Research on the Design of Cultural Creative Products From the Perspective of Cultural Identity

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Abstract
Improved cultural soft power is now a strategic goal of cultural building in nations all over the globe, as economic globalization has hastened the intermingling and collision of cultures. As a result, we should pay attention to how product design shapes culture, as this aids in developing cultural identity. Cultural creative products are a result of the development of cultural industry. They satisfy their essential attributes as products while also expressing a specific culture through the medium of products, which expands the influence and spread of culture and meets people's inner desire to express their culture and their identification with culture. Based on the perspective of cultural identity, this paper introduces the meaning of cultural identity and its characteristics, as well as some related scholars' research, and uses creative products as an entry point to analyze the current cultural identity dilemma faced and explains through design cases that can obtain cultural identity. And we will discuss cultural creative products that may get a consumer's cultural identity via design cases. We will investigate the development strategies of cultural creative products on account of cultural decoding to create products with cultural identity and resonance. The study findings might lead to new ideas for fostering cultural identity and developing cultural creative products. At the same time, it is essential to realize cultural identity and enhance cultural confidence in the context of modernization and globalization today.

Keywords: Cultural Identity, Cultural Creative Products, Creative Design, Brand Design, Cultural Encoding and Decoding

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Introduction - Cultural Identity

Cultural identity refers to the positive recognition and acceptance on the connotation of cultural expression. Cultural identity is the recognition of a common culture among individuals or members of a common society. Meanwhile, this recognition is not only an intrinsic motivation for the consumption of cultural products, but also the spiritual foundation for the continuation of the state and national community.

Cultural and Creative Products

A. Concept of cultural and creative products

Understanding the terms "creative products," "creative industries," and "cultural and creative industries" is necessary before attempting to define precisely what "cultural and creative products" are. Creative items include physical materials, activities and services. Artists produce new ideas with these elements, which have symbolic meanings. Economic activities with cultural creativity as the core are defined as the creative industry. Taking culture as the background and innovative thinking as the concept, combined with creative design, the final purpose of the cultural and creative industry is to produce items with a lot of additional value. "Creativity" serves a crucial function in this new industry. The UK was the first to introduce the term "cultural and creative industry" and promulgated relevant documents for it, such as the "Creative Industry Pathway Document". The document explained those who work in the cultural and creative industry, stating that these practitioners are a new type of practitioners who create wealth through personal creativity and talent combined with intellectual property. At the same time, John Hawkins, the father of the British creative industry, published the book "Creative Economy", which pointed out that the creative economy generates about $22 billion in economic benefits worldwide every day. Moreover, this benefit is increasing at a rate of 5%. It is evident that the economic expansion of this new industry is staggering.

Cultural and creative products have received much attention and promotion in this context, relying on the cultural and creative industry take for foundation and an essential branch for their development. Simply speaking, cultural and creative products mean taking material products as carriers, using creative design means and incorporating innovative thinking. The key value of this product is "culture" and "creativity", and it is meanwhile a new channel for cultural dissemination and cultural identity.

This type of product is the development and innovation of cultural resources, so that it is endowed with cultural elements disseminate cultures, create cultural brands and stimulate cultural identity.

B. Characteristics of cultural and creative products

Cultural and creative items are products driven by consumer demand that prompt the integration of culture and creativity. Creativity inspired by culture as a resource is intangible and can only be carried by tangible carriers, thus realizing its function of spreading culture over the globe. So, products of culture and creativity have both "tangible" and "intangible" qualities.

Second, getting cultural elements and designing and making material carriers are essential to making cultural and creative products. The most important thing about cultural and creative

products is that they not merely possess the same basic features as other products, but they also make people feel good on a spiritual level through things like cultural connotations and creative thinking. These intangible cultural elements can connect consumers' emotional appeals and cultural needs in a roundabout way. Creativity, culture, intangibility, and identity are certain things that make cultural and creative products suitable.

C. Basic attributes of cultural and creative products

1) Value attributes of cultural and creative products

The worth of cultural and creative items is derived from their latent cultural components. According to these implicit cultural elements, the main values of the products are classified as cultural function value, cultural experience value and cultural information value. Secondly, from the consumer's perspective, cultural and creative items consist of use value and conceptual value (Wufei, Li, 2009). The worth of cultural and creative items is typically higher than regular products with the same function due to these valuable features.

