

The Influence of Western Culture on Taiwanese Trademark Design in the Early Post-war Period (1945-1960s)

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Abstract

This study aims on the visual cultural phenomenon of the westernization of trademark design in Taiwan in the early post-war period (1945-1960s). This period was an era of great changes occurred in Taiwan from political, cultural to economic social environment, the changes directly affected the design environment at that time and formed a unique phenomenon. In other words, these trademark designs were also a record of the social and culture texture of the time. After the war, due to the reign of the R.O.C government and the close interaction with the United States, American Western culture was widely spread in Taiwan, also influenced the design style. Therefore, this paper aims on how Western culture affects trademark design through studying the trademark of common products in the early Post-war period, and summed up the influences of Western culture on the design of trademark at that time.

Keywords: Trademark design, Post-war Taiwan, Western culture.

1. Foreword

From 1895 to 1945, Taiwanese society was under Japanese colonization, also greatly influenced by its culture. The old Han traditional social patterns and people's lifestyles has been changed a lot after a long period of colonization, the conflicts and integration gave rise to a brand-new life culture style; After the Republic of China government moved to Taiwan, Chinese culture from various parts of the mainland gathered in Taiwan. Although the ruling power has been transferred, the Japanese life culture that deeply rooted in the society cannot be completely derived. Chinese and Japanese cultures both changing alternately, presenting an embarrassing phenomenon of deflation; On the other hand, the military confrontation after the word war II was tense. At that time, Taiwan was under political martial law, the social order and economy urgently need to be reconstructed. Furthermore, after the Western Industrial Revolution in the 18th century, due to the military, political and economic prosperity of Western countries, their culture has not only become the mainstream culture, but also a symbol of progress, civilization, and modernization, spreading and affecting the world, including Taiwan.

The article sorts out and investigate the social development texture of Taiwan through historical documents, classify trademark graphics and symbols from the early post-war period (1950-1960s) to do inductive analysis. The research found that there were eight different classifications, for example: Western classical decorations, Beasts and animals, Myths and fairy tales. Modern design in the trademark can prove that Western culture had a profound influence of the trademark design history of Taiwan.

2. Western culture and Taiwanese society

In the early 17th century, Western missionaries came to Taiwan to preach, at the same time they brought Western thoughts and culture. But at this time Taiwan has not yet been fully developed and population is small, Western cultural influence is not widespread yet. For example, the Dutch landed in southern Taiwan from 1624 to 1662 ruled for 38 years, and from 1626 to 1642 Spain occupied northern Taiwan for 16 years. At this time, the Western lifestyle and thinking brought by these foreign rulers were only regional.

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It was not until 1895 to 1945, during the Japanese colonial period, that Western culture began to systematically spread to Taiwan through the Japanese Reformation and Westernization Movement, which widely affected Taiwan's society and life. Since the "Meiji Restoration" in 1868, Japan has been learning from Western civilization actively², quickly achieve the goal of prospering the country and strengthening its forces. As expected, Japan entered the ranks of modern countries. At that time, Japanese society looked forward to Western culture, seen it as a learning object and a symbol of superiority and civilization. Therefore, Taiwan was also widely affected.

Due to the influence of the Western lifestyle and cultural thoughts introduced by Japan, the Taiwan market not only imported Western goods during the Japanese ruled period, but even many local Taiwanese daily necessities imitated and plagiarized the culture, including in the field of trademark design, Western cultural images and design materials were often used as product packaging. to enhance product image and commercial marketing purposes.

In the post-war period, due to the international situation, Taiwan was mostly influenced by American culture. Therefore, many companies introduced products and corporate trademarks that imitated and learned from Western imports.

After the Korean War broke out in June 1950, the United States signed the Sino-American Mutual Defense Treaty (Sino-American Mutual Defense Treaty³) with the Taiwan government in January 1951 in order to prevent the expansion of the Communist Party's power in Asia and strengthen the consolidation of the anti-communist line of defense in the Western Pacific. Taiwan became the United States' line of defense against communism in Asia. Therefore, Taiwan officially entered the "US Aid Period" (US Aid 1951-1965⁴). The United States provided Taiwan with military, economic, and technical assistance. Taiwan's post-war reconstruction has greatly benefited. The dissemination of American materials and foreign American culture with the aid of the United States has affected the people's livelihood consumption, popular culture, and the development of visual culture in Taiwan society. Therefore, the trademark designs of many Taiwanese companies at that time were deeply influenced by foreign cultural trends. It is generally believed that by imitating the design of imported goods, the image of the enterprise and the goods can be more profound. The Taiwanese trademark design style under the influence of Western culture has accumulated bit by bit to become the foundation of contemporary Taiwanese design history.

