

A Brief Discussion on the Current Cultural and Creative Products of Red Flag Canal Based on the Proposition of “Observing Things and Taking Images”

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Abstract:

In recent years, the state has been emphasizing firm cultural confidence. From the design level, cultural creative products are a powerful hand to promote cultural confidence, and we are facing the major test of inheritance and development. As a famous red culture in Henan Province, combining the guiding ideology of “observing objects and taking images” with the spirit of Hongqiqu and embodying it in the derivatives of cultural and creative products not only enhances the influence of the spirit of Hongqiqu, but also breaks through the geography and time better, so that people in other regions can understand the red culture of Hongqiqu more conveniently.

Keywords:

“Viewing Objects and Taking Images”, Red Flag Canal Spirit, Cultural and Creative Products

1. Introduction

As the name suggests, cultural and creative products are to distill the spiritual and cultural connotations of a region into specific images, symbols, or patterns, and embody these highly representative patterns in the daily necessities that people often use in their actual lives, or in the gift products they use. For the field of cultural and creative products, how to better express the inner culture of the product is the first priority of designers. Cultural and creative design needs to visualize the existing culture in this way, and then design products that can truly represent the culture of the region.

2. Research Status

2.1. Analysis of the current situation of the proposition of “taking images from things”

The proposition of “taking images from things” was first written in Yi Chuan, Zhu Zhirong [1] mentioned in “On the Imagery View of *Zhou Yi*” that the way of looking at things in the past was divided into “looking at things with me” and “looking at things with things”, on the basis of which the author went on to propose the unity of things with me, so as to achieve the relative unity of subjectivity and objectivity. “On this basis, the author proposes the unity of object and self as a way to achieve the relative unity of subjectivity and objectivity. In Outline of the History of Chinese Aesthetics [2], Mr. Yelang’s proposition of “Viewing Things and Taking Images” has three levels, which not only explains well the relationship between “Viewing”, “Taking” and “Images”, but also explains the meaning of “Viewing”, “Taking” and “Images”. Mr. Yelang’s three levels of the proposition “to view things and take images” not only explains well the relationship between “view”, “take” and “image”, but also shows the specific way of “viewing things”. In Viewing Objects and Taking Images: The Way of Viewing Objects in Traditional Chinese Art [3], the ancient Chinese way of viewing objects in artistic creation is compared with the way of observing objective objects abroad, and it is suggested that Western artistic creation focuses more on the principle of perspective based on scientific observation, whereas ancient Chinese artists often emphasized the importance of their own perspective in their artistic creation. Ancient Chinese artists, on the other hand, presented their own processed images on scrolls, which was a way of creation based on empirical sensation. Wang Huaiyi [4], in From Yi Xiang to Imagery - Zong Baihua on the Creation of *Zhou Yi* and Imagery, explores the ancient Chinese way of creating art in a deeper way, with the Chinese unique understanding of nature and the self, emphasizing the importance of harmony, chiaroscuro, poeticism, and tradition. Chinese artistic consciousness is a profound philosophical reflection, closely linked to Chinese culture and value system, and has always contributed to the development and uniqueness of Chinese art with distinctive features.

According to the collected literature, there are many works on the proposition of “looking at things and taking images”, but they are mainly concentrated in the disciplines of fine arts, calligraphy, sculpture and photography, and philosophy.

2.2. Analysis of the current situation of cultural and creative industries in Hongqiqu

Taking the literature in CNKI database as the source, in order to ensure the completeness of the searched literature, “Red Flag Canal Cultural and Creative Design”, “Red Flag Canal Cultural and Creative” and “Red Flag Canal Products” are used as the subject words. Advanced search. Through the search, no relevant papers matching the subject terms were retrieved.

At the same time, several related design products appeared on the design websites and webpages when searching for the above theme terms.

