



A RESEARCH ON THE DESIGN OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE
TO DEVELOP CULTURAL CREATIVE PRODUCTS: A CASE STUDY
OF "NINIGOU" CLAY STATUETTE IN HUAIYANG CITY



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BY
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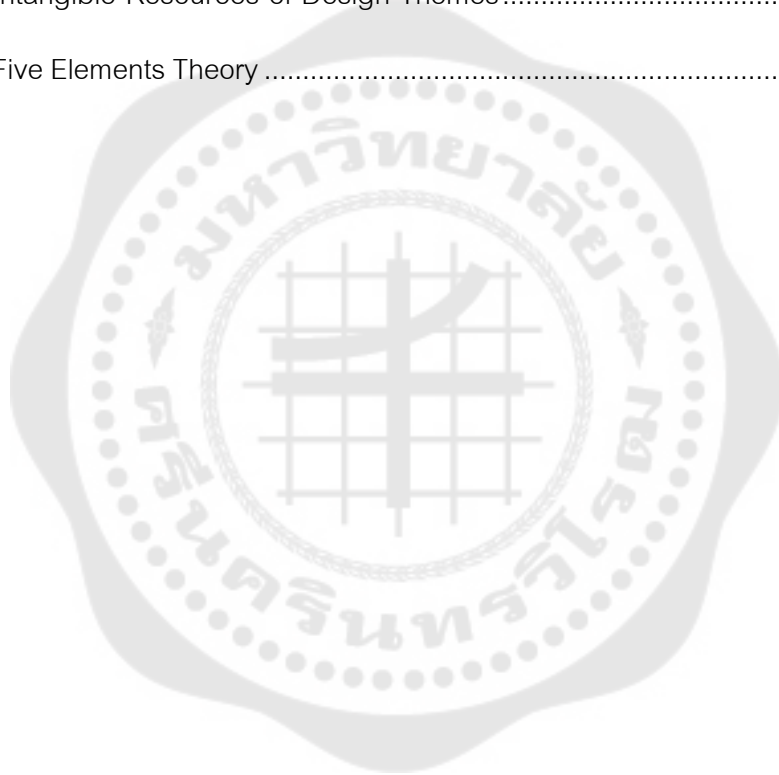
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Since the 21st century, countries in East Asia, including China, Japan, and South Korea, have placed a greater emphasis on the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage compared to Western countries. The reason behind this is that the industrial revolution has led to the formation of a global modern society, where old production methods have been rapidly replaced, and cultural transformations have occurred to adapt to the new ways of production and living. While Western modern society and traditional society also have differences, industrial society and modernity are inherent outcomes of Western culture, resulting in a relatively consistent and orderly development of Western culture and society. The development of Western culture has not been interrupted. On the other hand, East Asian countries have been forced to be part of globalization and industrialization, resulting in a rupture between their traditional and modern societies, and the development trajectory of their culture has been severed. Therefore, East Asian countries have anxieties regarding the issue of "intangible cultural heritage," which is actually anxieties about their own cultural situation. Thus, the significance of "intangible cultural heritage" to East Asian societies is particularly important in the 21st century.

Vertically speaking, the history of written language is a top-down elitist history, while "intangible cultural heritage" is essentially a visualized civilization, a genuine and historically inherited legacy that can also demonstrate the evolution of human civilization. If only the written history remains, it will inevitably lose the richness and complexity of a civilization. Horizontally speaking, "intangible cultural heritage" is also a form of "local knowledge" relative to mainstream culture, which is a question of globalization and ethnicity from a global perspective, and a question of mainstream culture and local society from a national perspective. In general, the importance of "intangible cultural heritage" lies in maintaining cultural diversity and legitimizing

expressions of ethnic identity, and preventing regional cultures from being swallowed up by globalization and modernity (Miège, 1987).

Hypothesis of the Study

Intangible cultural heritage plays a crucial role in the recognition of individual identity and national identity within the context of modernity, and the vitality and sustainability of intangible cultural heritage largely depends on the cultural identification of the public. However, the design strategies for cultural creative products of intangible cultural heritage have been too focused on traditional symbolic elements, and still emphasize the display of 'objects'. This traditional design approach reflects a lack of understanding of the essence and attributes of intangible cultural heritage in most cultural creative product designs, as well as in related research, resulting in a failure to trigger cultural identification and leading to superficial protection strategies for the productivity of intangible cultural heritage. This paper attempts to reflect on the current status of cultural creative product designs of intangible cultural heritage and their research, and introduces narrative theory into the research of cultural creative product design of intangible cultural heritage as a starting point to explore the concept and methodology of designing intangible cultural heritage cultural creative products.

When it comes to the philosophy of cultural and creative product design, we should first recognize that there are significant differences between intangible cultural heritage and tangible cultural heritage. The essence of "intangible cultural heritage" lies in its subjectivity as a design element, which is non-textual, non-historical, and non-linear. It exists beyond the realm of textual, linear, and elitist history. If the design of tangible cultural heritage revolves around the "object," then the design of intangible cultural heritage focuses on the "narrative" of the "event." In the exhibition of this "event," the object is only a carrier of the outcome of this "event," or simply a visual accessory or physical evidence. This "event" also includes the inheritors of intangible cultural heritage, their activities and processes of inheritance, the cultural context behind the intangible cultural heritage, and the current environment (natural, economic, social, cultural, and

geographical, etc.). In other words, the design of cultural and creative products of intangible cultural heritage needs to tell the complete story of this "event" and its developmental process, while expressing its dynamic nature and temporal characteristics presented in the process. Therefore, compared to the design approach centered on "objects" in tangible cultural heritage, the exhibition of intangible cultural heritage focuses more on its dynamic nature, developmental process, and narrative presentation. In addition, tangible cultural heritage, as a heritage that has lost its dynamic living environment, no matter how close the interpretation of its material remains is to history or culture itself, it is always an interpretation and restoration from the perspective of modern people as cultural others, and there is always an insurmountable gap between the truth of history or culture. On the other hand, intangible cultural heritage is dynamic and its exhibition content is presented around the original face of the cultural or living practices of the inheritors. Therefore, the best design is to let the culture "itself" appear in its true form as culture or history.

In the design, allowing "intangible cultural heritage" to speak for itself means that it should not merely be a symbolic presence. Design for intangible cultural heritage should not be a simple labeling of ethnic or regional attributes, as is often done in conventional displays of "intangible cultural heritage." Instead, it should reveal the multi-dimensional, dynamic history of interactions between cultures, regions, and people behind the "objects." How to let intangible cultural heritage "tell a story" on its own terms is a question that should be thoroughly explored in the research of cultural and creative product design for intangible cultural heritage. It is worth noting that the uniqueness of design for "intangible cultural heritage" lies in the objectivity of the interaction between the products and the users. In the design of intangible cultural heritage, users should not be passive recipients, as they are not dealing with a dead culture but rather reading the symbols of a dead culture. A well-designed cultural and creative product of intangible cultural heritage should make users active participants in the dialogue and provide a specific field where intangible cultural heritage can be

protected and preserved in modern society, rather than being a passive, symbolic display.

The purpose of this research is to provide a methodological approach to the revitalization and protection of intangible cultural heritage through research on cultural and creative product design for intangible cultural heritage. It aims to reveal the authentic face of the Chinese nation as a diverse and unified entity, which has been obscured by written history, in the design of such cultural and creative products. By establishing cultural content based on the ethical relationship between intangible cultural heritage and users who are present at the same time and engage in communication, this approach not only legitimizes the identities of various ethnic groups but also legitimizes the identity of the Chinese nation. In other words, this dual legitimacy is embodied in a perceptual manner in the design of cultural and creative products of intangible cultural heritage. To achieve this purpose, certain methods and principles are needed in the practice of cultural and creative product design for intangible cultural heritage.

Expected outcome

The expected outcome of this study is to integrate narrative design theory into the research of intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative product design, aiming to address the current limitations in the design approach of cultural and creative products related to intangible cultural heritage. By incorporating narrative design, the research aims to achieve the following:

Critically analyze the current design approach of cultural creative products related to intangible cultural heritage, which often relies on simplistic replication of traditional elements, lacking depth and recognition of the multifaceted nature of intangible cultural heritage.

Highlight the significance and richness of the various dimensions of intangible cultural heritage, including the relationships between people, objects, texts, and their interconnections, emphasizing their importance in cultural creative product design.

Explore the potential of narrative design as a method to analyze elements, strategies, and user-product relationships in the design of cultural creative products related to intangible cultural heritage.

Provide insights and guidance for the design of cultural and creative products that effectively convey the stories and essence of intangible cultural heritage, going beyond the mere replication of symbolic elements.

Generate knowledge and understanding of the essence of intangible cultural heritage, its protection, and the design principles specific to cultural and creative products related to intangible cultural heritage.

The case study of the "Ninigou" in Huaiyang County, Henan Province, China, serves as a focal point for the research, providing insights into the inheritance, development, and protection of intangible cultural heritage. The study aims to offer inspiration and practical implications not only for the inheritance and preservation of the "Ninigou" heritage but also for the other intangible cultural heritages.

Scope of the Study Conceptual / Study Formwork

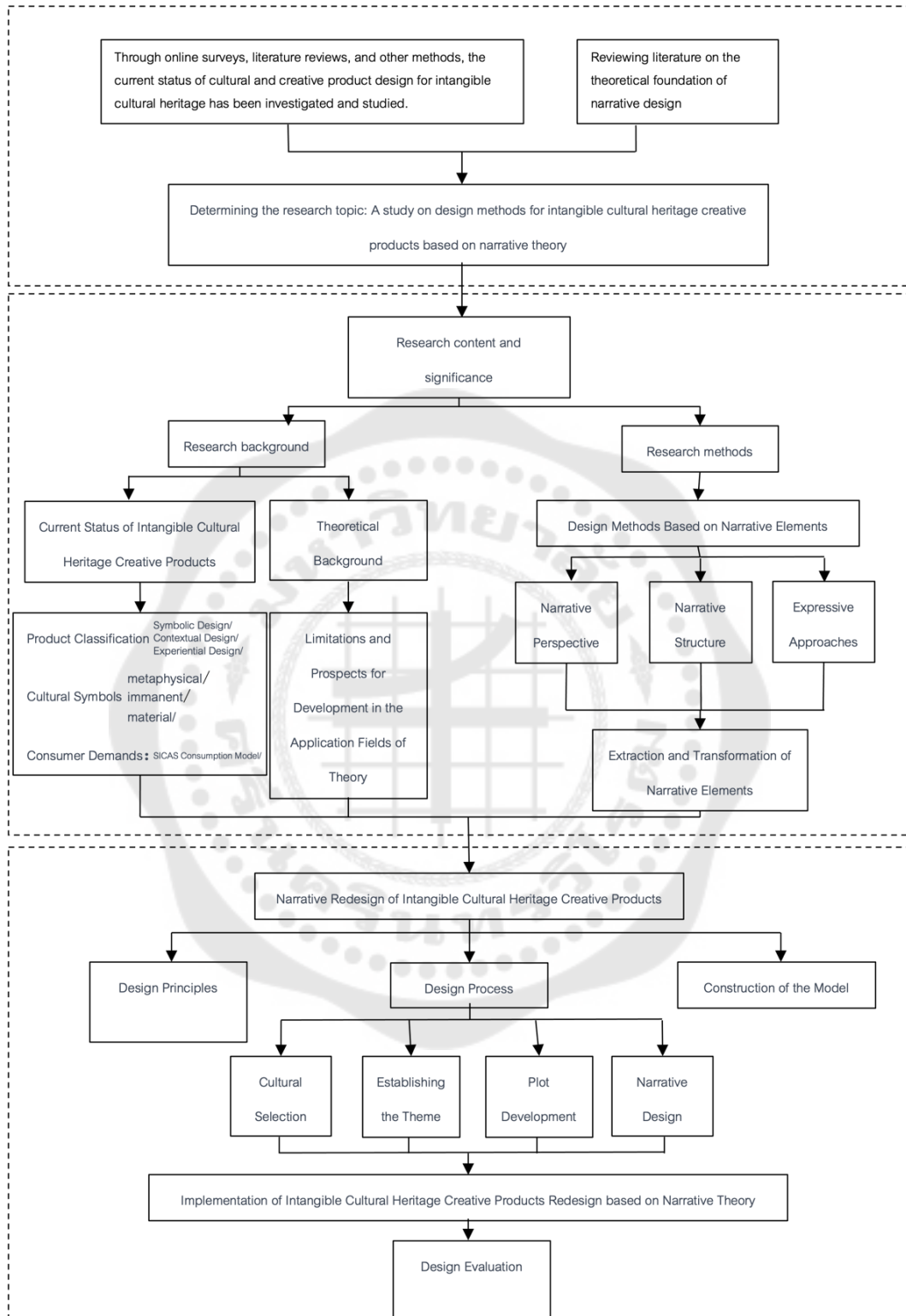
This research attempts to integrate narrative studies into the research of intangible cultural heritage cultural creative product design, based on a reflection on the current status of cultural creative product design and its research. On one hand, we can see that the biggest problem with current cultural creative products of intangible cultural heritage is their overly simplistic design approach, which still relies heavily on traditional elements and tends to be a simple replication of symbols. This approach may be suitable for cultural creative product design of tangible cultural heritage, which usually only has material remains and perhaps some textual records (such as historical records, which may not be entirely accurate), with the original environment and context no longer existing, thus lending itself to simple replication. However, this approach is not necessarily suitable for cultural creative product design of intangible cultural heritage. Unlike tangible cultural heritage, intangible cultural heritage is not limited to the material aspect; it also involves