3. Western Cultural Symbols in Taiwan Trademarks

This chapter uses the corporate trademarks with Western cultural images circulating in the Taiwan market in the early postwar period (1950-1960s) as the research object to collect the graphic symbols of trademarks, to classify and summarize them as following topics:

A. Symbols of Classical Decorative

Western culture has been the mainstream influence of trademark design for a long time, designs with Western cultural imagery make it easy for people to understand the progress, civilization, and high-quality for their companies and products.

Therefore, many Taiwanese companies at that time often used Western imagery symbols as product names or trademark designs to highlight the modern image. Among them, traditional symbols, aristocratic emblems, religious pictures and texts, and classical special symbols are easily associated with Western cultural images. For example, the crown graphic, a symbol of traditional imperialism in the West, is often used as the theme of trademark design by Taiwanese companies to show that it has the superior Western quality image of an emperor (Picture 1, 2, 3). The king, queen, and prince, which have the same symbolic meaning as the crown, were also commonly used at the time, such as the Guowang electric fan, the Dadi bicycle shop, and the Queen cosmetics (Picture 4, 5, 6).

²Tan, C. C., 2012, Meiji Restoration, Taipei, Yushan Society, PP.39-40.

³ <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E4%B8%AD%E7%BE%8E%E5%85%B1%E5%90%8C%E9%98%B2%E7%A6%A6%E6%A2%9D%E7%B4%84>(2021.6.1)

⁴The "US aid period" refers to the period of US aid to the Republic of China from 1951 to 1965. In addition to people's livelihood and strategic materials, the US aid content also includes materials needed for infrastructure construction, such as building roads, bridges, power plants, and natural resource development. In addition, in addition to providing material assistance to the Republic of China, the United States has also carried out various technological cooperation developments. At the same time, it encourages Taiwan and American universities to conduct academic cooperation and talent exchanges, and cultivate professional talents in Taiwan.

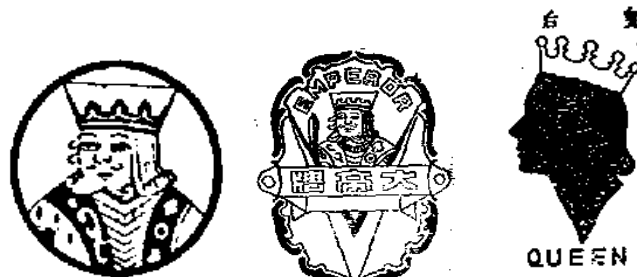
In another example, swords, medals, or shields that symbolize status in the Western traditional royal family and aristocrats are also often used, including China Optical Company and Cultural Book Company, which all use Western traditional shields as their trademark graphics (Picture 7 and 8); In addition, Baishi mineral oil used the Western samurai graphic for their trademark design (Figure 9), and Daguohua trading company used the French general "Napoleon" as the brand name, and double sword graphic for the trademark design (Picture 10).

For another example, traditional decorative symbols such as laurels that symbolize glory and victory, like ribbons with joyous images, Western music scores, musical instruments and other traditional decorative symbols in Western history and culture are not only designed and shaped in Western style, but these graphics have deep historical allusions and special cultural significance.

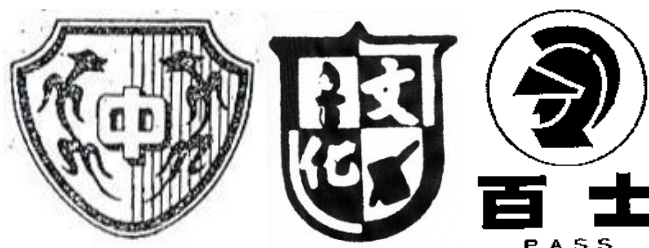
Therefore, it is often used in the post-war Taiwan trademark design (Picture 11, 12).