2) Cultural attributes of cultural and creative products

Since these products possess a powerful connotation of cultural symbols, they can form a symbolic cultural image. Moreover, through symbolic communication, these products can evoke consumers' emotional appeal, thus stimulating their cultural identity and sense of belonging.

3) Brand attributes of cultural and creative products

By utilising the visual impact and creation presentation of design methods, cultural elements and cultural symbols, a channel for the development of brand identity associated with culture will be created. It is evident that the cultural and creative products have enhanced the brand identity. This facilitates the formation of consumer preference for product brands and the strengthening of their brand loyalty.

Secondly, the symbol and identifiability of brands of cultural and creative products can make the products stand out among many commodities. Meanwhile, it can greatly enhance the brand value and increase the sales of the products.

D. Constituents of cultural and creative products

1) Cultural elements

Any cultural creative item cannot be produced without the support of cultural elements, which is the key to make them different from general products. Designers should research the cultural context before developing culturally and creatively inspired products. So that the general public can genuinely build a cultural identity through cultural and creative items, they can creatively offer the products' cultural features to consumers.

2) Formal element

As the most intuitive feeling for consumers to know a product, the form is also the material presentation of cultural and creative products. Formal elements are the external presentation

of the product, including the shape, technology, color, pattern, texture and material of cultural and creative products.

3) Functional elements

In cultural and creative products, functional elements are one of the key factors for consumers to consider whether to buy the products or not. This function mainly refers to what value the product can be used to achieve. The prerequisite for an item to become a product lies in its use value. Therefore, the starting and ending points of cultural and creative products must be to create items that are accepted or needed by consumers.

4) Aesthetic elements

Secondly, under the premise of meeting the use function, aesthetic elements should also be taken into consideration when designing cultural and creative items. In addition to being a crucial component of cultural and creative items, it also serves as a key differentiator between them and everyday goods. Ordinary products are designed according to the principle of "function determines form", while cultural and creative products emphasise the interplay of function, culture, and aesthetics. This is because aesthetics can add emotional value to a product and influence consumers' purchasing decisions.

5) Emotional elements

When consumers first know the product, the direct factors such as the shape, function and color of the product will leave them an initial impression of the product. Based on these emotional factors, and by combining these cultural elements with themselves, a certain positive cultural identity or emotional collision will be generated among consumers. When this emotion is generated, it will have a positive effect on the value of the product, thus prompting consumers to be willing to pay for this emotional factor. As a result, throughout the design process for cultural and creative items, developers should purposefully integrate emotional factors that can cause cultural identity, so as to drive the emotional resonance of consumers.

E. Design requirements for cultural and creative products

The design of cultural and creative products should not only reflect the functionality of the products, but also highlight its cultural and spiritual connotation, with the aim of evoking consumers' sense of identity. This requires designers to understand the close relationship between products and culture when in the practice. Products are the physical manifestation of culture, while culture is dependent on products. In the specific design, the creative form of the product can help consumers understand the cultural connotation that the design is intended to convey, thus generating an overall evaluation of the product. This evaluation determines whether consumers are willing to pay for cultural and creative products. On this basis, designers are required to fully understand the intrinsic core values of the cultural and creative products and design them by means of creative design (Tsai et al., 2007).

Current problems in cultural identity confronted by cultural and creative products

Numerous issues possess surfaced due to the tendency to set up cultural and creative goods fleetly. The problems are classified and summarized as follows:

1) Lack of innovation

The design of cultural and creative objects lacks innovation. For some products, cultural elements are only simply applied on the surface of the products or some unrelated cultural elements are integrated to the products. At the same time, there is no in-depth excavation of cultural connotation, thus the targeted product positioning cannot be done, but to simply imitate the existing design of cultural and creative goods. Also, there is nothing in-depth research on visual language and design elements, which leads to the lack of cultural characteristics of the products and thus cannot be recognized by consumers.

2) Failure to dig deeper into user needs

For many cultural and creative products, when market research is conducted, the target groups of the products have not been subdivided, so that it is impossible to create cultural and creative products with various demand levels. Secondly, the emotional needs of users have not been deeply explored. The existing cultural and creative products lack emotional communication and have inconspicuous cultural characteristics. Therefore, these cultural and creative items are unable to evoke users' emotional resonance, thus lacking cultural identity in the design.