inheritors, the original environment still existing, and therefore has many dimensions, such as the relationship between people and objects, people and people, people and texts, and texts with texts, beyond just the relationship between objects. The limitation of traditional design approaches lies in not recognizing the multifaceted nature of intangible cultural heritage, not appreciating the significance and richness of these facets, and not recognizing their interconnections with many other aspects. Due to the dynamic nature of intangible cultural heritage, these facets and connections can still be found in the current social environment, but traditional design approaches may not be willing or able to seek, explore, and reveal these relationships. On the other hand, the related research on this topic has been relatively narrow, with most studies focusing on individual cases and treating "cultural creativity" merely as souvenirs, without delving into the question of "how to tell the story of intangible cultural heritage well". In fact, narrative studies is a method that conducts synchronous research on various elements within the text and their original context. This research attempts to analyze the elements, strategies, user-product relationships of cultural creative product design of intangible cultural heritage through the introduction of narrative studies, and conduct a relational study based on this. Therefore, this research aims to highlight and elaborate on the significance of integrating narrative studies theories and methods into the design of intangible cultural heritage cultural creative products. Firstly, looking back at the history of narrative studies, classical narratology and post-classical narratology, though primarily used as tools for literary research, especially the study of novels, were originally developed to analyze folktales and mythological texts - which are precisely part of intangible cultural heritage. Early narratologists were folklorists and mythologists. For example, the renowned work "Morphology of the Folktale" published in 1928, considered as the beginning of narrative studies, was authored by the Soviet folklorist Propp. In this book, Propp proposed that the basic unit of folktales is not characters, but rather the "functions" of characters within the stories. He departed from the traditional classification method based on characters and themes, and classified numerous Russian folktales into 31 "functions", thus

analyzing the structural patterns of folktales. His approach has influenced Claude Lévi-Strauss's study of mythology and was introduced to France by Lévi-Strauss. In simple terms, narrative studies originated from the investigation of synchronic relationships among intangible cultural heritage, and post-classical narratology in contemporary times focuses on the synchronic relationships between the object of study and its original context. Therefore, introducing narrative studies as a method into the design of intangible cultural heritage cultural creative products can be seen as a return to the "original intention" of narrative studies, which was originally developed for the study of intangible cultural heritage. Due to the importance of "Intangible Cultural Heritage" in the construction of national culture, there have been many research achievements in China regarding "Intangible Cultural Heritage," as well as cultural and creative product design. However, there has been relatively little research on cultural and creative product design related to "Intangible Cultural Heritage." This research takes narratology as a research method and the main research approach is to propose that the design of cultural and creative products related to "Intangible Cultural Heritage" is not just a technical issue, but more importantly, our understanding of the essence of "Intangible Cultural Heritage." This involves the depth of our research on "Intangible Cultural Heritage," the absorption and transformation of existing academic achievements, and our understanding of the protection of "Intangible Cultural Heritage." The problem with cultural and creative design of "Intangible Cultural Heritage" lies in the complexity of the objects that can be designed. "Intangible Cultural Heritage" has two basic forms: one is music, drama, rituals, etc., which are carried by people and cannot be separated from the creative subject. They are more intangible and more suitable for performance. The other form is handicrafts, which are made by hand and the final product can be separated from the creative subject. On the one hand, it has intangibility, depending on human skills, and on the other hand, it is closest to materiality, as it is ultimately presented in the form of objects, making it more suitable for cultural and creative product design. However, the design of cultural and creative products related to "Intangible Cultural Heritage" is not the same as the design of

objects in "Intangible Cultural Heritage," nor is it the same as historical relics. Objects are only part of "Intangible Cultural Heritage," and they are a carrier or result of interaction with human beings under the premise of human subjectivity. They are neither mainstream commodities in modern society nor dead historical exhibits, but represent a carrier with certain vitality in modern society that is inconsistent with modern production and lifestyle, and has appeared in history. Therefore, objects are not the entirety or the main body of "Intangible Cultural Heritage." The design of cultural and creative products related to "Intangible Cultural Heritage" should not only showcase the material aspect, but also reflect the process of "Intangible Cultural Heritage" activities, even the living scenes. It should also showcase the skills and cultural background of people. Therefore, besides the reproduction of symbolic elements, some designs should also reflect the original environment of its origin and development, and restore it to the local design of its original ecology, address, village, and rural society. The essential differences, design principles, ethics, and other issues with traditional object-centered product design need to be further researched and explained in order to be reflected in practical design. These are all issues that need to be studied in depth.

As an important intangible cultural heritage in Henan Province, China, the "Ninigou" is a small clay toy that is made by local artists. It is known for its rich colors, unique shapes, and ancient patterns, and is regarded as a symbol of auspiciousness. With its origin and development closely tied to the folk temple fair, the "Ninigou" has been included in the national intangible cultural heritage list in recent years (2023). Like a storybook waiting to be heard, the "Ninigou" carries the stories of its heritage, and this study focuses on the case of Ninigou in Huaiyang County, aiming to provide insights for the inheritance and development of this intangible cultural heritage, as well as inspiration for the protection of other intangible cultural heritages.



Definition of terms

Ninigou refers to the clay toys found in the Huaiyang Taihao Temple Fair. The term combines two characters, with the first character meaning "to knead" or "to mold," and the second character representing "clay." It is a fond term used to describe clay sculpture toys. Despite being called "Ninigou," these toys come in various shapes beyond just dogs. They encompass a range of primitive totemic abstract and transformed composite creatures, making it a collective term for diverse and imaginative clay sculptures (Ni & Ni, 2009).



Figure 1 Different shapes of Ninigou

Source: Photographed by the author. (2022).

Intangible cultural heritage:

Intangible cultural heritage refers to the living expressions, practices, representations, knowledge, and skills that communities, groups, and individuals inherit from their ancestors and transmit to future generations. It includes traditions, customs, rituals, performing arts, oral traditions, social practices, craftsmanship, and other forms of cultural expressions that are deeply rooted in a community's cultural identity (Brusaporci, 2015).

Cultural and creative products:

Cultural and creative products refer to a diverse range of items or goods that are meticulously crafted and developed to encapsulate cultural values, artistic expressions, and creative ingenuity. These products emerge from the harmonious blend of traditional cultural elements with innovative design concepts. Examples of cultural and creative products encompass a broad spectrum, encompassing crafts, artworks, fashion accessories, home décor, literature, music, films, digital media, and various other artistic mediums that serve as vehicles for creative expression.

Huaiyang:

Huaiyang, specifically referring to Huaiyang District, is a designated administrative district situated in the eastern part of Henan province, People's Republic of China. Historically, during the Spring and Autumn period, Huaiyang served as the capital of the state of Chen. Today, it is a part of the larger prefecture-level city of Zhoukou (Huaiyang, n.d.).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

As mentioned earlier, this research takes narrative theory as the method and perspective to study the relationship between the elements, strategies, products, and consumers required for the design of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) cultural and creative products. This is a new research field that needs to be built upon the existing research achievements in ICH and cultural and creative design, and it is inevitably interdisciplinary research. Therefore, this research will review the academic history based on the issues of concern in this study.

Narrative

Narratology, in its original sense, is a research method that focuses on Intangible Cultural Heritage. Its intellectual origins can be traced back to Russian Formalism and the structuralist narrative theory pioneered by Vladimir Propp in the 1920s. Propp's "Morphology of the Folktale" (1928) is regarded as a seminal work in the field of narratology, influencing later structuralist narratologists such as Claude Levi-Strauss, Algirdas Greimas, and Roland Barthes, and spreading to France. Early narratology, represented by Propp and Levi-Strauss, primarily focused on folktales and myths as research objects, emphasizing structural analysis of the text rather than the artistic achievements of the works, such as the commonalities between texts, the relationship between the author and the narrator, the narrator and the characters in the work, the relationship between the author and the reader, and the analysis of narrative discourse and narrative actions. As a theoretical framework for studying literature, narratology emerged in France in the 1960s, but since literature is not the focus of this study, the overview of narratology history in relation to literature is omitted here. It is worth noting that since the publication of the eighth issue of the journal "Communications" in 1966, which is considered as the manifesto for the formal birth of narratology, narratology has shifted from the study of narrative forms in Intangible Cultural Heritage such as folktales and myths to the study of contemporary literary

narrative forms, becoming a new method and tool for world-renowned literary theory and criticism.

With the shift from structuralism to postmodern theory, people gradually realized the limitations of studying formal meaning, and literary research expanded from the study of intrinsic textual analysis to the exploration of intrinsic and extrinsic associations. In the 1990s, narratology transitioned from classical narratology to post-classical narratology. The research paradigm of narratology shifted from focusing on the levels of "story" and "discourse" to encompassing the levels of "context" and "interpretation." The attention also shifted from the "author" to the "reader," and from studying time and historical concepts to the spatial concepts of postmodernity. Post-classical narratology became associated with numerous external factors and other research methods, leading to various subfields of narratology, such as film narratology, music narratology, social narratology, psychoanalytic narratology, feminist narratology, cognitive narratology, rhetorical narratology, cultural narratology, and more. In 1999, David Herman edited and published "Narratologies: New Perspectives on Narrative Analysis," using the plural form of "narratologies" to emphasize the diversification of narratology. The integration and development of various disciplines in Western academia gradually introduced narratology from a literary perspective into broader cultural practices (David, 2002). Walter Fisher argues that our world is full of stories, and all forms of human interaction can be seen as narrative. Each of us is both a storyteller and a listener of stories. This view considers storytelling as a broad concept, expanding the research subject from texts to paintings, advertisements, everyday oral narratives, and various aspects of daily life. In the analysis of works, it focuses on the active role of readers and how social and historical contexts influence the creation and reception of works.

The development of post-classical narratology and the emergence of the experience economy have both contributed to the study of narrative in various cultural and artistic forms such as design, music, architecture, sculpture, painting, and more. Scholars in post-classical narratology believe that stories are explanations of the world,

providing credible interpretations of the development, essence, and value of everything in this world. Modern individuals have begun to pay attention to the intangible elements behind material products, such as their backgrounds, meanings, and the experiences they bring

Narrative Design

Narrative design research originated in architectural design, particularly with the introduction of the concept of "Narrative Architecture" by the British design group Narrative Architecture Today (NATO) in 1983. Since then, narrative research has expanded beyond spatial design to include visual arts, gaming, product design, and other disciplines, giving rise to numerous notable works such as "The Process of Graphic Design," "Landscape Narratives," and "Product Story Maps." Mark Currie's book "Postmodern Narrative Theory" mobilized narrative resources to analyze narrative phenomena in fields like politics, history, culture, and ethnicity (Currie, 2003). Researchers have combined narrative studies with design, leading to various theoretical achievements. Some designers argue that "narrating through objects" has become the central task of artistic design, demanding the creation of objects that evoke poetic responses. Architects explore how to integrate digital media with architectural spaces to enhance the ability for spatial narration. Game designers focus on user-led narrative interaction in their research. There is a scarcity of narrative theory books in China. Shen Dan (Shen, 2010) provides a concise introduction to both classical and postmodern narrative theories. Tan (2008) explores fundamental theories of narrative in his book "Introduction to Narrative Studies: From Classical to Postmodern Narratology." Wang Zhenzi focuses on research regarding interactive and narrative methods in digital media environments in her book "Studies on Digital Media Narration (Wang Zhenzi, 2012:8-13)." In comparison to foreign publications, domestic narrative theory books are relatively scarce and often rely on foreign theories without establishing a distinctive theoretical system of their own. However, narrative theory is widely applied in various fields of design in China. By referencing research achievements in different design domains, it

offers valuable insights for narrative design in the context of intangible cultural heritage creative products.