1. Dafa firm Sewing Machine 2. Taixing Paint Factory 3. Overseas Chinese Construction Company



4. Guowang Electric fan 5. Dadi Bicycle Shop 6. Queen Cosmetics



7. China Optical Company 8. Cultural Book Company 9. Baishi Mineral Oil



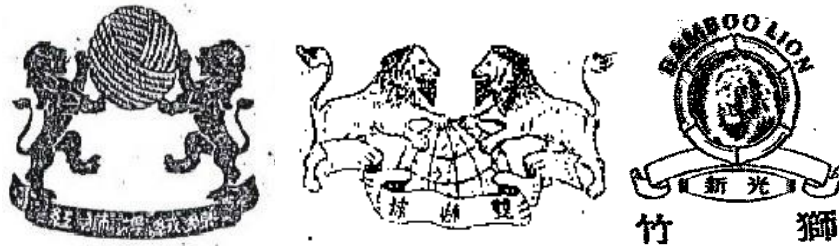
10. Daguohua Trading Company 11. Sehun Metal co., Ltd. 12. Shushuixuan Food

B. Symbols of Mythical Beasts and Animal

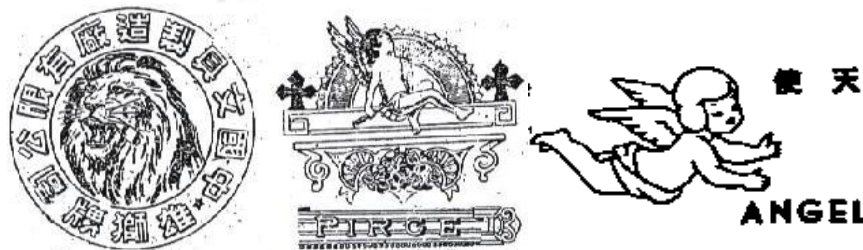
The lion is the king of beasts, symbolizing the emperor's courage and power. Therefore, Taiwanese companies also use Western double or single lion as their brand name and logo. Double lion style trademarks include Shuangshi plush and Shuangshi sewing machines (Picture 13, 14); single lion graphics have Zhushi gloves, Xiongshi Pencil, Xinshiqiu Pharmaceutical company (Picture 15, 16).

Among the traditional Western symbols, the little angel with two wings not only has the Western religious color, but also a symbol that conveys holy, peaceful, and warm emotions. In the early post-war period, some Taiwanese corporate trademarks used the shape of little angels as their trademark graphics to link its image, such as the trademarks of Wangzi Sewing Machine Shop and Tianshi Textile company (Picture 17, 18).

In Greek mythology, the flying horse soaring in the sky symbolizes special psychic power and wisdom and bravery. It's also often used in the trademarks of Taiwanese companies, such as the Pegasus brand sewing machine shop and Tianma soap (Picture 19, 20). In addition, because in Western legends, as long as it is an animal with wings and flying in the sky, it symbolizes magical power and imagination as well. On the other hand, flying tiger also become a common decorative pattern and has influenced the trademark design of Taiwan after the war. Such as the trademark design of Feihu Scissors (Picture 21).



13. Shuangshi plush 14. Shuangshi sewing machines 15. Zhushi gloves



16. Xiongshi Pencil 17. Wangzi Sewing Machine 18. Tianshi Textile company



19. Feimapai Sewing Machine Shop 20. Tianma Soap 21. Feihu Scissors

C. Symbols of Mythology and Fairytale

In Greek mythology, after giving birth to Castor and Pollux, two sons of Zeus, the Queen of Sparta, Leda turned into swans. Therefore, swan is often used as a symbol of romantic love in Western culture.

In the early post-war period, many Taiwanese companies used swan as their brand names and graphic designs in order to highlight their western culture, such as Tiane electric fans and Tiane towels (Picture 22, 23). In addition, the poignant love story of the mermaid in Western fairy tales, with Andersen's "The Mermaid" is the most popular one. Therefore, the mermaid shape has become a common traditional decorative image in Western culture. After the war, similar trademark designs appeared in Taiwanese trademarks (Picture 24).

Influenced by the culture of the use of Western animal images, exotic animals which were not available in Taiwan has become a common theme in trademark design at that time, thereby increasing the company's foreign cultural image. Animal graphic trademarks including elephants, kangaroos, zebras, penguins, white bears, and sheep were very common at the time (Picture 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30).