2.3. Analysis of the current situation of the proposition and products of the “Viewing Objects and Taking Images”

In “Grasping the Chinese Calligraphy System” from “Viewing Objects and Taking Images” and “Establishing Images to Completing the Meaning” [5], Wang Feng has the following understanding of “Viewing Objects and Taking Images”. He believes that the creation of calligraphy is based on “observing things and taking images”, which is the origin of calligraphy creation. Calligraphy artists observe the external characteristics and action trajectories of objective phenomena, which include shapes,

textures, lines, proportions and so on, and incorporate both of them into their own calligraphy. and integrating both into their subjective consciousness. This process includes decisions on choosing the style of calligraphy, the strength of the brush, the smoothness of the lines, and the design of the layout in order to create a unique piece of calligraphy. Gao Xuehua, in his article “Research on the Application of “Observing Objects and Taking Images” in Product Design [6], analyzes the connection between “Observing Objects and Taking Images” culture and product design, and points out the deep relationship between culture and product design: Observing Objects and Taking Images is a part of the product design creation process, and it helps designers to create unique works of calligraphy. It helps designers gain inspiration and creativity from the world around them. Culture, on the other hand, provides profound connotations and emotions for product design, making products more meaningful and compatible with people’s lives and values. Therefore, the deep relationship between culture and product design cannot be ignored; together they shape the form, function, meaning and user experience of products.

Previous research results and writings have mostly analyzed “viewing objects” and “taking images” with product categories, or studied the derived philosophical meaning of “viewing objects and taking images”. We will analyze and discuss the connection between “observing objects and taking images” and the cultural and creative products of Hongqiqiu.

3. Analysis of Existing Cultural and Creative Products of Hongqiqiu

After searching the existing network resources and offline field research, it is summarized that the current Red Flag Qu channel cultural and creative products have the following creation forms:

(1) Artistic deformation through words or phrases that can express the spirit of Hongqiqiu and values similar to the core spirit, including and not limited to expressions such as the spirit of Hongqiqiu, and visual elements such as typography, fonts, and colors of the text can also be used to emphasize the artistry. These visual elements can echo with the content of the text and enhance the expression effect. The author of Figure 1 extracted elements such as hammer head, awl, axe and mountain used by the people during the construction of the Red Flag Canal, and transformed the external image of the strokes to achieve the final artistic effect. This kind of design work is mostly used on products that need simple decoration, such as cell phone cases and adhesive tapes.



Figure 1. Red Flag Canal Font Design.

(2) By creating images from photographs that were recorded at the time and could show the labor process at the time, and selecting appropriate patterns or elements to combine with matching products. For example, the author of the Woolly Pig on the website of ZCool used the Red Flag Canal as the theme to design products such as

literature, manuals, folding pages and APPs (Figure 2). It can be seen that this series of products is mainly in accordance with the more representative photos in the Red Flag Canal Memorial Hall as the basis for design, through the color design, scene planning and other visual processing. The color tone is dominated by the “red” in Red Flag Canal, and the worker's hat, labor silhouette, stone basket and other elements are the main patterns of the design. These themes and patterns can reflect the uniqueness and cultural connotation of the Red Flag Canal.



Figure 2. Red Flag Canal Cultural and Creative Works of the Author of the Woolen Pig.

On May 18, 2021, Hongqiqiu Scenic Area participated in the “National Red Cultural and Creative Excellence Zone” held by the National Museum with red cultural and creative products. More than ten types of exhibits were displayed, including “Struggle for Taihang” series of bookmarks, “Drainage Repairing Years” series (stationery, adhesive tapes, canvas bags, bags, etc.), “Red Ribbon on the Green Mountains and Green Waters” series (including book covers, scarves, etc.), “Unforgettable Red Flag Drainage Canals” series of ornaments, and also some daily necessities, such as shoes and skateboards (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Red Flag Canal Series of Cultural and Creative Products.

4. How the Proposition of “Observing Things and Taking Images” Guides the Cultural and Creative Products of Hongqiqiu

The proposition of “taking images from things” is a meaningful one, which encourages people to observe the things around them, draw inspiration from them, and transform the objective things they observe and subjective cognition they feel into creative and artistic expressions. By applying this proposition in the design of cultural and creative products of Red Flag Canal, we can create works with depth, uniqueness and representativeness. The following are the guiding principles of how to apply the proposition of “observing objects and taking images” to the cultural and creative products of the Red Flag Canal.

(1) Observe the actual situation of Red Flag Canal

First of all, before designing, designers should first understand and research the humanities, history, geography and other cultural background of the Red Flag Canal. Then go to the site, personally watch the shooting and recorded written materials at that time, feel the preserved tools for canal repair, different channels, surrounding farmland, the surrounding environment and so on. At the same time, observe the shape of the channel, the water flow, the surrounding natural landscape and the farmers' work, etc., and analyze the biggest driving force behind the formation of the spirit of the Red Flag Canal. All these may become the starting point and important nodes for design creation.