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Narrative theory has yielded significant academic achievements in the field of design in China. For instance, in the domain of architectural design, researchers have compared film and architectural spaces and concluded that architecture possesses all narrative elements except language and offers an additional spatial dimension compared to films, which are composed of time and plane. Xiang (2005), in "Narrative Design and Narrative Architecture," explores the main concepts and fundamental methods of narrative design. The author identifies the limitations of narrative design and provides design interpretations of narrative architectural works.

In the field of interface design, Zhang (2012), in "Narrative Study of Three-Dimensional Interactive Interfaces," explores the principles and methods of narrative design for three-dimensional interactive interfaces. The author presents four levels of narrative definition and constructs a spatial scale for narrative design. In the domain of game design, Gao (2009), in "Narrative Interaction Design in Digital Games," summarizes the concept of narrative interaction and investigates the strategies and implementation of narrative interaction design.

In the field of spatial design, Yang (2007), in "Narrative Design of Space," analyzes spatial design works and explores narrative modes of thinking related to space design while organizing design approaches. In exhibition design, Wu (2012), in "Narrative Space Design in Exhibitions and Displays," analyzes case studies from aspects such as space and plot, scenes and narratives, spatial features, and interaction, discussing the design of narrative spaces. In landscape design, Zhai (2010), in "Narrative Study of Landscape Space Design," introduces narrative elements such as structure, time, space, and plot into landscape design, exploring the narrative expression of landscape design spaces.

Papers in various fields share a common characteristic: they are based on narrative thinking and use design to tell stories, thereby enhancing the depth of the design and providing rich emotional experiences for individuals. Tu (2008) proposed that design narrative is a product of the experience economy, as it enhances the entertainment and playfulness of design. Since the rise of world, providing credible

interpretations of the development, essence, and value of everything in this world. Modern individuals have begun to pay attention to the intangible elements behind material products, such as their backgrounds, meanings, and the experiences they bring.

Narrative Design

Narrative design research originated in architectural design, particularly with the introduction of the concept of "Narrative Architecture" by the British design group Narrative Architecture Today (NATO) in 1983. Since then, narrative research has expanded beyond spatial design to include visual arts, gaming, product design, and other disciplines, giving rise to numerous notable works such as "The Process of Graphic Design," "Landscape Narratives," and "Product Story Maps." Mark Currie's book "Postmodern Narrative Theory" mobilized narrative resources to analyze narrative phenomena in fields like politics, history, culture, and ethnicity (Currie, 2003). Researchers have combined narrative studies with design, leading to various theoretical achievements. Some designers argue that "narrating through objects" has become the central task of artistic design, demanding the creation of objects that evoke poetic responses. Architects explore how to integrate digital media with architectural spaces to enhance the ability for spatial narration. Game designers focus on user-led narrative interaction in their research. There is a scarcity of narrative theory books in China. Shen Dan (Shen, 2010) provides a concise introduction to both classical and postmodern narrative theories. Tan (2008) explores fundamental theories of narrative in his book "Introduction to Narrative Studies: From Classical to Postmodern Narratology." Wang Zhenzi focuses on research regarding interactive and narrative methods in digital media environments in her book "Studies on Digital Media Narration (Wang Zhenzi, 2012:8-13)." In comparison to foreign publications, domestic narrative theory books are relatively scarce and often rely on foreign theories without establishing a distinctive theoretical system of their own. However, narrative theory is widely applied in various fields of design in China. By referencing research achievements in different design domains, it

offers valuable insights for narrative design in the context of intangible cultural heritage creative products.

Narrative theory has yielded significant academic achievements in the field of design in China. For instance, in the domain of architectural design, researchers have compared film and architectural spaces and concluded that architecture possesses all narrative elements except language and offers an additional spatial dimension compared to films, which are composed of time and plane. Xiang (2005), in "Narrative Design and Narrative Architecture," explores the main concepts and fundamental methods of narrative design. The author identifies the limitations of narrative design and provides design interpretations of narrative architectural works.

In the field of interface design, Zhang (2012), in "Narrative Study of Three-Dimensional Interactive Interfaces," explores the principles and methods of narrative design for three-dimensional interactive interfaces. The author presents four levels of narrative definition and constructs a spatial scale for narrative design. In the domain of game design, Gao (2009), in "Narrative Interaction Design in Digital Games," summarizes the concept of narrative interaction and investigates the strategies and implementation of narrative interaction design.

In the field of spatial design, Yang (2007), in "Narrative Design of Space," analyzes spatial design works and explores narrative modes of thinking related to space design while organizing design approaches. In exhibition design, Wu (2012), in "Narrative Space Design in Exhibitions and Displays," analyzes case studies from aspects such as space and plot, scenes and narratives, spatial features, and interaction, discussing the design of narrative spaces. In landscape design, Zhai (2010), in "Narrative Study of Landscape Space Design," introduces narrative elements such as structure, time, space, and plot into landscape design, exploring the narrative expression of landscape design spaces. Papers in various fields share a common characteristic: they are based on narrative thinking and use design to tell stories, thereby enhancing the depth of the design and providing rich emotional experiences for individuals. Tu (2008) proposed that design narrative is a product of the experience economy, as it

enhances the entertainment and playfulness of design. Since the rise of postmodernism, there has been a rejection of rigid and indifferent functionalism, with more emphasis placed on the inner emotional experiences of individuals. The study of narrative theory in the field of product design also aims to meet consumers' emotional needs.

Research on narrative in product design is relatively scarce, but there have been some achievements in this area. For example, Zhang (2008) in "Construction of Product Language Narrative in Contemporary Perspective" focuses on product language, summarizing its main concepts and characteristics, and proposes the main content and basic methods of narrative design in product language. An (2009) in "An Exploratory Study on the Application of Narrative Design Methods in Product Design" briefly introduces the concept of narrative design and summarizes its main principles and methods in product design. Wu (2011) in "Research on Narrative Design of Products" proposes narrative design strategies for products, discussing three aspects: form, practical function, and emotional experience. Zhang (2016) in "Research on Narrative Design of Products Based on Regional Culture Themes" analyzes how designers conduct narrative design around regional cultural themes from the aspects of form, color, material, and function. Zhang (2017) in "Research on Narrative Design of Products Based on Regional Culture" focuses on the model and method of product narrative design with cultural themes. Liu Boya in "Analysis of Creative Product Design Based on Narrative Thinking" summarizes the design approach and methods for creative product design based on narrative thinking (Liu Boya, 2018:12-26). Huang (2013) in "Research on the Application of Tianjin Intangible Cultural Heritage Symbols in Product Design" combines empathy design and symbol design as design methods that integrate intangible culture and product design. Li (2018) in "Research and Practice of Narrative Design for Cultural Creative Products" constructs a narrative design system for cultural creative products, focusing on narrative design elements, methods, and principles.

In summary, Narrative design research in China has expanded beyond architectural design to include various design disciplines such as visual arts, gaming, and product design. Researchers have explored narrative elements in different design domains and provided valuable insights for narrative design. The application of narrative theory in design fields has enhanced the depth and emotional experiences of design, emphasizing storytelling and individual emotional needs. Although research on narrative design in product design is relatively scarce, there have been notable achievements in this area, with designers focusing on narrative design strategies and incorporating regional culture themes into product design. These research efforts contribute to the development of narrative design principles and methods in cultural and creative products.

Intangible Cultural Heritage and Creative Industries

The United Nations formally introduced the protection of intangible cultural heritage in the form of a convention in 2003. The definition of intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO is as follows: "Intangible cultural heritage refers to the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, and associated instruments, objects, artifacts, and cultural spaces that communities, groups, and individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage."

The "intangible cultural heritage" passed down from generation to generation is a trace of human civilization in the long river of history, providing people with a sense of belonging and identity. It represents the interaction between previous generations and nature, reflecting respect for history, culture, and creativity. In Japan, cultural heritage is divided into "tangible" and "intangible," with intangible cultural heritage referred to as "intangible cultural properties." This concept highlights the importance placed on intangible culture and serves as the origin of the "intangible cultural heritage" concept.

Japan also began early legal protection for its intangible cultural heritage with the enactment of the "Cultural Properties Protection Law" in 1950. In 1979, Mr. Morihiro Hirao initiated the "One Village, One Product" movement, promoting

intangible cultural heritage as a local industry to enhance its vitality. This led to the development of numerous cultural and creative products related to intangible cultural heritage, which were successfully marketed, yielding significant economic benefits.

Different countries have distinct cultural backgrounds, leading researchers to have varying interpretations of the cultural and creative industries (Boggs, 2009). In 1998, the UK first introduced the concept of "creativity" in cultural policy documents, and John Howkins proposed the concept of the "creative industries." American researchers have examined the cultural and creative industries within the context of copyright industries, while Italian researcher Mieke (1987) argues for a distinction between cultural and creative industries, focusing on the entire process from production to sales within the cultural industry.

In 2006, China observed its first Cultural Heritage Day. In 2011, the "Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage" was implemented, elevating the protection of intangible cultural heritage to a legal level. Subsequently, there has been increasing research on issues related to heritage inheritance. The "Classification Standards for Cultural and Creative Industries in Beijing" provides a definition and explanation of the cultural and creative industries. It states that these industries differ from traditional industries as they provide various cultural and artistic services and experiences to the audience through intellectual property or consumer consumption. The core concept of the cultural and creative industries is innovation.

On March 12, 2017, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, and the Ministry of Finance jointly launched the "Revitalization Plan for Chinese Traditional Crafts." The aim of this plan was to strike a balance between inheritance and development in traditional crafts, promoting creative transformation and innovative development. The development of the cultural and creative industries can contribute to the creative transformation of traditional crafts. The adaptation and re-creation of products based on traditional crafts fall under the category of "secondary design." However, in the process of innovation, some designers have a

vague understanding of the concept of cultural and creative products related to intangible cultural heritage. Some product designs may falsely claim to be associated with "intangible cultural heritage" for promotional purposes, while their essence lies in the design based on material culture.

There is a relatively limited amount of research that analyzes the combination of intangible cultural heritage and cultural creative industries from a product design perspective. Yang Huizi's "Intangible Cultural Heritage and Cultural Creative Product Design" introduces the concept and definition of "intangible cultural heritage creative products" and analyzes the inherent relationship between intangible cultural heritage and creative products (Yang, 2017). Ji Tie's "Regional Intangible Cultural Heritage and Local Design System" explores ways to incorporate diverse intangible cultural heritage into the local design system (Ji, 2009).

The true significance of Ninigou came into the public eye in 1983 when the local county cultural center conducted a survey on folk culture. In 1984, at the "Henan Folk Art Exhibition," Ninigou gained appreciation and praise from experts across the country for its unique shapes and colors, becoming well-known in academic circles. Subsequently, the government of Henan Province began to officially report on Ninigou, bringing it gradually closer to people's attention.

Based on my extensive research, notable studies and publications on Ninigou include "Huaiyang Ninigou" (Ni, 2010) and "Ninigou · Ni Gugu" ((Ni & Ni, 2009). Both books were authored by folk expert. Ni Baochen and primarily focus on the various cultural forms and historical origins of Ninigou. In addition, there is a book titled "Huaiyang Ninigou" (Sun Lei&Liu Zhenghong, 2017) as part of a series on intangible cultural heritage. This book examines the craftsmanship features, lineage of inheritance, clay sculpture works, social impact, and interview works of Ninigou, showcasing the essence of traditional handicraft culture.

