

Research on Localized Cultural and Creative Design from the Perspective of Intangible Cultural Heritage Revitalization

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Abstract: *Intangible cultural heritage holds a significant position in China's traditional culture, carrying the unique life wisdom and spiritual beliefs of a region. It plays an important role in cultural inheritance and the rural revitalization strategy. This article takes the modern inheritance of intangible cultural heritage culture as the starting point, defines the core connotations of the activation of intangible cultural heritage and in-situ creative design, analyzes the significant meaning of in-situ creative design research from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage activation, analyzes the current situation and predicaments of in-situ cultural creative design in China, and constructs in-situ creative design strategies from four dimensions: cultural excavation, design transformation, industrial implementation, and inheritance continuation. It also conducts practical demonstrations based on typical cases, with the aim of providing reference materials for the innovative design of in-situ intangible cultural heritage activation and promoting the inheritance and innovation of China's intangible cultural heritage.*

Keywords: Intangible Cultural Heritage Activation; In-place; Creative Design; Design Innovation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Against the backdrop of the in-depth advancement of cultural confidence and the strategy of rural revitalization, the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage have received increasing attention from all sectors of society. Intangible cultural heritage originates from the people and is rooted in the region, being the cultural treasures accumulated by specific ethnic groups over long-term production and life [1]. It possesses cultural, artistic, and practical values. Traditional protection of intangible cultural heritage mainly relies on static methods such as museum displays and oral records by inheritors, leading to the gradual detachment of intangible cultural heritage from people's lives and facing the predicament of inheritance gaps and lack of vitality. With the vigorous development of the cultural and creative industry, cultural and creative design has become an important breakthrough for the activation of intangible cultural heritage, and localized design is the core key to avoiding the homogenization and superficiality of intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products. Localized cultural and creative design is based on regional local culture, delves into the humanistic connotations, craftsmanship essence, and life scenes behind intangible cultural heritage, and refuses simple symbol appropriation and form replication, achieving the creative transformation and innovative development of intangible cultural heritage culture [2]. Currently, the development of intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products in many regions of China still faces problems, such as insufficient cultural excavation, severe design homogenization, detachment from regional life scenes, and insufficient market adaptability, making it difficult to truly achieve the core goal of intangible cultural heritage activation. Thus, conducting research on in-place creative design of intangible cultural heritage and in-place development and innovation breaks through the current obstacles hindering the in-place creative design of intangible cultural heritage activation, and is of crucial significance for realizing the return of intangible cultural heritage to life, the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, and regional innovation, and promoting the development of the cultural industry.

2. CORE CONCEPTS AND RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE OF LOCALIZED CULTURAL AND CREATIVE DESIGN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE ACTIVATION

2.1 Core Concepts and Significance of Intangible Cultural Heritage Activation

Intangible cultural heritage activation is an inheritance concept of intangible cultural heritage in contrast to static protection. Its core is to transform intangible cultural heritage from “museum heritage” and “techniques in the hands of inheritors” into a cultural form that integrates into contemporary life and possesses contemporary vitality,

achieving the protection goal of “seeing people, seeing objects, seeing life” [3]. Its core significance includes three aspects: first, dynamic inheritance, respecting the original form and inheritance laws of intangible cultural heritage, and relying on inheritors and local ethnic groups to achieve the inter-generational transmission of techniques and culture; second, integration into life, exploring the practical and emotional values of intangible cultural heritage, and making intangible cultural heritage products suitable for the life scenes and aesthetic needs of contemporary people; third, modern innovation. The inheritance of intangible cultural heritage is the transmission and development of traditional culture, but it does not mean adhering to tradition. Instead, it should be combined with modern concepts and modern technologies, driven by current market demands, to innovate intangible cultural heritage creative design, better promoting the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage [4].

