

Research on Visual Design and Application of Fengxiang Clay Sculpture from the Perspective of Intangible Cultural Heritage Activation

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Abstract: At present, the protection of intangible cultural heritage has been paid more and more attention. This paper takes the national intangible cultural heritage Fengxiang clay sculpture as the research object, combs its cultural background, visual characteristics and cultural connotation, and analyzes the practical difficulties such as talent fault, product solidification and scene limitation in the current communication. Starting from the core visual elements such as modeling, color and decorative patterns, this paper puts forward the activation design strategy of concrete element extraction and translation, emotional narrative reconstruction and application scene expansion, and explores the innovative application path of Fengxiang clay sculpture in the fields of cultural creation, packaging and cultural tourism. The research shows that the modern translation of intangible cultural heritage visual symbols can effectively realize the win-win situation of cultural inheritance and commercial value, and provide a practical paradigm for the creative transformation and innovative development of folk art.

Keywords: Intangible Cultural Heritage Activation; Visual Design; Fengxiang Clay Sculpture; Cultural Heritage

1. The Value of Intangible Cultural Heritage Activation and the Cultural Background of Fengxiang Clay Sculpture

1.1 The Era Value and Practical Significance of the Activation of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Intangible cultural heritage refers to various social practices, conceptual expressions, forms of expression, knowledge, skills, and related tools, objects, handicrafts, and cultural sites that are regarded as part of their cultural heritage by

communities, groups, and sometimes individuals^[1]. The intangible cultural heritage cultures of different nationalities and different places all contain their own unique genes and emotions. They make human culture rich and vivid. However, with the rapid pace of modernization, people's consumption patterns are constantly changing, and many traditional crafts are slowly disappearing. 'Non-legacy activation' refers to walking into people's daily life, participating in social production, and meeting people's needs for beauty under the premise of respecting non-legacy culture. They are not allowed to stay in the museum as exhibits, but to 'live' again.

The value of intangible cultural heritage activation is mainly reflected in three aspects: the first is cultural inheritance, attracting more people to devote themselves to the study of skills, so that the skills will not be broken. The second is social value. The activation energy of intangible cultural heritage enables a local culture to be inherited. Local people are more confident, can also bring everyone's emotions closer, and make people more identify with their own cultural roots. Finally, in terms of economic value, the rational use of intangible cultural heritage resources can drive the local cultural and creative and cultural tourism industries, and achieve a win-win situation between culture and commerce.

In this context, Fengxiang clay sculpture is a very representative art and culture of Shaanxi folk. If these elements can be transformed into cultural symbols that resonate with young people through activation and innovation, Fengxiang clay sculpture can radiate new vitality.

1.2 Cultural Background of Fengxiang Clay Sculpture

Fengxiang clay sculpture is a traditional folk art in Fengxiang County, Shaanxi Province. As early as 2006, it was selected into the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list. Its

history can be traced back to the pre-Qin period - it was not originally used for decoration, but instead of human sacrifice. Later, it was slowly integrated into folk life, used to dispel evil spirits and pray for blessings, and became an indispensable part of folk scenes such as Spring Festival and marriage. Its production process is unique. It is made of six kinds of natural materials such as local black oil plate soil and white sealing soil. It is hand-refined through dozens of strict processes such as mud, mud, rolling mud cake, mold, drying, white powder, line drawing, coloring and varnish [2]. The theme is also very rich, from auspicious animals, mythological figures to flowers, birds, insects and fish, among which tigers, lions and twelve zodiac signs are the most representative (e.g., Figure.1)

For Example:



Figure 1. The image of the traditional intangible cultural heritage seated tiger in Fengxiang clay sculpture

In the 21st century, Fengxiang clay sculpture has become an iconic symbol of northwest folk art. It is not only not forgotten by time, but also provides a steady stream of creative materials for today's image design and intangible cultural heritage activation.

2. Cultural Elements of Fengxiang Clay Sculpture

2.1 Visual Element Characteristics of Fengxiang Clay Sculpture

The visual system of Fengxiang clay sculpture has a strong recognition and systematicness. It has formed a stable and mature artistic mode in three aspects: modeling, color and symbol. It is the external expression of its cultural connotation and the core material for the activation of contemporary image design.