In terms of academic theses and journal papers, there is relatively more research on Ninigou, focusing mainly on its distinctive characteristics and development for preservation. One of the main representative scholars who conducted

research from their own perspective is Kuang (2011). Kuang approached the study of Ninigou from the field of imageology, summarizing and categorizing its visual symbolic elements. From the perspective of folklore, she explored the underlying meanings of joyful vitality, mystery, and simplicity. She proposed the application of these elements in modern design (Kuang, 2011). Jia (2012) conducted research on the three forms behind the images of Ninigou from the perspectives of folklore and archaeology: mythological stories, folk stories, and historical stories. He examined the aesthetic imagery of Ninigou's visuals and attempted to reinterpret the visual narratives of Ninigou. Jia believed that the visual imagery of Ninigou possesses latent utilitarian characteristics. Peng (2006) categorized the creative themes of Ninigou from an artistic perspective and elaborated on representative animal themes. Additionally, Peng studied the color culture of Ninigou's five-color concept. From a comparative perspective, Zhang (2005) and Zhang (2008) compared Ninigou with Ni Gugu and Huishan clay sculpture, respectively. Zhang (2005) focused on comparing the sculptural forms of Ninigou and Ni Gugu, exploring the differences in their expressive content, decorative patterns, and cultural regions. He believed that Ni Gugu had a stronger element of entertainment compared to Ninigou. Zhang Rui, on the other hand, compared Ninigou with Huishan clay sculpture in terms of theme selection, image creation, and color texture. Zhang Rui believed that Huishan clay sculpture exhibited more delicacy compared to Ninigou (Zhang, 2008). In his graduation thesis, Qu (2010) summarized and organized the forms and characteristics of Ninigou. He believed that the consistent and unchanging nature of its form is related to its cultural background, regional influence, and emotional and intellectual aspects.

From the perspective of the development and preservation of Ninigou, it can be discussed from two aspects. First, in terms of cultural innovation through redesign. Yuan Song conducted research on the aesthetic structure of Ninigou totem patterns from a design perspective. Yuan also explored the application of redesigned patterns on shirts to facilitate the integration of Ninigou with modern design (Yuan, 2016). Zhang Yanjie analyzed the current development status of Ninigou and the factors

that constrain its growth from the perspectives of communication and design. Zhang also made attempts to build the brand through the use of new media, undertaking a series of innovative explorations (Zhang Yanjie, 2015). Zhang's (2013) research paper titled "Research on Innovative Design of Huaiyang Ninigou Tourism Cultural Series Products" proposes the integration of Ninigou culture with industrial product design. Additionally, a set of cultural products is designed and practically applied as a result of this study (Zhang, 2013). Shao Yuanzhu proposed the innovative design of modern mascots by drawing inspiration from the artistic styles of Ninigou, including mysticism, surrealism, and romanticism. This approach aims to combine functionality with artistic style (Shao 2011). Yuan Jianxia comprehensively summarized the development challenges and opportunities faced by Huaiyang Ninigou under the conditions of modern market economy. It is acknowledged that Ninigou possesses regional cultural advantages; however, the traditional production methods are outdated, and the products lack innovation. Yuan Jianxia proposed the integration of Huaiyang Ninigou cultural resources with modern product design through the utilization of contemporary design methods. The aim is to enhance the aesthetic significance of the products and pursue a path of creative industrialization (Yuan Jianxia, 2013: 90-91). Secondly, from the perspective of traditional development and preservation. From the perspective of industrial development, Shi Ge proposed the integration of traditional handcrafted Ninigou products with the e-commerce industry. This approach aims to promote the publicity of Ninigou and achieve its development goals (Shi Ge, 2018). Qu Feng's "The Inheritance and Variation of Huaiyang Ninigou" is based on the "tradition" and analyzes the reasons for the inheritance and variation of Ninigou's art, culture, and connotation from the perspective of cultural ecology. In response to current issues, relevant solutions are proposed. Xi Yu conducted field investigations on Ninigou temple fairs and the current situation from the perspectives of anthropology and folklore, analyzed the current situation, and put forward suggestions for holistic protection (Qu Feng, 2009).

Analysis of Elements in the Design of Cultural Creative Products for Intangible Cultural Heritage

Analysis of Cultural Creative Product Design for Intangible Cultural Heritage involves not only the design of form, color, material, but also emphasizes the cultural significance and experiential design of the product. The following analysis is based on design features, cultural symbols, and target consumer groups.

Classification of Cultural Creative Products for Intangible Cultural Heritage

From the perspective of cultural and creative industries, cultural creative products can be roughly classified into four categories: craft artworks, cultural and museum creative products, art derivatives, and film and animation products. The term "cultural and museum creative products" refers to cultural relics and museum collections, while "art derivatives" refers to creative products based on artworks as design prototypes. There is overlap among these categories, as some products can belong to both craft artworks and art derivatives, while others can belong to both art derivatives and cultural and museum creative products. From the perspective of cultural creative products for intangible cultural heritage, film and animation products are almost non-existent, with the main focus being on art derivatives, craft artworks, and cultural and museum creative products (Li, 2018). Different classification criteria can lead to different categorizations. The national list of intangible cultural heritage can be roughly classified into the following categories: folk literature, traditional music, folk dance, traditional theater, storytelling and ballad singing, acrobatics and variety arts, folk arts and crafts, traditional craftsmanship, traditional medicine, and folk customs. Based on the different expressions of intangible cultural heritage, this research categorizes intangible cultural heritage creative products into three types: those that embody intangible cultural crafts and techniques, those that reflect social customs, and those that embody cultural arts (Shao, 2011).

Based on market demand, the author classifies intangible cultural heritage creative products into two types: short-term entertainment and long-term commemorative products.

Short-term entertainment products are rapidly developing and come in various forms. However, they often suffer from low overall quality and a lack of consistent style. The mass production of some products leads to rough craftsmanship and a weak cultural essence, resulting in low utilization and high waste. Therefore, there is still significant room for development in terms of appearance, design, and cultural output for short-term entertainment intangible cultural heritage creative products.

Long-term commemorative products are generally mid-range to high-end products. Mid-range products are well-crafted, satisfying some of the users' spiritual needs, and exhibit a certain degree of innovation that is worth preserving. High-end products are mostly made using intangible cultural heritage craftsmanship, featuring excellent craftsmanship, high-quality materials, profound cultural connotations, and historical imprints. They possess cultural charm in their appearance, carry strong symbolic meanings, and serve as a spiritual embodiment of a better life.

The author has conducted an analysis based on numerous cases. Here, several products are discussed as examples. The Dong brocade linen series products skillfully combine modern aesthetics with traditional culture. They have reinterpreted traditional patterns of Dong ethnic clothing, such as octagonal flowers, woven snake patterns, bamboo root patterns, and water ripple patterns, in a more modern arrangement and combination of patterns. Dong brocade features vibrant colors, high contrast, rich patterns, and a rugged and rustic style. To blend with modern styles, the Dong brocade linen series products employ soft color combinations, drawing inspiration from Dong ethnic architecture and everyday attire, thereby expressing ethnic culture. Additionally, the products leverage the soft and skin-friendly nature of linen itself to achieve innovative improvements.



Figure 2 Dong Brocade Cotton and Linen Series

Source: <http://www.comdesignlab.com/travel/archives/3026> (2023)

The "Cheng Yun" Kitchen Products Series draws inspiration from ancient artifacts, with the design derived from refined historical motifs. For example, the products are modeled after the Ding vessel, retaining its distinctive three legs and two ears, symbolizing a nostalgic longing for ancient utensils and a desire for the traditional culture they embody. The combination of natural wood color and black ceramic material showcases a rustic and natural temperament.



Figure 3 "Cheng Yun" Ancient-Inspired Kitchen Products Series

Source:https://www.sohu.com/a/134230295_119717 (2023)

The "Shang Shang Qian" Toothpick Holder is designed around the concept of "drawing lots." Drawing lots is a longstanding tradition in Chinese culture and a form of divination, representing a folk custom within intangible cultural heritage. "Shang Shang Qian" symbolizes good fortune and all things going smoothly, representing positivity and happiness. The toothpick holder combines the act of drawing toothpicks with the concept of "drawing lots," adding cultural depth to the action. The silhouette of the Temple of Heaven resembles an official's hat and represents a miniature of traditional Chinese architecture. By pushing up the "official's hat," it expresses blessings of promotion and wealth.



Figure 4 "Cheng Yun" Ancient-Inspired Kitchen Products Series

Source: <http://www.visionunion.com/article.jsp?code=200804230029> (2023)

The author classifies cultural and creative products of intangible cultural heritage into three types based on the narrative design approach: symbol-based design, ambiance-based design, and experiential design.

1. Symbol-based design focuses on using symbols, patterns, and motifs to convey the theme of the intangible cultural heritage. This type of design primarily involves two-dimensional thinking and is concentrated in the field of graphic design. The Dong brocade linen series, for example, emphasizes the use of traditional patterns as the key design element.

2. Ambiance-based design emphasizes creating a three-dimensional artistic atmosphere. It requires three-dimensional thinking in the design process. The "Sheng Yun" kitchenware series, for instance, captures a rustic and antique ambiance. Some graphic designs also aim to create a specific ambiance within the two-dimensional space, evoking a sense of depth and atmosphere.

3. The third type is experiential design, which places emphasis on creating multidimensional experiences that allow people to emotionally engage with the story. It requires a design approach that encompasses multiple dimensions. For example, in the case of the "SANSA" toothpick holder, the act of drawing a "SANSA" fortune stick carries a positive and meaningful connotation.

These three types can be approached using different design processes and methods. However, it's important to note that the categorization is not absolute, and there can be overlaps between them. Products that involve significant story-driven experiences are generally classified as experiential design. Cultural and creative products that solely rely on two-dimensional innovative designs without any novelty in their form can be categorized as symbol-based designs. Products that express a specific ambiance through their design can be classified as ambiance-based designs. Lower-level cultural and creative product designs lack symbols, ambiance, and experiential elements, making it difficult to convey a narrative through the product.

Analysis of Design Features of Intangible Cultural Heritage Creative Products

Form expresses meaning, and consumers associate certain things through the form of a product, leading to reflection and understanding of the true design significance. In modern products, there are many meaningless forms created solely for visual enjoyment, which undermines more meaningful cultural expressions. Narrative design aims to convey the story's essence and meet people's emotional needs, emphasizing the relevance between form and meaning in product narratives.

In narrative design, the story has temporal and spatial aspects, and the corresponding scenes presented by the product vary based on the story's context. Product design involves not only designing the external form and functionality of the product but also designing the usage context of the product. It is essential to consider the product's situation in different time and space, allowing the logical sequence of the story to be reflected in the product design. Through analysis, it is concluded that non-heritage cultural and creative products possess contextual characteristics.

Compared to the static design aspects of ordinary products, intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products need to express people's behavioral culture, making them dynamic. Behavioral actions are the external manifestations of individuals within a certain time frame, but it is difficult to depict human behaviors and social customs through the static form of products. Products often serve as material carriers of customs, playing a role as props in the transmission of social customs. Since the design of "props" can only be carried out after determining the dramatic plot related to the props, the design of cultural and creative products that express folk customs needs to consider dynamic factors and design storylines and interactive experiences between products and people. Intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products should have intangible cultural heritage as their design theme. Cultural and creative design first requires research on a certain type or region's culture, then seeks design directions that express cultural themes, and finally carries out product shaping, color, and material design. This design process determines the thematic cultural features of intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products. Based on the above analysis, the characteristics of intangible cultural heritage-based narrative design of cultural and creative products include semantic correlation, situationality, dynamism, and thematic cultural significance.

Analysis of Cultural Symbols

The excellent traditional culture of China serves as the foundation for the design of cultural and creative products. The rich cultural soil has nurtured numerous outstanding designs in this field. With thousands of years of cultural accumulation, we have an inexhaustible source of creativity. However, in contemporary times, our in-depth understanding of the value of traditional culture is insufficient, and there is a lack of integration of cultural resources. To address this phenomenon, it is necessary to conduct analysis and research on traditional cultural symbols and apply them in product design.

Yang Yufu divides culture into three levels: the metaphysical level, the metaphysical level, and the metaphysical level, corresponding to the reflective level of user cognitive psychology, the behavioral level, and the instinctual level. China's famous

handicrafts are characterized by profound cultural connotations and distinct regional features, belonging to the metaphysical level of cultural expression, which is worth learning from and drawing inspiration. Examples include New Year paintings, batik, paper-cutting, and more.

In ancient times, woodblock New Year paintings were essential decorations and important symbols during the New Year festivities. However, with the changes in modern customs, woodblock New Year paintings have lost their vitality and become an endangered art form. As a nationally recognized intangible cultural heritage, woodblock New Year paintings can only be found in handicraft workshops in Zhu Xian Town in Henan, Mianzhu in Sichuan, Yangliuqing in Tianjin, and other places. New Year paintings have a long history and cover a wide range of themes, reflecting people's social lives and serving as expressions of art and culture throughout different periods.