(2) Expressing the deeper meaning

In the whole process of design, this is a pivotal role. Designers should make sure that the designed cultural and creative products convey the meaning of the spirit of the Red Flag Canal and related historical stories. Not only should the patterns or elements be aesthetically pleasing, but the audience should also be able to understand and feel the history and cultural values of the Red Flag Canal. The meaning behind the work can be further explained through the accompanying text, artistic description or artistic interpretation of related stories. While achieving the aesthetics of the pattern elements, the product carriers chosen by the designers should also have the same characteristics of continuity, systematicity and regularity, such as different forms of expression for the same product and unified forms of expression for different products. This helps the users who did not know and had not heard of the related culture in the past to have a deeper cognition of the Red Flag Canal culture in a short period of time, and stimulates their interest in and understanding of the Red Flag Canal culture.

(3) Diversified media

Match the creative patterns or elements with products and apply them to different media, including painting, photography, sculpture, textiles, ceramics, and so on. Consider using a variety of media to present different observations and ideas. With the help of different forms of paintings such as realism, abstract art or cartoon style to bring these attractions to life; woodblock prints, small sculptural ornaments, wooden artifacts and attractions can also be combined and placed as decorations in daily life; and the patterns of these attractions can be embroidered on textiles such as silk, linen or blankets. In this way, silk scarves, shawls or tapestries with commemorative significance of the Red Flag Canal can be produced; digital technology can also be utilized to create virtual reality experiences or digital artworks so that people can visit these attractions in person in the virtual world and feel their magnificence and historical value; prints, models or three-dimensional virtual displays featuring motifs of the overall project of the Red Flag Canal can be designed in order to show the humanistic spirit and technological achievements of the Red Flag Canal.

(4) Sustainability and Contemporaneity

Consider sustainability and contemporaneity when designing and producing cultural and creative products. This means choosing environmentally friendly materials and production methods, as well as ensuring that the products are attractive and practical in modern society.

In terms of materials, choose eco-friendly materials and prioritize renewable materials, such as organic cotton, bamboo, and recycled paper, in order to reduce the waste of natural resources. Avoid single-use plastic materials as much as possible and look for biodegradable alternatives or choose recyclable plastics; conserve resources

and prefer lightweight materials to reduce transportation and energy consumption, as well as reduce waste generation.

In terms of sustainability in design, design products with their life cycle in mind, including maintenance, upgrading and recycling phases, in order to extend their lifespan. Adopt modular design to make products easy to repair and upgrade and to reduce end-of-life rates. Consider the multifunctionality of the design to increase its usefulness and attractiveness by meeting multiple needs.

In terms of contemporaneity, add information about the history and cultural value of the Red Flag Canal to educate and inspire consumers; collaborate with local communities to support local artisans and traditional crafts to promote cultural heritage; adopt modern design concepts and technologies to make the products aesthetically and functionally contemporary; and formulate products that are shareable: design products that can be shared and interacted with online in order to social media attract attention and encourage participation and communication.

5. Conclusions

All in all, “taking images from things” is a proposition that can stimulate designers’ creativity and in-depth thinking, so as to create diversified and artistic cultural and creative products based on the landscape, culture and historical characteristics of the Red Flag Canal, and provide useful guidance for the design of cultural and creative products of the Red Flag Canal. The key to design is to combine the unique features of the Red Flag Canal with the needs of the target audience and market trends to create products with commercial value and cultural connotation. It also conveys the story and spirit of the Red Flag Canal. Such cultural and creative products can not only meet the memorial and collection needs of tourists, but also promote the development of the Red Flag Qu channel tourism industry and the promotion of red culture.

The creative forms of the cultural and creative products of Hongqiqiu can be very diversified, expressing the unique spirit and historical value of Hongqiqiu through different artistic media and creative techniques. These cultural and creative products not only help to inherit the red culture of the Red Flag Canal, but also attract more people to understand and pay attention to the important spirit of “self-reliance, hard work, unity and cooperation, selfless dedication”.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization: Yang Xinran.; Formal analysis: Yang Xinran. Zhang Shuai.; Writing – original draft preparation: Yang Xinran.; Writing – review and editing: Yang Xinran.; Project administration: Zhang Shuai.; Funding acquisition: (2024-ZDJH-625).

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