Cultural decoding and encoding

A. The concept of encoding and decoding of the design of cultural and creative products

The encoding and decoding of the design of cultural and creative products involves the concept of semiotics. Therefore, before explaining these two concepts, the basic concepts of product design semiotics will be introduced. According to Peirce's semiotic theory, symbols are perceived by attaching to material carriers to achieve their spiritual function. Cultural and creative items can physically carry symbols. The cultural symbols in the products are the process of the designers' incorporating cultural images into the products after concentrating and extracting them through creative means. The whole creation process can be regarded as the process of encoding and reorganization of cultural symbols by designers. Figure 1 explains the relationship between culture and product.
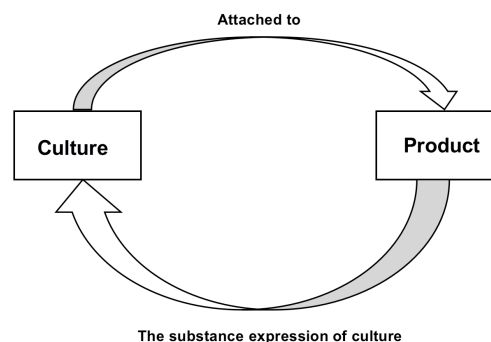

Figure 1: The Relationship Between Culture and Product

1) The concept of coding in cultural and creative design

Designers and related product design developers play the role of coders of cultural and creative goods. As coders, they conduct full research on the target consumer groups of cultural and creative products and then synthesize design codes for the figurative elements

such as shape, color and quality in the products and the abstract elements that constitute the practical functions of these products. In this process, on the one hand, designers need to use artistic means to refine visual elements and integrate these symbols into the shape, function and material of cultural and creative items. As opposed to that, these symbolic codes can link the products with consumers' cultural perception and identity, thus forming useful cultural codes. Figure 2 explains the roles of encoding and decoding.
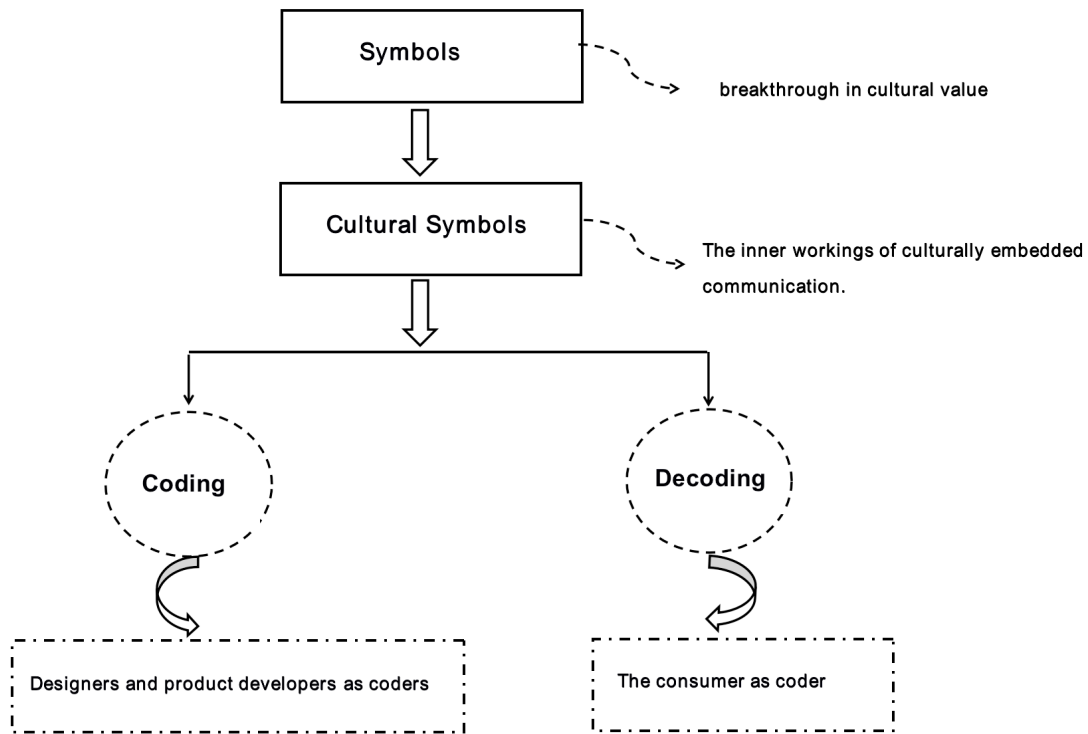

