

게슈탈트 심리학을 활용한 중국 토템디자인 연구

The Study of Chinese Totem Design:Using the Gestalt Psychology

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Abstract

Totem culture is a basic culture in all countries. A totem is any supposed entity that watches over or assists a group of people, such as a family, clan, or tribe. (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary and Webster's New World College Dictionary, Fourth Edition). Totems support larger groups than an individual person. In kinship and descent, if the apical ancestor of a clan is nonhuman, it is called a totem. Normally this belief is accompanied by a totemic myth. And for the ages past, many totems for family, clan and tribe merged in one or two which comes to be a totem culture. We can know many things from the totem of our Ancestors.

I. Introduction

1. The background of this research

Totem culture is a basic culture in all countries. A totem is any supposed entity that watches over or assists a group of people, such as a family, clan, or tribe. (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary [1] and Webster's New World College Dictionary, Fourth Edition).

Totems support larger groups than an individual person. In kinship and descent, if the apical ancestor of a clan is nonhuman, it is called a totem. Normally this belief is accompanied by a totemic myth. And for the ages past, many totems for family, clan and tribe merged in one or two, which comes to be a totem culture. We can know many things from the totem of our Ancestors.

At first part of the study we will introduce the theory of Gestalt psychology and showed the

totem of china in pictures. At last we will use the study to create art work of totem.

The scope of the study: The most representative totems in China include dragon, turtles, bats and so on.

2. Study method

After collecting a large number of representative such as The dragon and Chinese unicorn of Chinese totems, we studied the evolution of the totem patterns and assort them. We also studied the concept, what called "Emergence and Reification" in Gestalt Psychology.

3. The objectives of the study

Using the theory of Gestalt psychology in China totem patterns design. Make the old patterns into

modern fashion and used in commercial purposes.

II .Theory

1. Introduction

Gestalt Psychologist

Kurt Koffka (1935)

Born in Berlin, Germany, on March 18, 1886



Gestalt psychology or gestaltism(also Gestalt of the Berlin School) is a theory of mind and brain which proposes that the operational principle of the brain is holistic, parallel, and analog, with self-organizing tendencies; or, that the whole is different from the sum of its parts. The Gestalt effect refers to the form-forming capability of our senses (the word Gestalt in German literally means "shape" or "figure"), particularly with respect to the visual recognition of figures and whole forms instead opposed to behaviorism.

2. Emergence

Emergence is demonstrated by the perception of the Dog Picture, which depicts a Dalmatian dog sniffing the ground in the shade of overhanging trees. The dog is not recognized by first identifying its parts (feet, ears, nose, tail, etc.), and then inferring the dog from those component

parts. Instead, the dog is perceived as a whole, all at once. However, this is a description of what occurs in vision and not an explanation. Gestalt theory does not explain how the percept of a dog emerges,

(Sternberg 2006)



▶▶ Picture 1. Dalmatian Dog

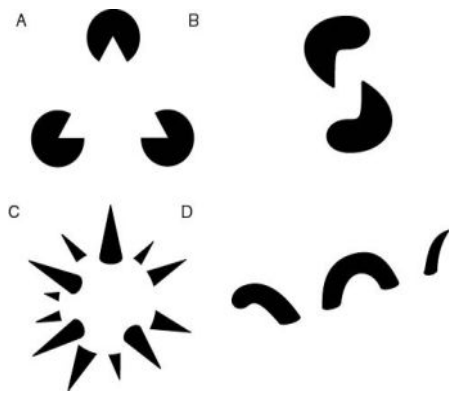
3. Reification

Reification is the constructive or generative aspect of perception, by which the experienced percept contains more explicit spatial information than the sensory stimulus on which it is based.

For instance, a triangle will be perceived in picture A, although no triangle has actually been drawn. In pictures B and D the eye will recognize disparate shapes as "belonging" to a single shape, in C a complete three-dimensional shape is seen, where in actuality no such thing is drawn.

Reification can be explained by progress in the study of illusory contours, which are treated by the visual system as "real" contours.¹⁾

(Sternberg, R.J. (2006). Cognitive Psychology. Belmont, CA: Thomson Higher Education.

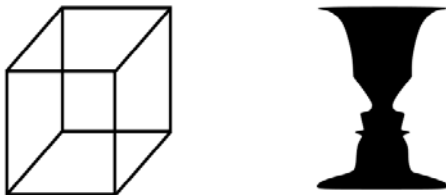


▶▶ Picture 2. Reification

4. Multistability

Multistability(or multistable perception) is the tendency of ambiguous perceptual experiences to pop back and forth unstably between two or more alternative interpretations. This is seen for example in the Necker cube, and in Rubin's Figure/Vase illusion shown to the below.