2.2 Core Concepts and Characteristics of Localized Cultural and Creative Design

Geographical-based cultural and creative design is based on the local culture and uses intangible cultural heritage resources as the core material. It is based on the natural environment, cultural customs, lifestyle and ethnic sentiments of the region, and through modern design methods, creates cultural and creative products with distinct regional identification, cultural heritage and life attributes. Its core characteristics are as follows: First, regional rootedness: closely relying on local intangible cultural heritage, folk customs, nature and other local resources, the products carry a distinct regional cultural imprint and reject uniform and homogenized design [5]. Second, cultural authenticity: deeply exploring the cultural connotations, craftsmanship essence and spiritual core behind intangible cultural heritage, not tampering with or undermining the cultural essence of intangible cultural heritage, and guarding the cultural roots. Third, life adaptability: matching the living scenarios, usage habits and aesthetic preferences of local people and general consumers, achieving the transformation of cultural and creative products from “display items” to “daily necessities”. Fourth, inheritance connection: collaborating with local intangible cultural heritage inheritors and artisans, promoting the implementation of design results and helping local intangible cultural heritage skills and culture to achieve sustainable inheritance.

2.3 The Intrinsic Connection Between Intangible Cultural Heritage Activation and Geographical-based Cultural and Creative Design

The purpose of geographical-based cultural and creative design for intangible cultural heritage is to realize the activation of intangible cultural heritage. The best path for the activation of intangible cultural heritage is geographical-based cultural and creative design [6]. On the one hand, geographical-based cultural and creative design is the carrier of intangible cultural heritage activation. Under the design concept of geographical-based cultural and creative design, intangible cultural heritage that is intangible can be transformed into tangible cultural and creative works, which can help consumers understand China's intangible cultural heritage by purchasing and using cultural and creative products, and experience the charm of intangible cultural heritage. On the other hand, the activation of intangible cultural heritage can convey the core support to geographical-based cultural and creative design. Geographical-based cultural and creative design needs to start from the activation of intangible cultural heritage and avoid the tendency of commercialization, so as to truly achieve the purpose of cultural and creative products carrying intangible cultural heritage [7]. Therefore, there is an interdependent and mutually promoting relationship between intangible cultural heritage activation and geographical-based cultural and creative design, which collaboratively contributes to the inheritance and innovation of intangible cultural heritage in our country.

3. THE CURRENT SITUATION AND CHALLENGES OF LOCALIZED CULTURAL AND CREATIVE DESIGN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE REVITALIZATION

3.1 Current Development Status

In recent years, with the increasing attention from the government to the protection of intangible cultural heritage and the development of the creative industry, various regions have carried out on-site cultural creative design practices of intangible cultural heritage, achieving remarkable results. On the other hand, a collaborative model of research, education and industry has gradually taken shape [8]. Design teams from universities, creative enterprises, and intangible cultural heritage inheritors have cooperated, promoting the local and professional development of intangible cultural heritage creative products through field investigations and skill integration. Some intangible cultural heritage creative products have become regional cultural symbols, driving the

development of local tourism and handicraft industries. Moreover, the integration of digital technology has injected new vitality into the on-site cultural creative design of intangible cultural heritage. New forms of cultural creations such as digital intangible cultural heritage collections, intangible cultural heritage “emojis”, and modular intangible cultural design have emerged continuously. This not only reduces the development costs of intangible cultural heritage creative products but also expands the dissemination channels, allowing intangible cultural heritage to enter the lives of the public in a more youthful and modern way.

3.2 Challenges

3.2.1 Superficial Cultural Exploration and Lack of Regional Characteristics

Some localized cultural and creative designs fail to deeply explore the cultural connotations, historical context, and regional spirit of intangible cultural heritage, merely using intangible cultural heritage symbols and patterns in a simple way, such as directly printing intangible cultural heritage patterns on fridge magnets and key chains. They lack an interpretation of the folk stories, craftsmanship essence, and emotional value behind intangible cultural heritage, resulting in cultural and creative products that are merely superficial and lack distinct regional characteristics, making it difficult to reflect the core value of intangible cultural heritage revitalization.

3.2.2 Severe Design Homogenization and Insufficient Innovation Capacity

Driven by commercial interests, many intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products exhibit a phenomenon of “copycat design”, with product categories mainly concentrated in bookmarks, bracelets, and ornaments. Intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products from different regions are largely similar, lacking localized innovation and differentiated design [9]. Some designs are detached from local life scenarios, blindly pursuing trendy aesthetics, and ignoring the original characteristics of intangible cultural heritage and the usage habits of local ethnic groups, leading to low market recognition and difficulty in achieving long-term development.