Batik, also a nationally recognized intangible cultural heritage, is rich in cultural connotations. The natural crack patterns formed by the shedding of wax vary in shape and possess artistic beauty. Local artisans artistically depict the images of plants and animals by carefully observing nature, resulting in vivid and dynamic patterns in batik. The external patterns belong to the metaphysical level of cultural expression. Some animals are also endowed with special symbolic meanings and become distinctive auspicious motifs, evolving into a higher level of cultural significance. For example, the "fish" is considered a symbol of fertility among the Miao ethnic group, and the fish patterns on their clothing represent the desire for prosperity and posterity.

Famous paper-cutting traditions include Weixian paper-cutting in Hebei, Manchu paper-cutting, dyed paper-cutting, and more. Besides the renowned embroidery styles of Suzhou, Hunan, Guangdong, and Sichuan, ethnic embroidery such as Miao embroidery and Qiang embroidery also exhibit unique characteristics. Notable craftsmanship includes Miao silver jewelry forging techniques, hair-thread inlay, cloisonné enamel, and more.

In the physical economy, American advertising scholar E.S. Lewis proposed the AIDMA (Attention-Interest-Desire-Memory- Action) model, which describes the consumer behavior from initial exposure to information to the final purchase. In the era of Web 2.0, researchers have further developed the consumer behavior analysis model based on the characteristics of the Internet and wireless applications, known as the AISAS (Attention-Interest-Search-Action-Share) model. The first step is to capture the consumer's attention, followed by generating interest, conducting search, taking action, and finally, sharing with others. The introduction of "Search" and "Share" emphasizes the significance of search and sharing in online shopping.

In today's (This refers to 2023) intelligent Internet era, DCCI Data Center of China Internet (DCCI) has proposed the SICAS (Sense-Interest & Interactive-Connect & Communication-Action-Share) model, which represents the consumer behavior in the fully digital era of mobile internet. The model analyzes consumer behavior by emphasizing the aspects of sensing (Sense), generating interest through interaction (Interest), establishing connections through communication (Connect), leading to purchase actions (Action), and finally, spreading and sharing (Share). This research will be conducted based on these aspects and a questionnaire will be designed accordingly.

Previous studies have identified six main types of potential users for cultural and creative products: Collectors, Leaders, Exhibitors, Enjoyers, Experiencers, and Confused users. Consumers of cultural and creative products are further categorized into Independent Rationalists, Others-guided, Impulsive Buyers, and Aesthetically Confident individuals. Aesthetically confident consumers, such as Collectors and Leaders, seek the intrinsic value and satisfaction that products can provide. Impulsive buyers, including Exhibitors, Enjoyers, and Experiencers, are driven by the desire for visually appealing, comfortable, and pleasurable products. Experiencers specifically seek novelty and a sense of participation. Confused users, who fall under the Others-guided category, rely on

recommendations from others while shopping and look for products with distinct themes and strong characteristics. Independent Rationalists are more practical and conservative, focusing on cost- effectiveness and utility. In the subsequent analysis of user roles, reference will be made to these previous user classifications.

The relationship between intangible cultural heritage creative products and narrative

Analyzing the relationship between intangible cultural heritage (ICH) creative products and narrative from the perspectives of narrative relationship structure, basic elements of storytelling, and story structure.

Narrative Relationship Structure in Product Design

The author analyzes the concept of narrative at the narrative level and its relationships, and then extends it to the level of product design, summarizing the narrative relationship structure in product design. The narrative method subjectively expresses the narrative content, and the narrative content influences the narrative form and narrative method. By employing narrative methods, the narrative form can be summarized, and the narrative form will permeate through the narrative methods.



Figure 5 Narrative Relationship Structure in Product

Aristotle proposed a procedure for creating works which involves first establishing the background, followed by describing the reasons and beginning, then depicting the process and development, and finally reaching the ultimate conclusion. In the process of product design, designers need to first determine the theme of the design and then distribute the essence of the theme across various aspects of the product design, including functionality, symbolism, form, material, and color. Subsequently, by constructing a narrative text, the story is infused into these different aspects, transforming the narrative significance into external forms. The interpretation process by product users is a reverse puzzle-solving process, where they extract the surface meaning of the product through its external form, and through association and analysis, arrive at the authentic narrative theme of the final product.

Customers identify the thematic essence of cultural and creative products by deducing the narrative content from the narrative form. When customers see a display of a cultural and creative product, the first step is to extract semantics from the product's form. The second step involves both necessary and free association based on these semantics, converting potential auditory illusions, visual illusions, and sensory illusions back into visible visual cues, and then judging whether the associations are correct. The phenomenon of one sensory organ triggering a corresponding sensation in another sensory organ is known as synesthesia or cross-modal perception. This phenomenon has been recognized since ancient times. Aristotle used visual and tactile descriptive words to describe sound, distinguishing between sharpness and rhythm. Polányi believed that fragrance, color, and sound are all interconnected and interrelated. Qian Zhongshu proposed the concept of "interperception" and believed that the senses are interconnected without boundaries. In design, designers also leverage the phenomenon of synesthesia. The visual and tactile aspects of this juice packaging are highly reminiscent of real fruit, with the texture of the product's surface matching that of the actual fruit. When consumers see this packaging, they visually associate it with the taste of the corresponding fruit. The third step is to derive the complete meaning through semantic reasoning, which refers to the theme of the cultural and creative

product. This process requires designers to determine the narrative content and narrative methods of the cultural and creative product at the beginning of the design process, ensuring the strength of the product's narrative significance.



Figure 6 showcases a presentation of juice packaging that mimics real fruits

Source: <https://www.163.com/dy/article/HHDTCP4U0541BT1I.html> (2023)

Russian formalism considers the theme as a fundamental component of the story, categorizing it into dynamic and static themes. Specifically, the theme is divided into bound themes and unbound themes. Shklovsky's narrative theory emphasizes the connection between action and background, categorizing stories into events and existents based on their dynamic or static nature. Russian formalism assigns existents to static themes and events to relatively dynamic themes.

Through setting the structure of the story, the design of the story becomes clearer. Taking the example of the Stone Garden Candy from Shinan Temple, the analysis of the story structure reveals that the different components of the story have varying levels of importance in product design.

Karesansui is mainly a courtyard landscape composed of fine sand and neatly arranged stones. In "karesansui," the "water" is represented by the fine sand with ripple patterns. The narrative theme of the product is the Japanese garden landscape of "karesansui," with Japanese sweets representing the stones and leaves, and sugar

representing the "fine sand" in the dry landscape. The overall presentation captures the essence of karesansui.

Events are crucial elements in story design. For example, "Shinanji Stone Garden Candy" narrates various sceneries of karesansui. Before consuming the candy, the eater places it in the "courtyard" and uses a small wooden rake to create ripple patterns in the sugar, crafting different karesansui landscapes. The connection and combination of these events create the situational context of the story.



Figure 7 Shinanji Stone Garden Candy

Source: https://www.sohu.com/a/135428079_588351 (2023)

Reconstructing the Narrative Spatiotemporal Structure of Intangible Cultural Heritage Creative Products

Intangible cultural heritage creative products can utilize various narrative spatiotemporal structures, employing both linear and non-linear narrative structures in their design, resulting in different design outcomes.

Linear Narrative Design

In Western narrative, storytelling typically follows a linear structure with time as its foundation. Time is considered a linear connection, where events are linked in a chronological order. Time is an ongoing dimension without an endpoint, serving as a measure for calculating life and history. Human life stories also revolve around the time dimension as their basis.

Time can be divided into three temporal styles in narratology: narrative time, event time, and discourse time. Previous research on these three temporal styles has introduced three important concepts: chronology, duration, and frequency. Based on the relationship between narrative time and event time, chronology can be categorized as follows: chronological order, prolepsis, analepsis, analepsis, and recapitulation. Chronological order occurs when narrative time aligns with the chronological sequence of events. Prolepsis involves narrating events before they occur. Analepsis refers to narrating events in reverse order, where the outcome is narrated before the actual event. Insertion occurs when one event is narrated within the narration of another event. Recapitulation involves a retrospective narrative of past events. The narrative style of the text can be causal or deductive, among others.

In narrative design, the writing time corresponds to the design time of the work. When a story is described in language based on the spatial dimension, it also acquires a temporal attribute, known as "narrative time." Narrative time refers to the time used in the narrative of a work, and it is a fictional concept of time. Event time, on the other hand, refers to the time at which events occur in the story, such as ancient times or modern times. Event time aligns with the designer's lifetime. If the work represents a real story, the event time predates the designer's lifetime, whereas if the event time is later than the designer's lifetime, the work represents a futuristic or speculative story.

Frequency includes two concepts: event frequency and narrative frequency. Event frequency refers to the frequency of events occurring, while narrative frequency refers to the frequency of narrating events. Implicit narration is also common in novels, where it is difficult to distinguish whether it is a one-time narration or repetitive

narration. In design, the frequency of narration can be implicit or explicit. For the "readers" of a product, decoding is required to discern the frequency of narration. For example, if a product narrates a theme story through various means such as form, color, function, and usage, it is considered repetitive narration. If a product only narrates through usage, it is considered a one-time narration. The thinking process of children makes them more inclined to accept stories, and fairy tales often use repetitive narration to make the story memorable. To meet the needs of children, children's toy products have a strong narrative element. When designing narrative-oriented children's products, repetitive narration is also a design approach.

Nonlinear Narrative Design

Nonlinear narrative design, which is based on the spatial dimension, deviates from the linear progression of events and does not rely on the time dimension as its foundation. It is a significant characteristic found in ancient Chinese novels and garden designs, where the story or experience unfolds through the transition of scenes.

When considering whether the spatial dimension complies with physical rules, it can be classified into Euclidean space and non-Euclidean space. Euclidean space refers to the physical space that conforms to the laws of physics. In essence, space and time are inseparable and together form a four-dimensional Euclidean space, also known as a four-dimensional continuum. In a novel, there may exist both actual Euclidean space and imaginary non-Euclidean space. In design, sculptures, images, products, and garden designs are examples of narrative mediums that are predominantly based on the spatial dimension. However, the background or setting of the design may belong to a fantastical or imaginary space, such as heaven or a lunar palace.

Historical records, through written narration, have the ability to preserve fleeting moments and even make them eternal. Annalistic historical records follow the chronological order of events, making them a typical example of linear narrative. On the other hand, biographical historical records present narratives from multiple dimensions, belonging to the realm of multilinear or nonlinear storytelling.

By adopting nonlinear narrative in historical records, authors can better highlight the portrayal of characters, social environments, customs, and other aspects they wish to express. Since the storytelling is based on time, events related to the same theme may be scattered, which can be challenging to convey a specific theme. In ancient Chinese narrative texts, there are many instances where the transition of scenes implies the passage of time. Narrating the portrayal of characters through significant scenes while downplaying the concept of time is an example of nonlinear storytelling.

Principles of Narrative Redesign for Intangible Cultural Heritage Creative Products

Culture as the Core, Emotion Experience as the Focus

The revitalization of traditional craftsmanship is a key focus of modern design, resulting in the creation of outstanding design works during the research process. For example, the "Happiness on Branch" Bluetooth speaker produced by Kaicraft emphasizes the incorporation of Hunan embroidery techniques and traditional culture. As one of the four famous embroidery styles, Hunan embroidery is renowned for its vivid and lifelike imagery, earning it the reputation of "embroidered birds that can sing." The "Happiness on Branch" pattern is a typical auspicious design that carries positive connotations. The homophonic word "mei" for plum in Chinese expresses people's aspirations for a better life. The functionality of the product aligns with the conveyed message of the pattern. The open beak of the magpie on the speaker resembles a singing gesture, providing users with a psychological sense of the magpie's joyful song.



Figure 8 Bluetooth Speaker with Joy on the Branch

Source: https://m.taihuoniao.com/design_case/view/2910 (2023)

Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) is the core of design for intangible cultural heritage creative products, and it is also the fundamental distinction of these products from other creative products. Culture serves as the essence of design, and narrative design aims to convey Chinese traditional culture through storytelling. Emphasizing culture as the core is one of the main principles in redesigning these products.

Human needs are multi-dimensional, and products that solely focus on functionality can no longer satisfy people's emotional needs. Narrative design aims to fulfill emotional needs and prioritize the emotional experience of individuals. Human cognition can be divided into three levels: instinctual, behavioral, and reflective. The reflective level, being the highest level, has a longer-lasting impact on individuals. Excellent design has the ability to evoke emotions and elevate individuals' cognition to the

reflective level, creating emotional resonance. Designing based on meeting user needs as a principle can contribute to the creation of better products. Products that revolve around traditional culture as the narrative theme possess inherent value, as they can create immersive experiences and convey spiritual essence.

