

Innovation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Arts and Crafts Design

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Abstract: In order to discuss the innovation of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts design, it is essential to first understand the current situation of intangible heritage arts and crafts, and then proceed from two directions, which include visual form and functional value. The role and influence of digitization and industrialization on the modern transformation of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts design need to be clarified. In terms of ideas for innovative designs, interactive scene design and cultural brand building can be emphasized. These research results provide ideas and methods for realizing the creative transformation and innovative inheritance of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts.

Keywords: Intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts; Innovative design; Visual form; Functional value

Publication date: October 2021; **Online publication:** October 29, 2021

1. Introduction

Intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts are closely related to the traditional lifestyle. They have been passed down and condensed into important art forms of traditional culture through generations. The historical inheritance of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts is dynamic, contains the vitality and creativity of folk crafts, and manifests the creative spirit and aesthetic taste which continue to develop along with the changes in the social environment and life patterns. In modern visual environment and social living space, intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts do not only preserve and promote the genes of traditional visual culture, but also face the challenges of modern visual forms, design concepts, and aesthetic concepts. This complicated situation constitutes a realistic dilemma faced by intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts, but it also brings opportunities for innovation and development.

2. Current situation of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts

Intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts are in an awkward position in the modern era. On the one hand, in view of the weakening of the spiritual core in traditional visual forms, in most cases, the emphasis is on decorative forms and visual interest in design creation and aesthetic appreciation. However, without the norms and guidance of the spiritual core and cultural connotation, it is difficult to form a reasonable and proper principle of use. In current situation, the use of visual elements from intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts often results in improper operations, such as arbitrary misappropriation, splicing, excessive interpretation, as well as misunderstandings of the cultural connotation of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts. This in turn leads to the destruction of the core values of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts. On the other hand, the rigid traditional visual style and the solidified traditional cultural connotation have a large psychological distance from the current lifestyle, visual habits, spiritual needs, and value orientation. They are unable to adapt to the characteristics of spiritual applicability in this modern day. Therefore, it is difficult to stimulate people's aesthetic interest and spiritual resonance with intangible

cultural heritage arts and crafts design. This situation restricts the inheritance and scope of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts as well as causes the failure of the core values of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts to be fully embodied. These problems need to be resolved in the process of inheritance and dissemination. The inheritance and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts includes two elements: the duplication and innovation of core cultural genes. Duplication here refers to maintaining the integrity of the spiritual core in the process of dissemination as well as to retain important traditional aesthetic interest and visual elements. On the other hand, the purpose of innovation is to integrate intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts into modern visual environment. In terms of content innovation, while dealing with these arts and crafts, it is necessary to take into consideration of modernization, explore modern themes, create new narrative contents, and improve the ideographic function of modern life in order to establish meaningful relationships in life and inject modern meaning into intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts.

3. Digitalization promotes the innovative design of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts visual forms

At present, modern digital creation technology has gradually replaced traditional craftsmanship and has become the mainstream, involving many forms such as film and television, electronic art, digital interaction, and virtual reality design. Digital recording and protection of intangible cultural heritage has formed an important trend. It has also promoted the exploration of digital development ^[1]. Using digital technology as a strategic tool for innovative design, the direct impact on intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts is the evolution of visual form, which is mainly reflected in two aspects: experience mode and display mode.

3.1. An experience mode that simulates the perspective of the creator

Intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts have evolved from a physical entity to a composite visual form of digital imitating entities. This fusion of virtuality and reality produces special effects in visual perception, forms a new visual texture, and derives innovative experience modes. On the one hand, this “virtual as reality” experience mode creates a real visual experience, which can deepen people’s sense of immersion and experience while appreciating intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts. On the other hand, virtualization technology has the advantage of surpassing reality in design operations, and it can conveniently modify visual images. This is conducive to initiating innovative design experiments on the visual form of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts ^[2]. For example, the innovative design of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts using AR (augmented reality) and VR (virtual reality) technology combined with interactive scene design allows the audience to participate in digital simulation production, such as experiencing clay sculpturing, wood carving, and embroidery. With interactive functions, the audience can easily change various elements of the avatar, such as the shape, material, color, etc., without having to master professional skills. It deepens the understanding of the audience in the production process of arts and crafts as well as forms an experience mode that strengthens interactive relationships. Therefore, the interactive design that simulates the creator’s perspective is able to expand the visual experience of the modern society as well as stimulate their interest and willingness to take part in intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts, thus enhancing their design attention and willingness to innovate in visual forms.