22. Tiane Electric Fans 23. Tiane Towels 24. Baidai Industrial



25.Xiangpai White Brown Rope 26.Daishupai Leather 27.Banma Textile Factory



28.Qiepai Electric Fan 29.Baixiongpai Socks 30. Gentlemen Textile Factory

D. Symbols of Modern Civilization

The military, political, economic strengths and advances in scientific and technological research and development of modern Western countries have made Western culture a symbol of modern civilization and high quality of life. Therefore, beside common Western traditional patterns and classical decorative symbols that has been mentioned above, there are also companies that tried to show their modern image through the totem of Western modern civilization. Commonly used themes which include symbols such as modern architecture, professionals, living utensils, and sports events.

Diamonds are valuable materials in Western society also symbolize nobility and honor. Taiwan is deeply influenced by these Western cultural values, many companies at that time directly used diamonds as their trademarks to emphasize the high-quality products and Western cultural imagery. Including various industries and commodities, such as plastics, toothbrushes, drawing paper, paint, machinery, flour. (Picture 31 and 32).

Car is an important and common means of transportation in daily life in the West. However, in the early post-war period, Taiwan's social economy was not rich, only the wealthy could afford to buy one. Therefore, in order to highlight the modern quality image and advancement of life culture, many companies choose to use Western cars as brand names or graphic designs. For example, Quiché sewing machine, Taxi essence soap (Picture 33, 34).

For Taiwan, the modern leisure lifestyle of the West has the attraction of different cultures. Therefore, some Taiwanese companies also used Western lifestyle and leisure activities as the theme of their trademark design. For example, listening to music, reading books, playing sports, enjoying art and smoking cigars (Picture 35).

The specialization of labor in various professions in Western society is clear and respected, so people with professional knowledge and ability are mostly social elites at that time. In the early post-war Taiwanese society, people with a high degree of education or professional knowledge were also respected and admired by the public, so it was also a trademark design totem that companies loved to use. For example, Yisheng perfume, Hushi western medicine company (Pictures 36, 37); Xueshi toothpaste, Yisheng clothing company (Pictures 38, 39); even some corporations use Nobel price, the highest honor of Western academic as their trademark (picture 40); A gentleman in a formal dress and a jazz are also designed as trademarks (Pictures 41 and 42).



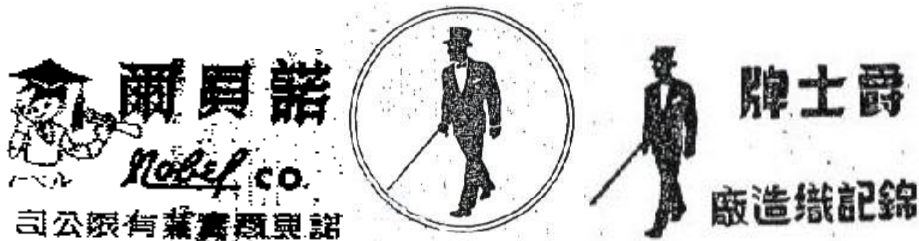
31.Zuanshipai Toothbrush 32. Zuanshipai Paper 33.Qichepai Sewing Machine



34.Taxipai Soap 35.Maishupai Clothing36.Yishengpai Perfume



37.Hushipai Medicine 38.Xueshipai Toothbrush 39.Boshipai Clothing



40.Nobel Industry41.Jasspai Toothbrush42.Jasspai Textile Factory

In terms of Western architecture, after the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century, new building materials and technological advances prompted the construction of tall buildings in the West. These buildings or modern landmarks became symbols of Western civilization at that time. Therefore, modern architectural symbols are often used in the trademark design of Taiwanese companies after the war. For example, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France, is a symbol of Western industrial civilization and is full of Westernism. Therefore, at that time, there were Tower brand companies and Eiffel brand paint, which were all based on the design concept (Picture 43, 44). In addition, the Far East Textile Factory uses Western modern western-style houses as its trademark, and launches "Western House" textiles (Picture 45).