3.2.3 Imbalance in Subject Collaboration and Disconnection between Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritors and Designers

In current practices, there is a common subject contradiction: intangible cultural heritage designers lack a deep understanding of intangible cultural heritage techniques and regional culture, making it difficult for their design plans to be implemented; inheritors do not understand modern design and market demands, making it difficult for their products to meet contemporary aesthetics; there are disputes over revenue distribution and intellectual property rights, leading to unstable cooperation and a disconnection between design outcomes and intangible cultural heritage inheritance.

3.2.4 Imbalance between Production and Inheritance, Insufficient Sustainability

Localized cultural and creative products face the contradiction between standardized production and the inheritance of manual techniques: while batch mechanical production can meet market demands, it dilutes the uniqueness of intangible cultural heritage manual techniques, losing the significance of localization and dynamic inheritance; pure manual production is inefficient, costly, and has limited output, making it difficult to meet the mass market. At the same time, the aging of intangible cultural heritage inheritors and the lack of young inheritors pose a risk of a generational gap in intangible cultural heritage techniques and cultural and creative design.

3.2.5 Poor Market Adaptability and Imbalance between Commercialization and Cultural Value

Some intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products either overly pursue commercial interests, weakening cultural connotations and becoming cheap tourist souvenirs; or overly emphasize cultural value, neglecting practical functions and market demands, with high prices and insufficient practicality, making it difficult to be accepted by the general public and unable to form a virtuous cycle of “design, production, consumption, inheritance”, restricting the sustainable development of intangible cultural heritage revitalization.

4. CORE STRATEGIES FOR LOCALIZED CULTURAL AND CREATIVE DESIGN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE REVITALIZATION

Based on the core goals of intangible cultural heritage revitalization and the current practical challenges of localized cultural and creative design, combined with the inheritance of regional culture and market demand, a four-dimensional design strategy of "deep cultural excavation, localized design transformation, localized industrial implementation, sustainable inheritance continuation" is constructed to achieve the organic integration of intangible cultural heritage, local characteristics, and modern design.

4.1 Deep Cultural Excavation: Adhering to the Core of Local Culture

The authenticity of cultural heritage is the foundation of intangible cultural heritage revitalization and localized design. In the early stage of design, it is necessary to conduct comprehensive field investigations in the areas where intangible cultural heritage is passed down to complete the deep excavation of intangible cultural heritage [10].

4.2 Localization Transformation of Design: Integrating Modern Demands

The core of realizing the integration of tradition and innovation in local cultural creative design is "sticking to the essence and innovating". That is, on the basis of adhering to the core of intangible cultural heritage, combining contemporary aesthetics, living scenarios and market demands, completing the localization design transformation and achieving the connection between intangible cultural heritage and contemporary life [11]. This mainly includes the following points: First, localization of functions, based on the living habits and mass consumption demands of local people, optimize the practical functions of cultural and creative products, integrate intangible cultural heritage techniques into daily product design. For instance, the blue-printed cloth cultural products from Jiaxing have been adapted to meet modern demands, designing tablecloths, throw pillows, storage bags and other practical household items; in Yunnan bamboo weaving intangible cultural heritage simplifies the process, designs earrings, bags and other wearable cultural products, making intangible cultural heritage change from "crafts" to "daily necessities", enhancing the practicality and daily usage rate of the products. Second, localization of aesthetics, taking into account the traditional aesthetics of intangible cultural heritage and contemporary aesthetic trends, deconstruct and reconstruct the patterns, shapes and colors of intangible cultural heritage, avoiding rigid replication. For example, the cultural and creative products of Changzhou comb and hairpin extract the traditional silver wire inlay technique, combine Peking Opera face patterns, zodiac elements, design cute styles, suitable for young people's aesthetics; the cultural and creative products of Gan Opera break the simple appropriation of face patterns, extract the performance rhythm into dynamic visual symbols, enhancing the artistic sense and modernity of the cultural products. Third, localization of materials, prioritize the selection of local natural materials, such as bamboo cultural and creative products use local bamboo, black pottery cultural and creative products select local unique pottery clay, both retain the original texture of intangible cultural heritage and reduce production costs, highlighting the localization characteristics; at the same time, moderately introduce environmentally friendly, lightweight modern materials, balancing traditional craftsmanship and modern production needs. Fourth, diversification of forms, breaking the limitations of physical cultural and creative products, combining digital technology to develop digital intangible cultural heritage cultural products, such as intangible cultural heritage digital collections, emojis, AR cultural products, etc., broaden the channels for intangible cultural heritage dissemination, adapt to the consumption habits of young consumers, and achieve multi-dimensional presentation of the activation of intangible cultural heritage.

