium bada powrót do narodowych korzeni we współczesnej chińskiej sztuce i designie poprzez rewitalizację i reinterpretację tradycyjnych symboli kulturowych, estetyki i metod kompozycyjnych. Opierając się na koncepcji *dé-codncidence* François Julliena, autorzy przeciwstawiają zachodnie ideały stałej adekwatności chińskiej estetyce zorientowanej na proces, podkreślając rolę spontaniczności, wzajemnych powiązań i symbolicznego dynamizmu. Artykuł analizuje, w jaki sposób tradycyjne elementy, takie jak motywy z murali Dunhuang, symbolika kolorów narodowych, estetyka ogrodowa i formy ikoniczne, są adaptowane we współczesnym projektowaniu graficznym, architekturze, brandingu produktów i logo uniwersytetów. Analizując te zmiany, badanie pokazuje, że współczesna chińska kultura wizualna utrzymuje dialog ze swoim dziedzictwem kulturowym, łącząc innowacje z ponownie wyobrażoną ciągłością tradycji.

Słowa kluczowe: Chińska kultura wizualna, tożsamość narodowa, tradycyjna symbolika, współczesny design, François Jullien (*dé-codncidence*)

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