Figure 2: The Roles of Encoding and Decoding

2) The concept of decoding in cultural creative design

Through appreciating and using the products, consumers play the role of perceiver and interpreter of the decoding of cultural and creative products in this mutual communication process. When they appreciate the cultural and creative products, the interpretation of the products is formed through using and understanding the products. They get to know the implicit knowledge and cultural connotation of the products, and their cultural identity is formed in the process of cognition. This is the decoding process.

It can be seen that designers and related product developers are accountable for the encoding of cultural and creative goods, while consumers are the decoders. In the process of encoding and decoding, cultural knowledge is transmitted to generate cultural identity. In this process, code products with cultural characteristics and emotional appeals play a key role in promoting cultural identity (Ting Shen & Daze Dong, 2017). Therefore, successful cultural and creative products are usually able to generate cultural identity and cultural resonance in the process of encoding and decoding (Figure 3).
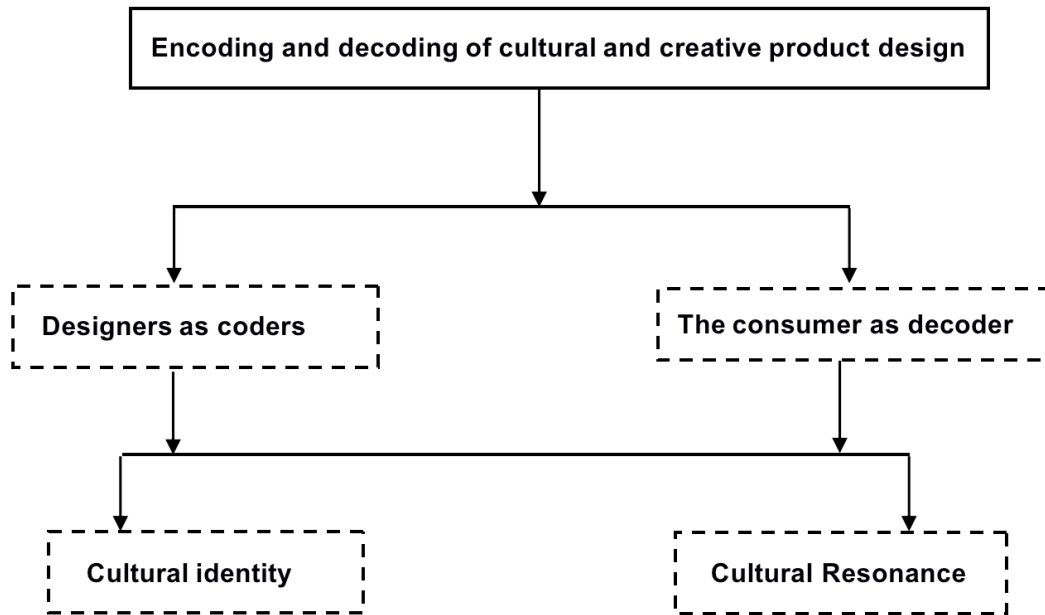
Figure 3：Encoding and Decoding of Cultural and Creative Product Design

B. The design path of cultural and creative products based on cultural identity

Cultural identity is to realize the innovative design of cultural and creative products by awakening users' memory of culture, thus becoming a "cultural bridge" connecting products and users. Unique cultural and creative products are developed to build a close cultural connection with consumers and inspire their cultural resonance. The basic design steps of this innovative product can be summarized as arousal - association - recognition. The main paths are as follows.