2.1.1 Modeling Features

In terms of modeling, the modeling of Fengxiang clay sculpture is mainly based on characters and animals. The modeling of each clay sculpture is different and unique. The painting is flexible and flexible with the shape, and the lines are simple and thick, showing the western folk charm and the artist's creative wisdom [3] (e.g., Figure.2)

. From the morphological point of view, Fengxiang clay sculpture is mainly a three-dimensional round carving work. The overall shape is relatively honest and simple, but it is particularly charming. Take 'hang tiger' as an example: its tiger head is deliberately enlarged, its eyes are round and open, showing fangs, and its forehead is decorated with 'Wang' or peony patterns. This exaggerated approach does not make people feel fear, but with some cuteness in the mighty.

For Example:



Figure 2. Ma Shang Feng Hou (Immediate Success on Horseback)

In addition to hanging tigers, such as sitting tigers, lying cows, colored sheep and other animal shapes, they also follow the principle of 'freehand brushwork'. Folk craftsmen in the production of the pen, with rough surface and lines directly show the characteristics of the image, more in line with the law of formal beauty. For example, the limbs of the clay sculpture horse are simplified into a cylinder, and the trunk is also compressed into an oval shape, showing a solid and heavy body. This approach coincides with the concept of 'geometric' and 'flat' in modern design.

2.1.2 Color Performance

In terms of color performance, the primary

concept of Fengxiang craftsmen in choosing color is red-hot and lively. Big red, magenta, rose red and magenta constitute the main color-red festive warm, green symbol of vitality. These highly saturated colors are juxtaposed together, creating a strong visual impact. On this basis, the craftsmen use black and white to outline and adjust the contrast, so that the picture is both lively and orderly.

From the perspective of color distribution, Fengxiang clay sculpture has always followed the principle of 'heavy color and light ink', that is, the large-scale use of red and yellow, a warm color with high saturation, and then use green, a cold color as a contrast embellishment. Black ink lines and white powder are used to define the shape and brighten the picture. This way of using color is in line with the northwest folk art of Shaanxi paper-cut and Shehuo mask, which is the intuitive expression of life enthusiasm on the loess land.

In addition, clay sculptures of different themes have a bias in color. The evil spirits (such as hanging tigers) usually use red, black and white, these three colors, emphasizing majesty and strength; auspicious blessings (such as sitting tigers and zodiacs) add bright colors such as green and yellow, which can appear more lively and cordial; folk story characters clay sculpture, their colors tend to match according to the character, this approach reflects the symbolic characteristics of folk color.

2.1.3 Decorative Patterns

On the decorative patterns, it also contains people's good expectations. For example, the qiancao pattern means to attract wealth into the treasure, the pomegranate pattern represents many children and many blessings, and the peony pattern and the crabapple pattern often appear (e.g., Table 1.).

Table 1. Common Decorative Patterns and Their Meanings in Fengxiang Clay Sculpture

Pattern	Meaning
Coin-grass pattern (intersecting coin pattern, copper coin pattern)	Bringing in wealth and treasure, abundant financial resources
Pomegranate pattern	Fertility and multiple offspring, prosperous family
Lotus pattern	Purity and abundance
Peony pattern	Wealth, glory, and elegance
Crabapple pattern	Wealth in the household, family happiness
Scrolling grass	Vigorous vitality, endless

pattern	growth
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These patterns are not blindly stacked together, but in accordance with a certain rhythm and order to organize the arrangement. For example, the forehead of the hanging tiger is decorated with peony or 'Wang', the lotus or the rolling grass is symmetrically distributed on both sides of the cheek, and the lower jaw is the through money pattern, thus forming the decorative logic of 'from top to bottom, from the center to both sides'. The black and white line drawing outlines the edge of the pattern, and the color fills it. The whole presents the unique 'full composition' style of folk art, that is, it does not leave a large blank, and conveys the meaning of abundance in a complex and full manner. These symbols are never just good-looking decoration, they are entrusted with the local people's sincere hope for a happy life.