3.2. Constructing a dynamic deductive display mode

Intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts have developed from a static display mode to a dynamic display mode through digital technology. This is a creative breakthrough in traditional visual forms ^[3]. Among them, digital imaging and animation technology have promoted the development of dynamic display from

simple to in-depth. At the basic level, the transition from static to dynamic benefits from mature digital imaging technology. Using the common folk decorative paintings of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts as an example, software tools can be used to convert traditional arts and crafts pictures into digital forms, and electronic screens can also be used to replace traditional media materials, such as papers and silk. This kind of digital decorative painting provides an opportunity for users to freely modify or change the visual elements of a picture, such as the photo frame, color tone, brightness, etc. In addition, users can set a timing replacement program for the image and execute it automatically, resulting in an image switching effect similar to an electronic billboard. This way of display effectively breaks the single visual form of traditional intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts, and eventually, people would have a richer dynamic image and impression of folk cultural images in decorative paintings. On the other hand, traditional papercutting needs to be described through language or text. The art of papercutting can be shared in the form of animation as a complete storyline; thus, the cultural connotation contained in the art of papercutting can be revealed. Through the intuitive and dynamic display process, the effect of the art of papercutting can be conveyed.

4. Industrialization of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts design

The innovative design of arts and crafts can be promoted by industrializing the intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts design. The characteristic of modern industrialized production is the division of labor in society. Separating design from manufacturing through the division of labor is one of the important differences between traditional arts and crafts and modern design and production. This indicates that in the process of integrating intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts into modern life, it is mandatory that they form a deep fit with the product functions and industrial models emphasized by modern industrial production. It is also essential to explore and develop non-heritage arts based on the product concept and industrial thinking of modern arts and crafts while considering the potential function and value of heritage arts and crafts.

4.1. Design and develop modern practical functions

Intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts should refer to the functional attributes of modern consumer products to develop functional values for modern needs. In this way, the innovative measure is closer to the needs of the public in real life, thereby enhancing value of function and aesthetics. For example, traditional lanterns in intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts have the function of providing light in addition to their ornamental value. However, as they are unable to meet the requirements of real space lighting, they can only be used as simple lightings or decorations in the modern era. The lighting function of traditional lanterns can be improved by learning from various designs, so as they can also be used for modern lighting. By extracting the modeling elements and decorative techniques of traditional lighting and combining them with the structure, material, light source, as well as production methods of modern lighting, the creation of a product with traditional visual decorative charm and the practicality of modern lighting would be able to meet the needs of the modern society in terms of its functionality and aesthetics. By supplementing and enriching the traditional functions of modern design, as well as reconciling modern design expressions with traditional production elements, intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts can be reproduced in people's daily lives with practical functions and aesthetic value. This is the most effective way to bring "life" to intangible cultural heritage as they would then be easily accepted by the modern society ^[4]. It can be seen that the acquisition of practical functions by intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts can promote the transformation of traditional arts and crafts into modern design forms.

4.2. Combining modern industries to create brand value

The cultural connotation of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts is conveyed in the form of modern products. This undoubtedly opens up channels for the public to connect with intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts as well as expands the public's views in regard to the traditional culture of arts and crafts. Intangible cultural heritage handicrafts rely on manual production methods; thus, their effects are often not as good as industrialized production. The design purpose is to produce products that are generally accepted by the public. The realization of the large-scale production industrial model determines the scope and extent of these cultural products entering the consumer society. It can be appreciated that the industrial model is the impetus for the continuous expansion and widespread dissemination of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts, cultural products, and cultural values. For example, the Guochao culture uses cultural elements with Chinese characteristics as its core design elements and cleverly integrates popular design techniques as well as visual styles, which reflect the innovative design with traditional cultural values, as its brand appeal. This innovative design is driven by consumer demand for the pursuit of traditional cultural values. Consumption motivation includes a strong sense of national identity and cultural belonging. Therefore, it is wise to draw lessons from the successful experience of Guochao's creative designs, transform the traditional modeling in intangible heritage arts and crafts into characters with strong individual visual characteristics, as well as enhance the visual symbols and cultural connotation of intangible cultural heritage through brand planning and marketing. Through brand innovation and design, the cultural value and commercial value of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts have been greatly enhanced.

5. Conclusion

The innovation of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts should begin from the two directions: the digitization of visual form and the industrialization of functional value. Innovation points to the future. Through the implementation of innovative designs, intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts can be reintegrated into the modern visual environment and living space to gain a deeper understanding and extensive dissemination. In this way, the spiritual essence of traditional culture would fit the development theme of the modern society. In the final analysis, dynamic inheritance expresses people's true needs for traditional culture and the modern spirit through innovative consciousness and design practice. Therefore, innovative designs need to make a breakthrough contribution to the visual form and functional value of traditional intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts in order to promote the creative transformation and innovative inheritance of intangible cultural heritage arts and crafts.

Funding

This research was supported by the Guangdong Province Educational Science Planning Project, "Research on the Construction and Application of Flipped Classroom Mode in the Teaching of Environmental Design Projects in Colleges and Universities" (2020GXJK439).

Disclosure statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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