43. Rongfeng Trading44.Eiffe Brand Paint45.Yangfangpai textile

The application of sports totems is also deeply influenced by Western culture. After the first Olympic Games was held in Athens, Greece in 1896, the world sports event held every four years has become a symbol of Western civilization activities and also influenced the trademark design of Taiwanese companies. After the war, Taiwan continued to achieve good results in world sports competitions. For example, in 1960, Taiwan's Yang Chuanguang won a silver medal in the Rome Olympics and became the first Taiwanese athlete in sports history. In 1968, a female athlete Ji Zheng also won a bronze medal in Olympic track and field in Mexico. The society is euphoric and the Olympic Games are popular, so many companies use the Olympic theme, names, symbols and sports images as corporate brand names or graphics. For example, the Olympic International Trade Company, Shiyun matches, and Shiyun sewing machines (Picture 46, 47, 48); another example is Titlis pens and Ziqiang stationery, which are designed with athlete-shaped trademarks (Picture 49, 50);Yongda Knitting, with its "Silver Medal" corporate trademark, echoed that Taiwan's Yang Chuanguang won the Olympic silver medal at that time (Picture

51).



46. Olympic International Trade Company 47. Shiyun matches 48. Sewing Sewing Machine



49. Telis Pan 50. Chuchiang stationery 51. Yinpai Knitting

E. Symbols of Technology

After the war, Western scientific development and modern industrial technology has made spurt progress, which enabled Western countries to become pioneers in leading the world towards a modern society. Therefore, technological achievements are equivalent to the symbols of civilization and modernization. In order to highlight the quality of modern equipment production and manufacturing, many companies are attracted to use technology as the theme of their trademark design, especially the professional technology symbols such as physics and electrical machinery, which are often used in trademarks at that time. For example, the man-made fiber products of Hualong Textile Company are named Atom Brand (Picture 52); manufacturers such as the permanent motor industry and electro-optical enterprises use the lightning graphic symbolizing speed and technology as their trademarks to correspond to their corporate professional attributes and emphasize their The modern image of the product's technology (Picture 53, 54).



52. Hualong Textile Company 53. Yeng Kyiu Motor Industry 54. Lighting Industry

F. Symbols of Globalization

Modern Western scientific and technological developed rapidly, modern transportation convenience and advanced information dissemination technology have accelerated international interaction and cultural exchanges. Therefore, internationalization and the concept of a global village have gradually formed, and they have become a common topic after the war. The West introduced the international trade business model, the internationalized economic system dominated by Western economic powers and profoundly affected the commercial development of Taiwan after the war. At that time, companies mostly designed trademarks with international themes. Terms such as the earth and the globe, which symbolized internationalization became popular, and the earth graphic became a trendy symbol in trademark design. For example, Huanqiu cement, Huanqiu feed factory, earth stationery industry and other manufacturers all use the earth as the name of the trademark graphic design (Picture 55, 56, 57); Taiping Bicycle Company and Quanqiuji Enterprise Feed Factory use English word “National” and “Universal” as their trademarks, successfully make the company more internationalized and globalized (Picture 58, 59).



55.Huanqiu Cement 56. Huanqiu Feed Company 57. Diqiu Stationery Industry



58.National Bike 59.Universal Feed Company

G. Symbols of English Characters

After the war, as American culture as the mainstream influence, English became an international language and a cross-cultural communication tool. Therefore, the use of English seems to be equated with Westernization, modernization, and internationalization. In the early postwar period, Taiwan had a close political relationship with the United States, so English became a symbol of Americanization and internationalization at that time, and it influenced many Taiwanese companies to use English letters in trademark design to demonstrate their international image.

Although Taiwan's "Trademark Law"⁵ stipulates that the words used in trademarks must be mainly Chinese, and may be supplemented by foreign languages, the foreign language trademarks applied for at that time were still very common, and the examination standards were lenient and strict. there were still many trademarks designed in English letters only. Among them, there are completely English texts as trademarks, and there are also trademark designs that merge Chinese characters and English letters together but mainly use English letters. For example, the trademarks of China Leather Factory, Ronglong Weaving Factory and Gaole Soda Factory were completely designed in English (Picture 60, 61, 62); other brands such as Wenming fountain pen, Shunlongxing fountain pen, and Tijian pill used English pronunciation that translate into Chinese characters directly as the brands name; there are also trademarks which mixed Chinese and English designs. (Picture 63, 64, 65)



60.Commander Shoes 61.Welcome Weaving Factory 62.Coro Soda Company



63. SKB Pen 64.SK B Pen 65.Tijian Pills

H. Symbols of Modern Design

Modern design, enlightened in Western society at the beginning of the 20th century, especially the modern design concept of Bauhaus pragmatism, has influenced the development of global design. Trademark graphics were mostly traditional realistic shapes in the past, but the modern styles formed by Pragmatism are simple and bright, used geometric shapes and focus on the conveying and recognizing functions of the shapes.