2.2 the Cultural Connotation of Fengxiang Clay Sculpture

2.2.1 Totem Worship and Folk Beliefs.

Tiger is regarded as a spiritual beast in Shaanxi folk belief to ward off evil and protect children's peace. The image modeling of flowers, birds, fish, insects, auspicious birds and beasts in Fengxiang clay sculpture is the remains of ancient Chinese totem, reproduction and god worship^[2].

2.2.2 the Materialized Expression of Folk Carrier and Farming Ideal

The ritualized carrier of folk life. The clay sculpture works often participate in the folk activities of life etiquette and season. For example, during the Spring Festival, the elders will give clay sculpture toys to children, which is not only an expression of family affection, but also a desire to bless peace into something visible and tangible.

Simple expression of farming aesthetics. The recurring themes of harvest, reproduction and abundance in Fengxiang clay sculpture reflect the basic imagination of the traditional agricultural society for a better life. In other words, Fengxiang clay sculpture is not only a 'good-looking' handicraft, but also a 'meaningful' cultural symbol system, which is highly unified in form and content.

3. The Communication Status and Image Activation Strategy of Fengxiang Clay Sculpture

3.1 The Dissemination Status of Fengxiang Clay Sculpture

In recent years, Fengxiang clay sculpture has achieved remarkable results in industrialization, inheritance system and integration of culture and tourism. Liuying Village has an annual output of more than 600,000 pieces of clay sculpture, sales revenue of more than 42 million yuan, attracting more than 400 people to work, and is known as the ' first village of clay sculpture in China '. The inheritance system formed an old, middle and young echelon with Hu Xinming as the core. ' Xinming clay sculpture workshop ' was selected as a provincial intangible cultural heritage workshop, which led to 320 employments. In terms of product innovation, meng pet series, national trend clay sculpture and zodiac stamp works are widely welcomed by the market, and the sales volume of a single product can reach tens of thousands. In terms of the integration of culture and tourism, Liuying Village has built a clay sculpture experience park and research base. In 2024, it will receive 1.5 million tourists, with a comprehensive tourism income of nearly 28.5 million yuan. ' Mud playing goods ' is becoming a ' golden doll ' for rural revitalization.

Although Fengxiang clay sculpture has become a national intangible cultural heritage project, its contemporary dissemination still faces multiple difficulties. First, the structure of inheritors is unbalanced. At present, the age of the artists of the traditional skills of Fengxiang clay sculpture is still generally high, and the problem of talent fault is increasingly prominent. Second, the product form is solidified and the propagation form is single. At present, Fengxiang clay sculpture takes entity dolls and ornaments as the main product form, mainly relying on traditional exhibitions, sales methods, and communication methods are not innovative enough. Third, use scenario solidification. The use of traditional clay sculptures is ceremonial and displayable, and is often closely related to folk occasions, such as temple fairs, sacrifices, festivals, etc. In the absence of similar occasions in contemporary urban life, the cultural significance of clay sculpture is not perceived by the new generation of consumers.

3.2 The Visual Design Idea of Fengxiang Clay Sculpture from the Perspective of Intangible Cultural Heritage Activation

3.2.1 Extraction and Translation of Concrete Elements

The extraction of concrete elements refers to the extraction of recognizable and representative visual features from the classical shapes, colors and patterns of Fengxiang clay sculpture, and then redesign these elements. Such as the classic sitting tiger, round eye fangs, dunshi cute(e.g., Figure.3).

The author retains the most core recognition features in the design : in terms of modeling, the towering big ears, the posture of squatting, and the facial structure weaken the ferocity and emphasize the loveliness ; in terms of color, it is still mainly pink, magenta and bright yellow, and then a large area of white base is used, which is more refreshing in vision ; on the decorative patterns, the patterns of pomegranate, crabapple, lotus and so on were extracted, and the complex lines and gold details were removed. By flattening and geometric processing, modern plane language translation is realized, so that the traditional image is more suitable for application to poster design or graphic patterns. In this way, the charm of folk art is still there, but the sense of obscurity of traditional symbols is weakened, which is more in line with the simple style that modern people like.