Again, Gestalt does not explain how images appear multistable, only that they do.²⁾



▶▶ Picture 3. Necker cube(left) Rubin's Figure/ Vase(right)

III. Totem study

1. The definition and the origin of the totem

Definition

- An animal, plant, or natural object serving among certain tribal or traditional peoples as the emblem of a clan or family and sometimes revered as its founder, ancestor, or guardian.
- A representation of such an object.
- A social group having a common affiliation to such an object.
- A venerated emblem or symbol

Origin

Totems are closely connected to the national social conditions and the customs of the region. A simple totem originated with a small tribal's fear or worship. Once a war break out between two tribes. The winner's totem will be stay and the loser's will be mix in to it. After several times of such thing occurred, finally become the original totem.

2. All kinds of the totem in worldwide

Totems in Africa



▶▶ Picture 4. Totems in Africa

(Sternberg, R.J. (2006). Cognitive Psychology. Belmont, CA: Thomson Higher Education.

Totems in Asia



▶▶ Picture 5. Totems in Asia

Totems in Americas



▶▶ Picture 6. Totems in Americas

3. Summary

After compare the totem around the world, We can see the totems are always a kind of animal of synthesis of animals, The human body or face are also used in totem, The totem reflects the local biological and local people's values, what their want, what their have, what their need, what their fear. And the totems are always reflects the philosophy of the time.

IV. The study of the Chinese totem

1. Application of the Chinese totem



▶▶ Picture 7. Examples of dragons on bone china

2. Representatives of the Chinese totem

There is a large difference between dragons in Asia and Europe. The Asia dragon originated in China. The dragon is the totem of the whole nation. It is a fusion of ancient's totem including snake, eagle, turtle, deer, fish, etc. Dragon was one of the totem worship images in remote times when people liked to use the images of creatures or plants which they held in awe as symbols of their tribes. They believed that totem worship could bring them protection and good luck. What does dragon come of? There are a lot of answers such as crocodile, snake, pig or even lightning. Many experts agree on that dragon came of a totem mainly consisting of snake. It had snake's body, pig's head, deer's horns, bull's ear, goat's beard, hawk's claws and fish's squama. This view introduces a penetrating insight towards the life of ancient society: in remote times of clanship, the Huaxia Clan symbolized by snake totem in the Yellow River drainage area conquered other clans and then grew into a big clan union by integrating others together with their totems. That was how the totem of dragon came into being.

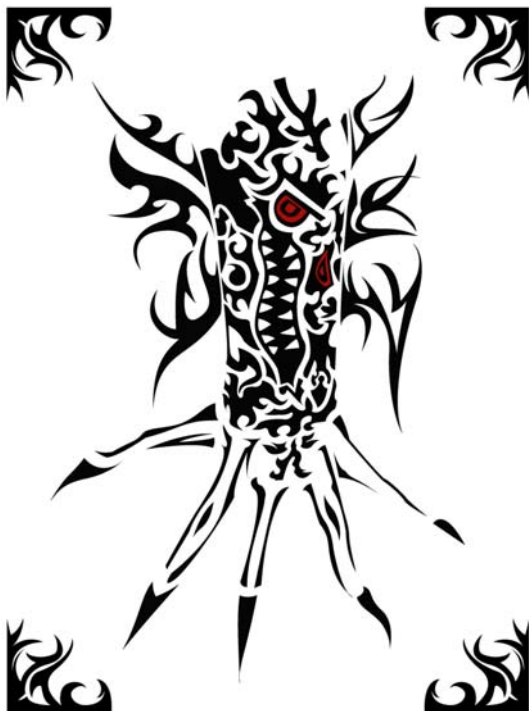
V. Concept of the work and Conclusion

1. Concept: Emergence and Reification

There are some Chinese totem patterns in these pictures below. When people look at the pictures they will recognize as a human head, body, and hand at first. But, there are no such things in these flat pictures. The conception is from their experience and it makes people think incorrectly.

2. Conclusion

When people look at a picture, they will first notice the whole profile by their previous experience. For example, When they see a flat picture, still they will use their experience to make the flat picture look like a 3d image if certain conditions meet. As the totem patterns always make up by many simple shapes, the gestalt psychology is useful for composition. Use it in illustration will be fun and with the business value in it.



▶▶ Picture 8. Totem-body-hand



▶▶ Picture 9. Totem-body-head



▶▶ Picture 10. Totem-body-back