4.3 Localization Implementation of Industry: Multi-party collaboration and Linkage, Balancing Production and Inheritance

To promote the implementation of localized cultural and creative design results, it is necessary to establish a multi-party collaborative mechanism of "government, universities, enterprises, inheritors, local ethnic groups", achieving a localized closed loop of design, production and sales. First, the government builds a platform, introduces policies for supporting intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products, standardizes intellectual property protection, coordinates the income distribution of inheritors and designers, establishes a stepwise sharing and copyright sharing mechanism, resolving the main contradictions; second, universities and cultural and creative enterprises jointly establish localized design studios and intangible cultural heritage workshops, organize designers to deeply study techniques in the inheritance area, collaborate with inheritors to

design, ensuring that the design proposals are in line with intangible cultural heritage techniques and can be implemented and mass-produced; third, innovate production models, adopt a mixed production method of “machine molding, manual refinement”, practical cultural and creative products are moderately mechanized production, artistic display cultural and creative products retain pure manual techniques, balancing production efficiency and cultural authenticity; fourth, build localized sales channels, combine with tourist attractions, rural markets and e-commerce platforms, create regional intangible cultural heritage cultural product brands, allowing cultural and creative products to reach consumers directly, forming a localized industry closed loop.

4.4 Sustainable Continuation of Inheritance: Activating Inheritance Power, Achieving Dynamic Development

The ultimate goal of the activation of intangible cultural heritage is to achieve sustainable inheritance, the localized cultural and creative design must also take into account the cultivation of inheritance power [12]. First, attach importance to the training of intangible cultural heritage inheritors, establish a “master, apprentice inheritance and design training” model, provide modern design and market knowledge training for young inheritors, and provide intangible cultural heritage skills training for designers, creating a composite talent with both skills and design capabilities; second, combine localized cultural and creative design with rural revitalization and campus education, develop intangible cultural heritage DIY kits, enter schools and communities, popularize intangible cultural heritage culture, attract young people to participate in inheritance; Thirdly, through the sales of cultural and creative products, the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage can be supported. A portion of the proceeds can be used for the protection of intangible cultural heritage techniques, subsidies for inheritors, and the improvement of inheritance conditions, so as to provide impetus and guarantee for the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, and achieve “cultivating through culture” in an active and dynamic way.

5. SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK

In conclusion, the inheritance and sustainable development of intangible culture cannot be separated from intangible cultural heritage activation. Through in-place creative design, intangible cultural heritage can be activated. The collaborative effect of the two can open up a new and broad path for the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage. However, in the initial exploration stage of in-place creative design of intangible cultural heritage in China, there are difficulties such as insufficient cultural exploration, design homogeneity, imbalance in the coordination of the main body, and insufficient sustainability of inheritance. From the perspective of the activation of intangible cultural heritage, localized cultural and creative design must adhere to the core of regional culture, guard the authenticity of intangible cultural heritage through deep cultural excavation, realize innovation through localized design, promote industrial implementation through multi-party collaboration, achieve sustainable development through inheritance, and create cultural products that are both culturally significant, regionally specific, practical and marketable. This will enable intangible cultural heritage to truly integrate into contemporary life and achieve dynamic inheritance.

At the same time, with the continuous development and advancement of modern technology and the continuous enhancement of national cultural confidence, in-place creative design of intangible cultural heritage will receive more attention and recognition. In the future, it is expected that information technology can further promote the improvement of the level of in-place creative design of intangible cultural heritage, utilize technologies such as AIGC, 3D modeling, AR/VR, to achieve digital excavation, intelligent design and immersive dissemination of intangible cultural heritage, expand the dimensions of intangible cultural heritage activation; at the same time, further strengthen the multi-party collaboration mechanism, improve the intellectual property protection and income distribution system, balance the relationship between commercialization and culture, standardization production and manual skill inheritance; moreover, more attention should be paid to the cultivation of young consumer groups and young inheritance forces, so that intangible cultural heritage can regain vitality in young and localized design, truly achieving the goal of “intangible cultural heritage living in the present and inheritance facing the future”, and contributing to the inheritance and innovation of excellent traditional Chinese culture, rural cultural revitalization and regional cultural development.

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