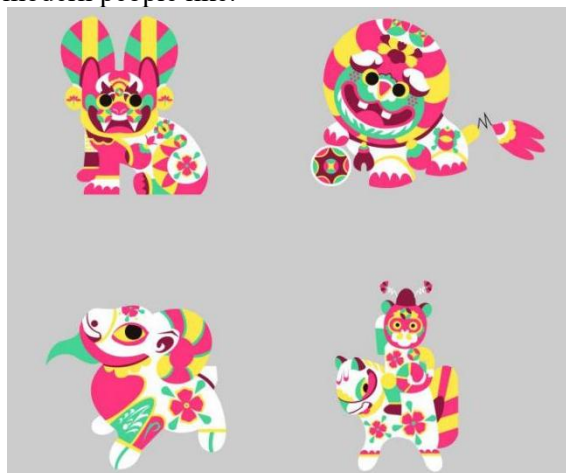


Figure 3. Partial Visual Image Design of the Clay Sculptures

3.2.2 Reinterpretation of Emotional Narrative

The traditional Fengxiang clay sculpture is entrusted with the simple and beautiful expectations of the people, such as exorcising evil spirits, Nafu Yingxiang, and seeking children. Today, these emotions can be changed. For example, the theme of 'guardianship ' -the tiger is originally a beast of the town house to ward off evil, we can reshape it into a ' healing guardian ' that accompanies daily life. The traditional meaning has not been lost, but it is spoken in a way that contemporary young people

are more likely to resonate.

3.2.3 the Contemporary Extension of Intangible Cultural Heritage Culture

The contemporary extension of intangible cultural heritage culture refers to letting Fengxiang clay sculpture enter a richer contemporary life context and jump out of the traditional display scene. For example, the image of clay sculpture is integrated into offline scenes such as cultural and creative market and joint packaging. On the upper end of the line, short videos, digital illustrations, social media expression packs and other forms can be combined to construct a situational narrative in the online virtual space, so that the intangible cultural heritage culture can be seen by more people.

Integrating the image design of Fengxiang clay sculpture into the packaging of local specialties is a way to realize cultural communication and increase commercial benefits. Fengxiang is rich in local characteristic agricultural products such as apples, peppers and bacon, but there have always been problems of poor packaging and low brand recognition. Therefore, integrating the image and auspicious patterns of clay sculpture into packaging design can enhance the cultural added value and visual appeal of products (e.g., Figure.4)

For Example:

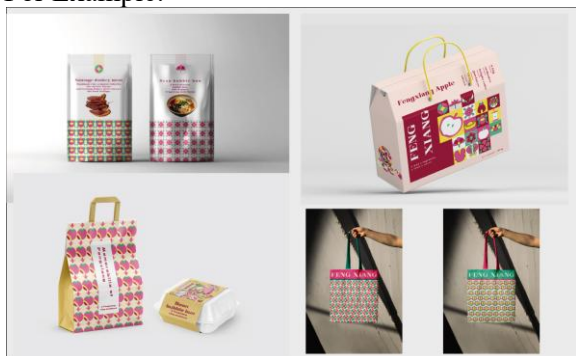


Figure 4. Packaging Design Featuring Fengxiang Clay Sculpture

The business model can create an exclusive and unified visual image of Fengxiang clay sculpture through the cooperation of intangible cultural heritage IP authorization + specialty joint name, and then authorize local enterprises to use it for agricultural product packaging, and rely on the daily sales of products to spread the intangible cultural heritage culture. In this way, consumption drives cognition, cognition triggers interest, and interest leads people to Fengxiang for tourism, forming a closed loop of ' product

consumption-cultural

cognition-tourism

diversion'.

4. Conclusion

Under the background of the continuous improvement of cultural self-confidence and the normalization of the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, the contemporary transformation of intangible cultural heritage has become an important topic in the cultural field. This paper takes Fengxiang clay sculpture as the research object, and extracts an activation idea composed of four links : concrete element extraction, humanistic emotion reconstruction, application scenario expansion and commercial value release. Practice has proved that taking the local specialty packaging as the starting point, integrating the tiger image and auspicious patterns in the clay sculpture into the product design not only enhances the cultural identity of the product, but also provides a continuous economic impetus for the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage. This method is also applicable to other intangible cultural heritage, and provides a feasible technical path for the creative transformation and innovative development of intangible cultural heritage.

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