1) The principle of cultural elements as the core

The process framework for the design of cultural and creative products is made up of culture, creativity, and product. First, in addition to relying on existing cultures, creating cultural and creative products also helps shape new cultures. Symbols also convey the product's cultural significance. For this reason, cultural symbols serve as the engine behind the scenes that spreads the product's cultural meaning, which influences the existence and operation of the product all the time.   Therefore, as part of the creation of cultural and creative products, cultural elements need to be taken as the core principle. By referring to and sorting cultural forms, these forms are classified and the essence of cultural forms is extracted. Combined with creative design methods, the characteristic cultural symbols and forms are recoded in the context of modern aesthetics. The product can be self-explanatory and can explain the cultural meaning behind it by itself. On this basis, creative products with cultural recognition are created, which can convey culture to consumers, cause cultural resonance, stimulate consumers' cultural identity, and invariably enhance the cultural value of the product.

2) Branding principle

Brand is the core factor that distinguishes a product or service from others. Brand design incorporates the core elements of a company or product name, tagline, and iconic graphicsymbols (He Jiaxun, 2000). In other words, one of the important roles of branding is

to bring recognition to the product. Consumers consume products of the brand to express themselves, explore their emotional belonging and cultural identity.

By establishing the cultural brand of the product, the sense of visual identity of the product can be unified and at the same time the channel for product development can be expanded. Secondly, designers can use cultural elements to create brand characteristics. Through the development and innovation of culture, cultural association is implanted into the product to build symbolic meaning and cultural image, thus arousing the cultural identity of consumers. At the same time, through the brand image, a sense of cultural identity is aroused among consumers while ensuring product quality, thus creating brand added value. The relationship between cultural and creative products, brand values, and customers is described as follows (Figure 4).
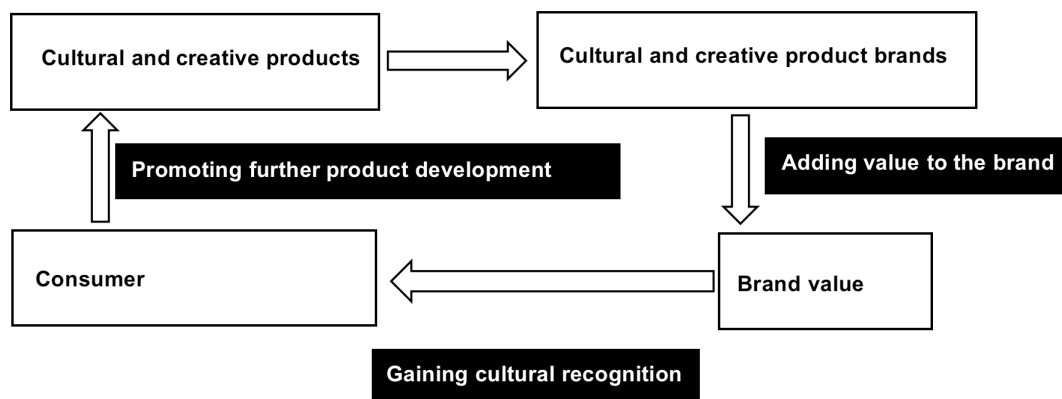

Figure 4: The Relationship Between Cultural and Creative Products, Brand values, and Customers

3) The principle of serialization

First, product serialization has a strong visual impact and appeal. It can present the product style directly to consumers. Therefore, in contrast, serialized products have a stronger visual impact than individual products. At the same time, the confusion caused by the inconsistency of product style can be avoided. Second, serialized products have a stronger sense of cultural expression. This is because serialized products can reinforce the aesthetics in the form design of the product. On the other hand, through repetitive forms, serialized products make consumers remember the brand deeply and stimulate exchange of information effect of the cultural and creative brand. Finally, serialized items can expand the types of cultural and creative products and reduce the evolution cost. Nevertheless, serialization can reduce the development time and cost invested in each product according to product development and production. The same tooling can be used in most of the products in the series, thus greatly reducing the development cost invested in individual products.

Conclusion

At present, cultural and creative design is developing rapidly, and thriving cultural and creative products can stimulate consumers' cultural decoding and identification ability. Therefore, designers should explore and construct the meaning of cultural symbols under the premise of cultural identity. Only by leaving a cultural imprint on consumers and realizing the process from consumers' viewing and purchasing products to cultural experience can a cultural bridge between products and consumers be built. In this way, the innovative design

of cultural and creative products is achieved, in order to enhance the cultural connotation of the products and form a unique cultural brand and image. From the perspective of cultural identity, this paper has analyzed the evolution strategy of cultural and creative products, which can provide some theoretical citations for future related researches.

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