Craftsmanship and Artistry

Standardization has become an avenue for integrating traditional craftsmanship into modern product design. Standardization helps improve production efficiency and product quality, making it easier for sales. Those who have limited understanding of intangible cultural heritage lack the discerning eye to select products from craftsmanship of varying levels. They rely on brands to strictly control quality requirements. Modern consumers are more inclined to embrace brands that offer guaranteed quality. Taking the Happiness on the Branch Bluetooth speaker as an example, consumer electronics require consistent appearance standards, but standardizing hand embroidery poses a higher level of difficulty. Factors such as the embroiderer's aesthetics, needlework proficiency, and embroidery sequence can influence the final outcome. The Bluetooth speaker addresses these challenges by providing centralized training for embroiderers, establishing pattern standards, and achieving consistent appearance while enabling mass production. By combining embroidery with the speaker product, it exudes both classical and contemporary aesthetics.

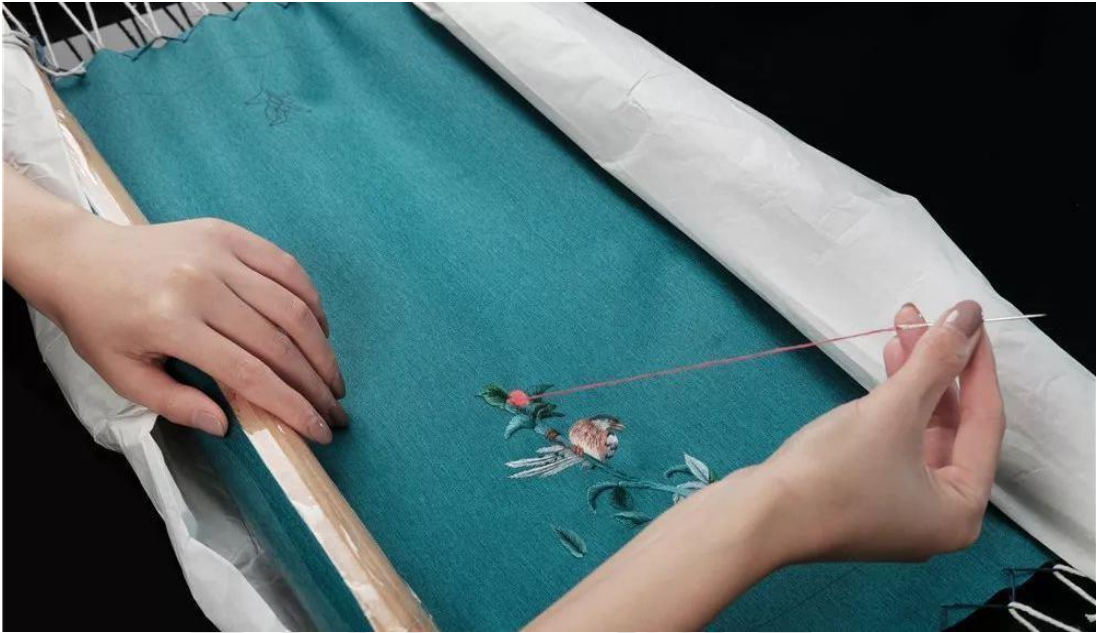


Figure 9 Standardization of Hand Embroidery

Source:https://m.taihuoniao.com/design_case/view/2910 (2023)

The criteria of "excellent materials, aesthetic craftsmanship, and skillful techniques" in ancient China reflect the evaluation standards for outstanding products. Through the analysis of case studies, it is evident that these qualities are common among excellent design examples. Traditional Chinese craftsmanship encompasses a wide range of techniques. Many products produced by machines cannot achieve the level of precision found in traditional handmade craftsmanship. Exquisite craftsmanship is a significant embodiment of product quality and can enhance its aesthetic appeal.

Currently, the market is flooded with cultural and creative products that are made of inferior materials and crafted poorly. These products have become temporary "toys" that people indulge in. Products made with cheap materials not only tend to be easily damaged but also greatly affect their level of refinement. Some intangible cultural heritage techniques can only be effectively showcased when used with specific materials, and low-quality materials are unsuitable for this purpose. Copperware,

pottery, and other products created using intangible cultural heritage techniques inherently possess a sense of aesthetic beauty derived from their materials. The coloring and patterns found in these products reflect centuries of aesthetic accumulation.

Characterization and stylization

Product should embody regional and ethnic characteristics, and the chosen themes in product design should be easy to express with vividness. Homogenization is one of the drawbacks of modern cultural and creative products. For example, "travel tags" with national elements can be found in various tourist attractions across different regions. The underlying reason is the lack of design innovation and insufficient awareness of regional differentiation in cultural and creative products. If each region has a large number of cultural and creative products representing its own culture, the phenomenon of homogenization can be greatly reduced. In recent years (This refers to 2023), Chinese people have become more confident in our own culture, and independent brands with cultural characteristics have gradually emerged. However, overall, there are relatively few professional products design teams dedicated to regional and traditional cultures, and their brand influence is limited.



Figure 10 Trendy-style Soft Rubber Luggage Tags with Palace Museum Design

Source: <https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1655325612067300081&wfr=spider&or=pc> (2023)

Designer Liu Chuankai incorporates iconic architectural symbols of the city onto sandalwood fans. This design piece showcases the imprint of the era through the architectural characteristics of the city. By combining traditional and modern cultures, it meets the users' psychological need for contemporary relevance and helps deepen their understanding of traditional culture. The technique of flower carving is a crucial process in the production of sandalwood fans and is also part of intangible cultural heritage. However, with the mechanization of production, flower carving faces the risk of being lost. The hollowed-out part of this design piece represents the artistry of flower carving, and promoting and showcasing this technique helps expand the market for handicraft products.

People have different lifestyles and habits due to the differences in the eras they live in. There is a clear distinction between modern and ancient ways of life. Integrating intangible cultural heritage into modern lifestyles is the fundamental way to preserve this heritage. In particular, for intangible cultural heritage related to customs and traditions, it is more suitable to be inherited through people's daily lives and behaviors.



Figure 11 "Man Sheng Kuai Huo" Urban Symbol Folding Fan

Source: https://www.sohu.com/a/149369943_457018 (2023)

The Role of Narrative Design in Product Design Field

Narrative design employs the theories from the literary domain to use "narrative" as a method for creation. The ultimate presentation of the product is achieved through the design language, encompassing forms, colors, materials, and other elements, to narrate a "story," thereby achieving the goal of creating cultural experiences. The main roles of incorporating narrative design into product design are as follows:

1. In-depth research and refinement of design through narrative thinking The impact of narrative thinking on design goes beyond the final presentation of the product; it also influences the early stages of design development and positioning. By incorporating narrative thinking into the process of problem discovery, designers can conduct more profound research on user positioning, behaviors, and needs, thereby refining the design's details in various contexts. Designers identify issues arising from the contradictions between users, products, and environments, and narrative thinking allows them to express these contradictions through scenarios. For example, storytelling boards and script methods commonly used in product design are design approaches that employ narrative thinking. By employing various mediums such as form, text, and patterns, designers narrate the product's theme, making it clearer and more easily understandable for consumers to grasp its thematic essence.

2. Information dissemination and enrichment of product cultural connotations Compared to non-narrative design, the distinguishing feature and advantage of narrative design lie in its ability to convey more story information, thereby enriching the cultural core of the product. In modern product design and contemporary art, there is often a pursuit of pure artistic form, with many elements designed for aesthetic purposes only. The shapes, colors, and patterns of ordinary products lack substantive thematic meanings, neglecting the narrative aspect and emotional experiences of users. As modern design reaches the extreme of "less is more," postmodernist design that seeks to satisfy emotional and spiritual needs emerges. To meet these higher-level aspirations, narrative design has been increasingly studied and applied by scholars. When

applied as a design method in cultural and creative product design, narrative design considers not only the realization of product functionalities and technologies but, more importantly, the combination of cultural elements with product forms to convey the designer's cultural memories and reflections, thus creating a cultural experience. Specifically, narrative design emphasizes the connection between products and historical, human, and social backgrounds. It employs storytelling design based on relevant events related to the narrative objects, enabling consumers to form specific associations, memories, and reflections, and to experience corresponding cultural encounters through their interactions with the products.

3. Interaction with users and the creation of pleasant emotional experiences
In the experience economy, material consumption centered on "goods" has transformed into experiential consumption centered on "experiences." People now place greater emphasis on the experiential aspects of consumption and have increased demands for the entertainment and artistic qualities of products. Narrative design aims to obtain the emotional significance inherent in "experiences" because events possess dynamism and can capture people's attention more effectively compared to static objects. Events can also stimulate people's associations and prompt consumers to reflect on their life experiences, thereby obtaining emotional experiences. To narrate "goods," narrative design must be based on the existence of the product's material functionality. By adding the narrative dimension to products, it enhances emotional communication between individuals and products.

4. Enhancing the innovativeness of design
In the contemporary social environment, achieving innovation solely through the product itself requires new technologies and materials, making innovation more challenging. However, there is tremendous potential for innovation in the connotation of products through intangible culture. Traditional Chinese stories contain the essence of how the Chinese perceive the world and their values. Products infused with traditional Chinese culture possess the uniqueness and rich cultural connotations of Chinese culture.

Summary

China's development of the cultural and creative industries related to intangible cultural heritage (ICH) started relatively late. In the early stages, there were some significant research achievements in the design of cultural and creative products based on intangible cultural heritage, such as the promotion of traditional Chinese culture through cultural and creative product design by the Palace Museum. However, overall, the development of the industry is still immature and has great potential for growth.

There are various limitations to the development of cultural and creative products related to intangible cultural heritage. In terms of design, firstly, there is a lack of large-scale professional design teams, resulting in weak design capabilities. Secondly, the design process is challenging, requiring flexible thinking and a deep understanding of intangible cultural heritage and its inherent spirit in order to create modern products that are appropriate and effective.

In terms of sales, there are limitations as well. Firstly, the sales channels are relatively limited. Secondly, the level of inheritance and revitalization of intangible cultural heritage is not sufficient, leading to cases where potential buyers are unfamiliar with intangible cultural heritage and therefore reluctant to make purchases.

Overall, there is still a need for further development and improvement in the design and sales aspects of cultural and creative products related to intangible cultural heritage in China.

As mentioned earlier, current research on cultural and creative products related to "Ninigou" primarily focuses on the representation of physical objects. However, there is a lack of scholars incorporating narrative studies into the design and development of cultural and creative products within the Ninigou culture.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The research on cultural and creative product design of intangible cultural heritage, using Ninigou in Huaiyang region as an example, aims to showcase not only the material aspects of Ninigou as an intangible cultural heritage, but also its intangible elements, including the process of heritage activities and even the living scenes associated with it. It seeks to highlight the skills and cultural backgrounds of the artisans involved. Therefore, in addition to the reproduction of symbolic elements, it is important to consider the original context of its origin and development, and to design with reference to the original ecological settings, villages, and local communities.

To conduct the research, I engaged in participatory observational studies and in-depth interviews in Huaiyang County and its surrounding areas in Henan Province. The research process involved the following steps:

1. Preliminary study by reviewing relevant literature.
2. Field research.
3. Research subjects.
4. Interview questions.
5. Information analysis and presentation. Each step is described as follows.

Preliminary Study by Reviewing Relevant Literature

The increasingly prevalent internet environment and the application of new media provide new avenues for observing intangible cultural heritage. By examining its dissemination methods and manifestations in the new environment, the changes in the forms of intangible cultural heritage in Henan Province are explored, seeking new pathways for the design of cultural and creative products. In the following section, the research and analysis of the status of intangible cultural heritage in Henan Province is conducted through this step, extracting and analyzing data from relevant websites.

In addition, the author also conducted research on the cultural and creative products available on the market, categorizing and organizing them in order to identify potential entry points for cultural and creative product design.

Field research

This study is qualitative research, and the author chose to conduct in-depth interviews with craftsmen in the area where the mud figurines are produced. The production areas and craftsmen of Huaiyang mud figurines are distributed in villages such as Jinzhuang, Xulou, Chenlou, Wuzhuang, Dinglou, Lilou, Shizhuang, and Baiwang, located to the east of the Taihao Fuxi Mausoleum. They have different themes, styles, and techniques in their creations. For this study, Xulou Village, where the national-level inheritor of mud figurines is located, was selected as the key research site. Visits and research were also conducted in Jinzhuang Village and Chenlou Village, where provincial-level inheritors of mud figurines are located.