⁵ Contents of Article 1 of the "Trademark Law" revised in 1958. (<https://law.moj.gov.tw/Law/LawSearchResult.aspx?cur=Ln&ty=ONEBAR&set=LNNDATE%7cASC&psize=20&kw=%e5%95%86%e6%a8%99%e6%b3%95>) (2021.2.28)

After 1960s, due to the international situation, Taiwan had a close relationship with the United States.

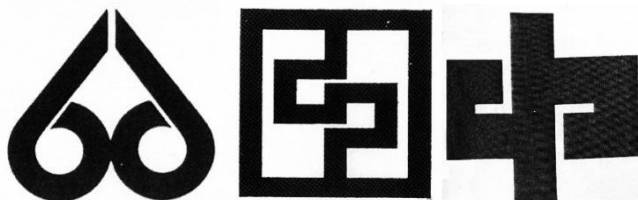
At that time, the modernist design thoughts and works that prevailed in the United States also spread rapidly in Taiwan. Because of the active revitalization of economics in Taiwan after the war, commercial art has gradually formed a professional industry in response to the current situation, so professional design companies have also emerged.

At that time, the private use of U.S. imported goods and foreign company trademarks and other pipeline reference designs, and related government agencies and professional design organizations were established, many professional foreign designers were invited to Taiwan for lectures and promotion, American modernist design have a rapid influence in Taiwan. Therefore, in order to strengthen the modern and avant-garde corporate image, concise and modern-style trademark designs have been popular.

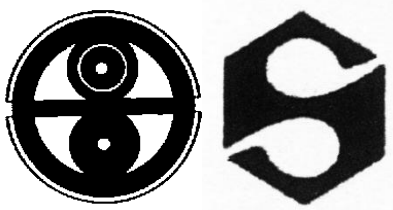
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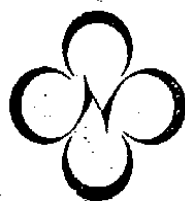
In the early postwar period, the government is responsible for the promotion of industrial designs which include the organization logos of the China Productivity Center, the Republic of China Foreign Trade Development Center, and the Republic of China Art and Design Association. They were the first institutions to use modern geometric shapes as trademark designs (Picture 66, 67, 68) ; Private enterprises are also popular in the form of trademark design, imitating modern design styles. For example, Taiwan Book Publishing House, Xindong Pharmaceutical Factory, Nanqiao Chemical Industry, etc. (Picture 69, 70, 71). Even under the influence of the Op art style popular in the United States in the 1960s, Taiwan Kolin Records and Tianliang Clothing also came up with visual illusion effect style of trademark design (Picture 72, 73).



66.China Productivity Center 67.Trading Center 68.Republic of China Art and Design Association



69.Taiwan Book Publishing House 70.Xindong Pharmaceutical Factory



71.Nanqiao Chemical Industry 72.Kolin Company 73.Tianliang Clothing

4 Conclusion

During the Japanese occupation period, Western culture was introduced through the Japanese government, which influenced Taiwan's society as a symbol of progress, civilization, and high-quality foreign imports from the West. Until the post-war period, this advocacy of Western culture continued in Taiwanese folk life.

In addition, the political relationship between Taiwan and the United States at that time caused great amount of American culture to be imported into Taiwan and affected the popular phenomenon of the westernized design of trademarks of Taiwanese companies at that time.

Trademark designs influenced by Western culture have also undergone phase changes and developed gradually with the social environment and ideological trends. In the early 1950s, most of the trademarks were just reference or imitation of Western classical decorative symbols, but in the middle period, many modern American life, civilization and technology aspirations were added into the design way. After the 1960s, trademark designing style was widely influenced by the popular American modernist design, trademark graphics and texts with concise shape and modernist design style appeared.

This article collects and summarizes trademark graphics and texts related to popular life, and analyzes the development of trademark design in Taiwan after the war from the perspective of art sociology. The seemingly simple trademark design can reflect the era and social texture of the early postwar period, contains a wealth of foreign cultural dissemination and influence.

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- <https://law.moj.gov.tw/Law/LawSearchResult.aspx?cur=Ln&ty=ONEBAR&set=LNNDATE%7cASC&psize=20&kw=%e5%95%86%e6%a8%99%e6%b3%95> (2021.02.28)