Research content as follows:

1. Current status of mud figurine craftsmen
2. Characteristics and cultural significance of mud figurines:
 - *Themes, designs, colors, and production process
 - *Relationship between mud figurines and the Taihao Fuxi Temple Fair
 - *Consumer factors influencing mud figurines
3. Recommendations from local residents regarding the development of mud figurines

Research Subjects

In the 1970s, several villages surrounding Huaiyang County were involved in the production of Ninigous. During the agricultural off-season, every household relied on making Ninigous and selling them to supplement their income. The exact number of craftsmen at that time is difficult to determine. However, with the impact of mass-produced toys during the reform and opening-up period, the popularity of Ninigous gradually declined, and fewer people were willing to inherit this intangible cultural

heritage. In recent years (This refers to 2023), China has attached increasing importance to the inheritance and development of intangible cultural heritage. With the support and assistance of the government, three artisans have been recognized as inheritors of Ninigou craftsmanship, coming from Xulou Village, Chenlou Village, and Jinzhuang Village. The author conducted in-depth interviews with Mr. Xu Shuzhang, a national-level inheritor of intangible cultural heritage, and his family. Field visits and surveys were conducted in these three villages, including households that continue to produce Ninigous and those that no longer engage in the craft. The research subjects primarily included:

1. In-depth interviews with three inheritors of intangible cultural heritage.
2. General interviews with 12 individuals from 8 households engaged in Ninigou production in the village.
3. General interviews with 10 individuals from 8 households in the village who are not engaged in Ninigou production.
4. General interviews with 15 sellers of Ninigous around the Taohao Tomb scenic area.
5. Survey questionnaires conducted with 107 tourists at the Taohao Tomb scenic area.

Specific details are as follows:

Xu Shuzhang, Representative Inheritor of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage project Huaiyang Clay Dog

Xu Pin, son of Xu Shuzhang, Clay Dog inheritor

Shao Bo, Representative Inheritor of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage project Huaiyang Clay Dog

Jinzhuang Village Residents: Liu Xiwen, Liu Zishou, Liu Baoli, Liu Jianjun

Chenlou Village Residents: Chen Dingling, Chen Wujun, Chen Wuguo, Chen Hao

Xulou Village Residents: Xu Song, Xu Yan, Xu Honggui, Xu Man

Occupation: Farming and Clay Dog artisan

Jin Zhuang Village Residents: Liu Quanfu, Liu Guifeng, Liu Guijiang, Liu Quanshan

Chenlou Village Residents: Chen Zhigao, Chen Zhiyuan, Chen Pingan, Chen Pingchuan

Xulou Village Residents: Xu Feiyang, Xu Xuanmin Occupation: Farming

Taihao Mausoleum Souvenir Shop Salespersons: Zhang Hongyan, Wang Bo, Zhu Yanhua, Cui Min

Taihao Mausoleum Scenic Spot Vendors: Song Xiao, Lin Xiaowen, Li Xu, Wang Zhe, Wang Guang'en, Wang Ping

Huaiyang Jin Hui Clay Dog Professional Cooperative Salespersons: Jin Qiaomei, Sun Fang, Sun Haijuan, Zhao Silu, Yan Jia

Interview Questions

In-depth interviews will focus on the following topics:

Learning experiences of the inheritors of Ninigou intangible cultural heritage.

Artistic features of Ninigou.

Production process and craftsmanship of Ninigou.

Cultural significance of Ninigou.

Innovations and developments in Ninigou.

General interviews with village residents will cover the following questions:

Why did they choose to continue or discontinue making Ninigou?

Have there been any changes in the shapes of Ninigous produced in recent

Will they encourage their descendants to engage in Ninigou production?

Their perspectives on the future development of Ninigou.

General interviews with merchants will address the following topics:

Main customer demographics for Ninigou purchases.

- Impact of temple fairs on Ninigou sales.

- Best-selling types of Ninigous.
- Suggestions for Ninigou innovation from a market perspective.

After the questionnaire design was critically reviewed by the advisors, 120 questionnaires were distributed to tourists near the Taohao Tomb scenic area, and 107 responses were collected. The questionnaires consist of three parts:

- Basic information about the respondents.
- Factors influencing their Ninigou purchases.
- Attitudes towards current cultural and creative products in the market.



CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDING

This chapter establishes a narrative design model for intangible cultural heritage creative products.

Firstly, we conducted a survey using questionnaires to analyze the attitudes of Taihao Mausoleum visitors towards ICH creative products, summarizing consumer preferences and market trends. Then, we examined the existing ICH creative products available in the market and studied the methods of transforming narrative texts into product design language.

These efforts provide a theoretical foundation for constructing the narrative model of ICH creative products in the next chapter, laying the groundwork for the practical design of Ninigou cultural and creative products.

Survey Results of Taihao Mausoleum Visitors

In order to generate consumer interest, it is necessary to conduct research on consumer preferences. For this purpose, a market survey questionnaire for consumers of cultural and creative products at the Taihao Mausoleum scenic area was conducted. A total of 120 questionnaires were randomly distributed, and 107 valid questionnaires were collected, resulting in a response rate of 89%.

In the survey, the gender distribution was approximately equal, with males and females accounting for roughly half of the respondents. The majority of respondents fell within the age range of 15-50 years old, accounting for 95% of the total, while those above 51 years old represented the smallest proportion, accounting for only 5%.

In terms of educational background, the majority of respondents had completed undergraduate or associate degrees, while the proportion of respondents with vocational or technical college degrees and postgraduate degrees was relatively lower. The proportion of respondents with a high school education or below was the smallest.

The majority of respondents were from Zhoukou City, with Huaiyang County being under the jurisdiction of Zhoukou City. A small portion of respondents were from other regions within Henan Province, while the proportion of respondents from other provinces was the smallest.

Based on the analysis of the basic information of the respondents, it can be concluded that the target audience attracted to Ninigou cultural and creative products is mainly between 15 and 40 years old, with an educational level of high school or college in Henan Province. Among them, consumers aged 31-40 have the highest psychological price range and the strongest purchasing power. Consumers aged 15-30 can accept price ranges mainly between 50-100 yuan. In conclusion, it is more appropriate to price the cultural and creative products within 100 yuan.

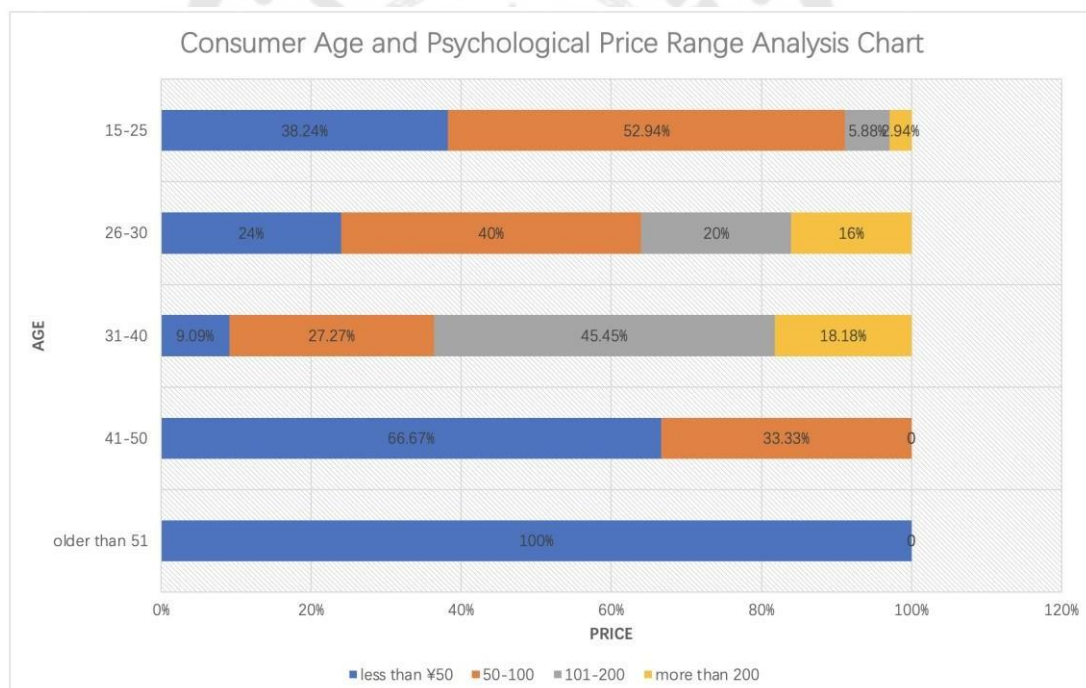


Figure 12 Survey Results of Taihao Mausoleum Visitors

Source: Created by the author (2023)

After investigating the reasons for consumers purchasing cultural and creative products, it was found that 58.8% of people buy these products for commemorative and collectible purposes, 20% buy them as gifts for friends and family, 3.8% buy them for their practical value, and 17.5% buy them out of personal interest and hobbies. Analysis of the data reveals that the primary purpose for consumers purchasing cultural and creative products is for commemoration and collection, indicating that these products must have distinct features and a sense of commemorative significance. While the practical value of cultural and creative products is important, it is not the main reason for consumers to make a purchase. Consumers often seek cultural and creative products that offer higher levels of value beyond practicality, fulfilling their emotional needs.

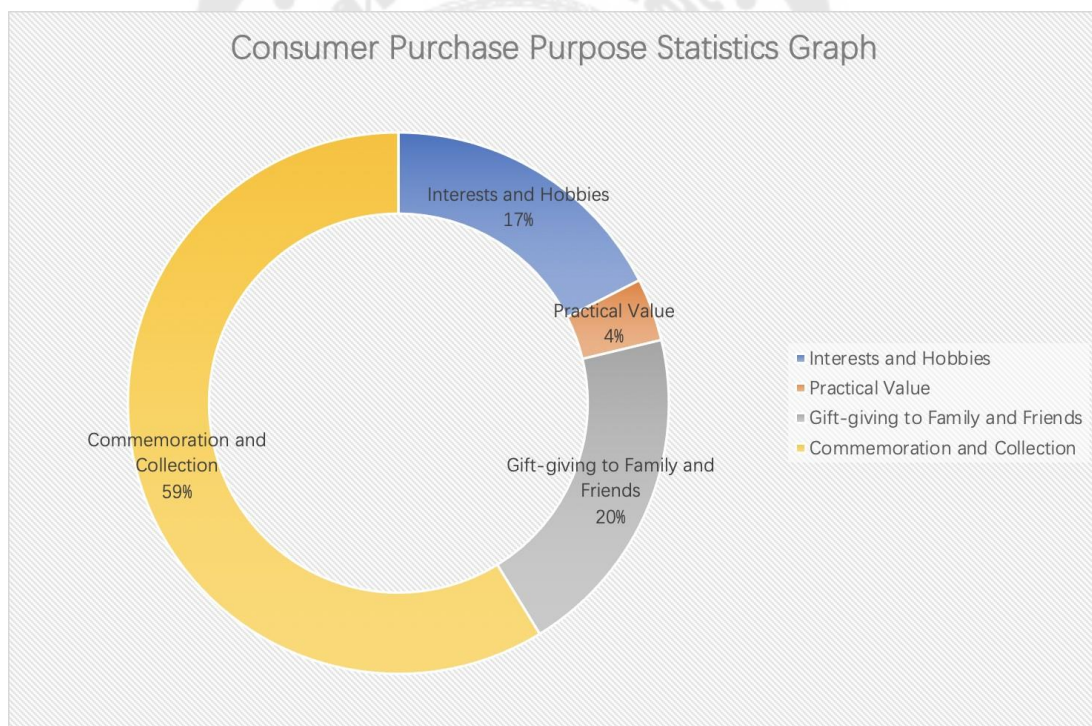


Figure 13 Consumer Purchase Purpose Statistics Graph

Source: Created by the author (2023)

Based on the survey conducted on consumer preferences for purchasing Taihao Ling cultural and creative products (multiple-choice questions), it was found that 71.2% of people are inclined to purchase handicrafts with blessings and auspicious meanings, 65% of people are willing to buy pendants and small accessories, 46.2% of people prefer stationery and toys, 20% of people are interested in purchasing lighting fixtures, chairs, and other furniture products, and 7.5% of people are willing to buy accessories for 3C products. The data indicates that consumers in the context of Taihao Ling culture show the most interest in handicrafts and pendant accessories.

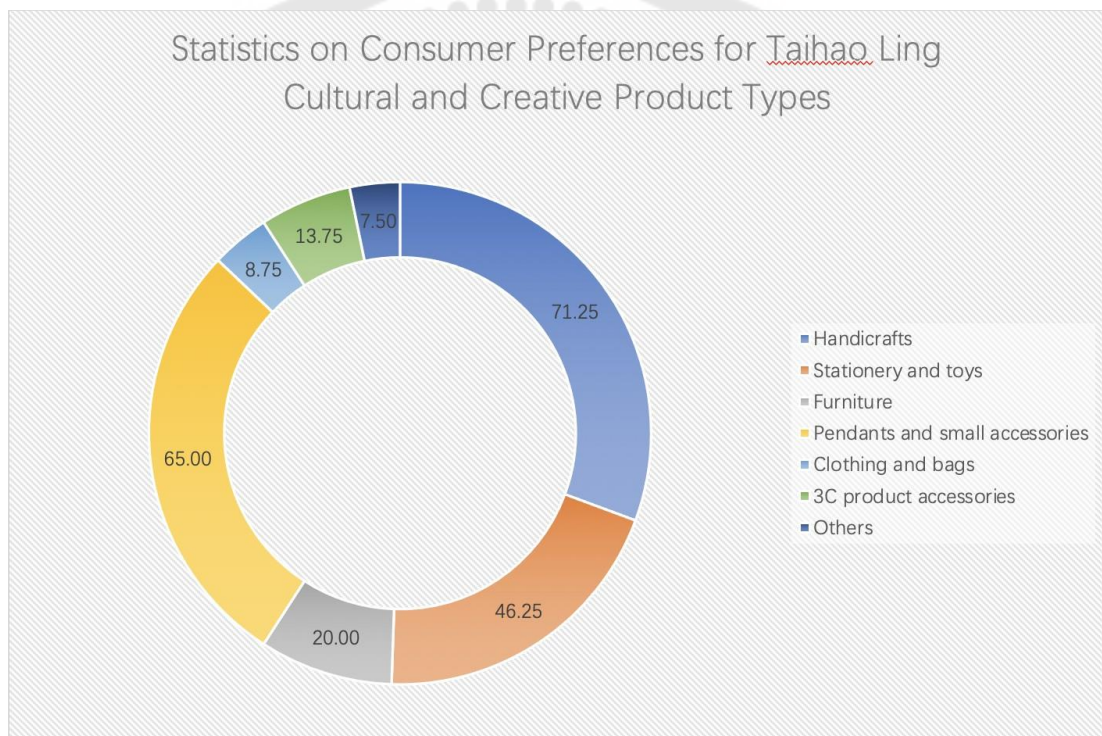


Figure 14 Statistics on Consumer Preferences for Taihao Ling Cultural and Creative Product Types

Source: Created by the authors (2023)

Through analyzing the product features that attract consumers and the shortcomings of existing products, it can be observed from the data that consumers are primarily attracted to the appearance, creativity, and cultural significance of the products. However, the brand's appeal is relatively low. This suggests that consumers place greater emphasis on the product's appearance, creativity, and cultural significance, while also indicating a lack of well-known cultural and creative brands and insufficient influence of existing brands in the current social context.

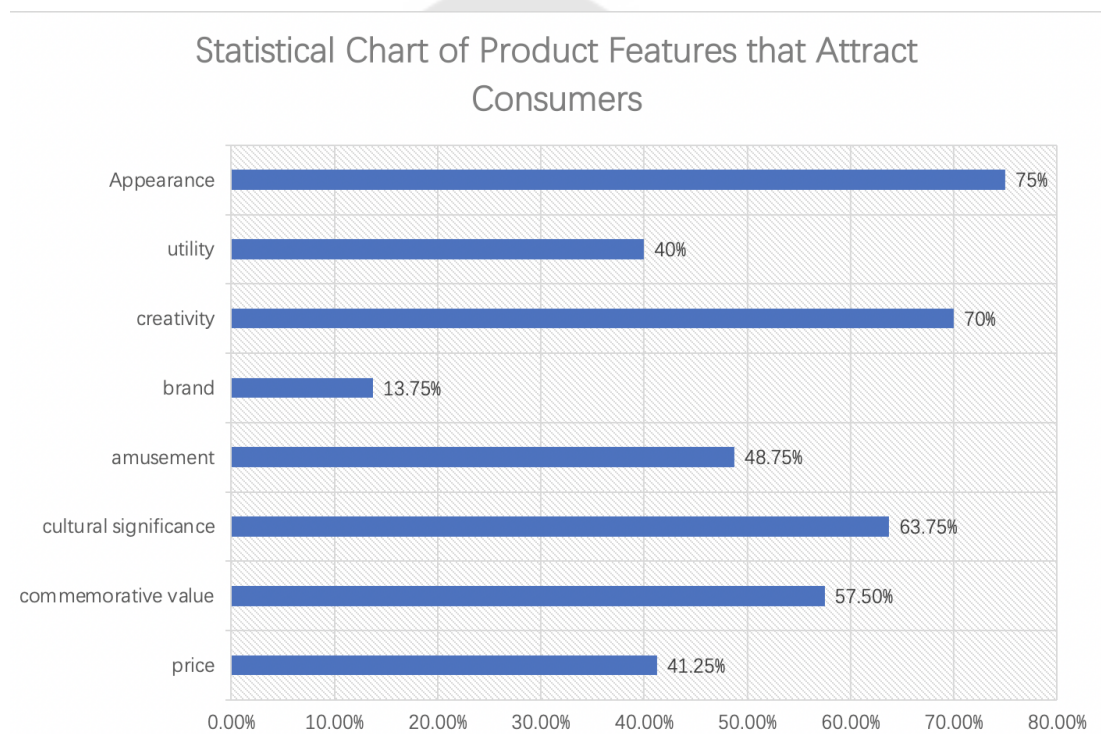


Figure 15 Statistical Chart of Product Features that Attract Consumers

Source: Created by the authors (2023)

The existing shortcomings of the products in Taihao Mausoleum mainly include a lack of distinct local characteristics, a lack of emotional interaction, a limited range of product options, a lack of cultural connotation, and weak practical functionality. These four aspects show relatively average scores, indicating the existing deficiencies in Taihao

Mausoleum cultural and creative products. The category "poor quality" has a relatively low proportion, suggesting that the quality of Taihao Mausoleum cultural and creative products is good, but there is a lack of creativity and uniqueness.

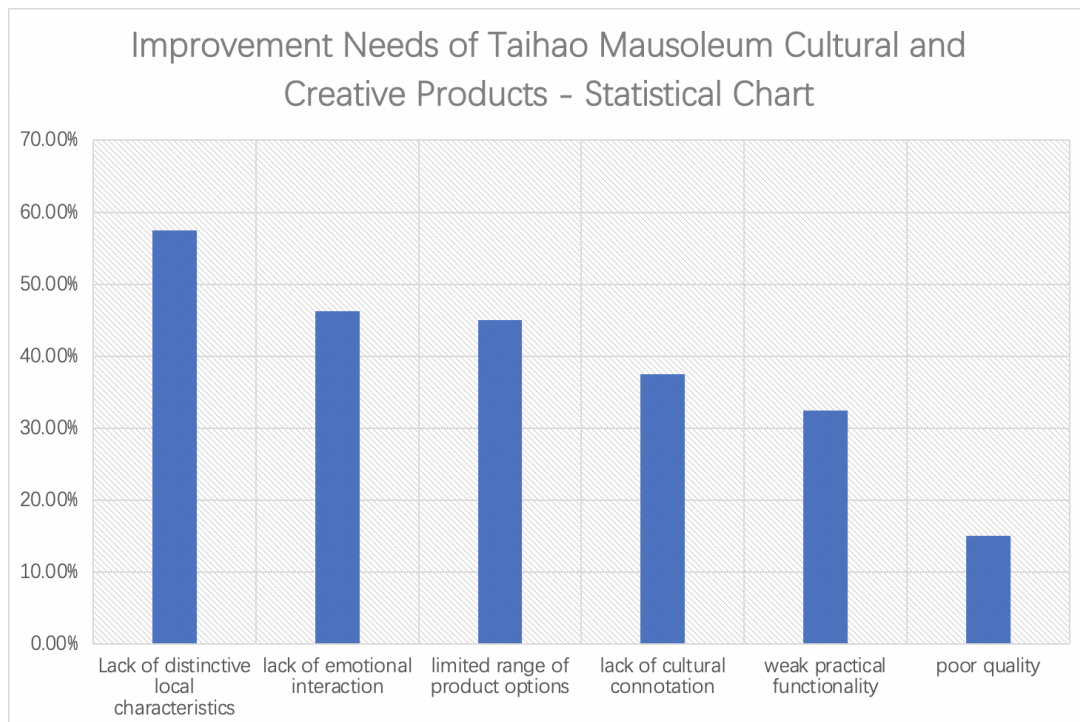


Figure 16 Improvement Needs of Taihao Mausoleum Cultural and Creative Products -Statistical Chart

Source: Created by the authors (2023)

Information Analysis and Presentation

Research on Intangible Cultural Heritage Resources in Henan Province

Intangible Cultural Heritage Resources in Henan Province are abundant. According to the available data until the end of 2022, the province has a total of 2 items listed in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, 113 national-level representative projects of intangible cultural heritage, and 127 representative inheritors. At the provincial level, there are 728 representative projects of intangible cultural heritage and 832 representative inheritors.

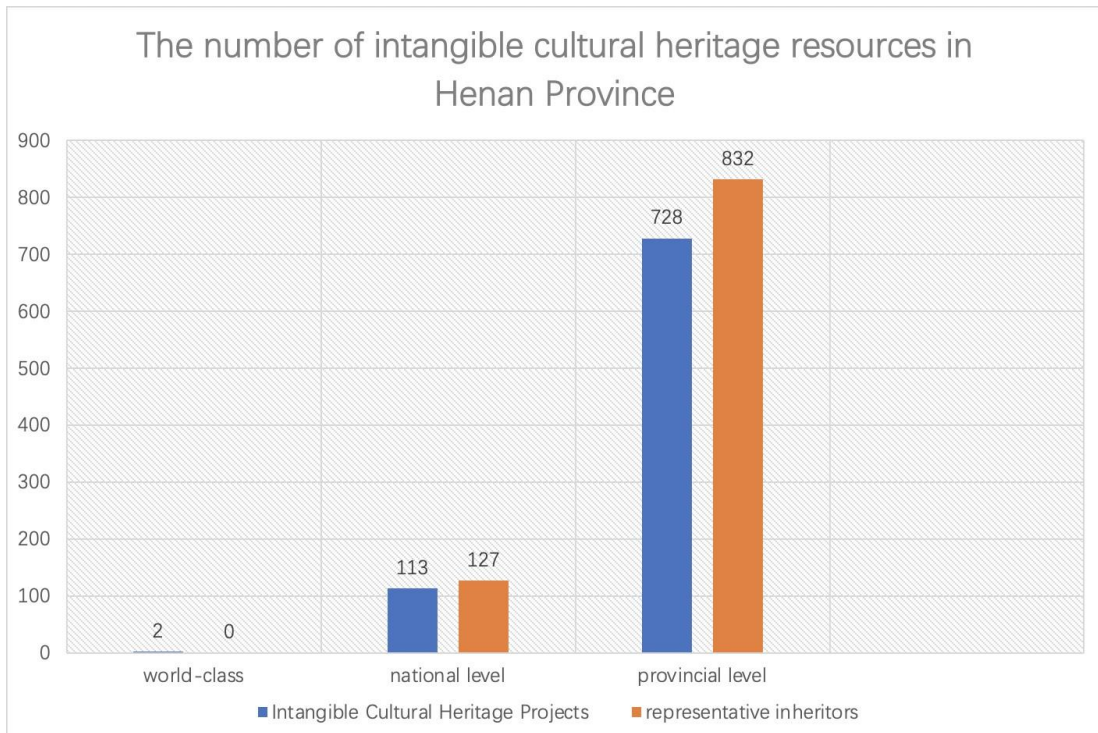


Figure 17 Quantity of Intangible Cultural Heritage Resources in Henan Province

Source: Created by the authors (2023)

From the available data on the inheritors of intangible cultural heritage in Henan Province, from 2007 to 2023, the former Ministry of Culture and the National Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Center have successively reviewed and approved five batches of national-level representative inheritors of intangible cultural heritage. A total of 127 individuals from Henan Province were selected.

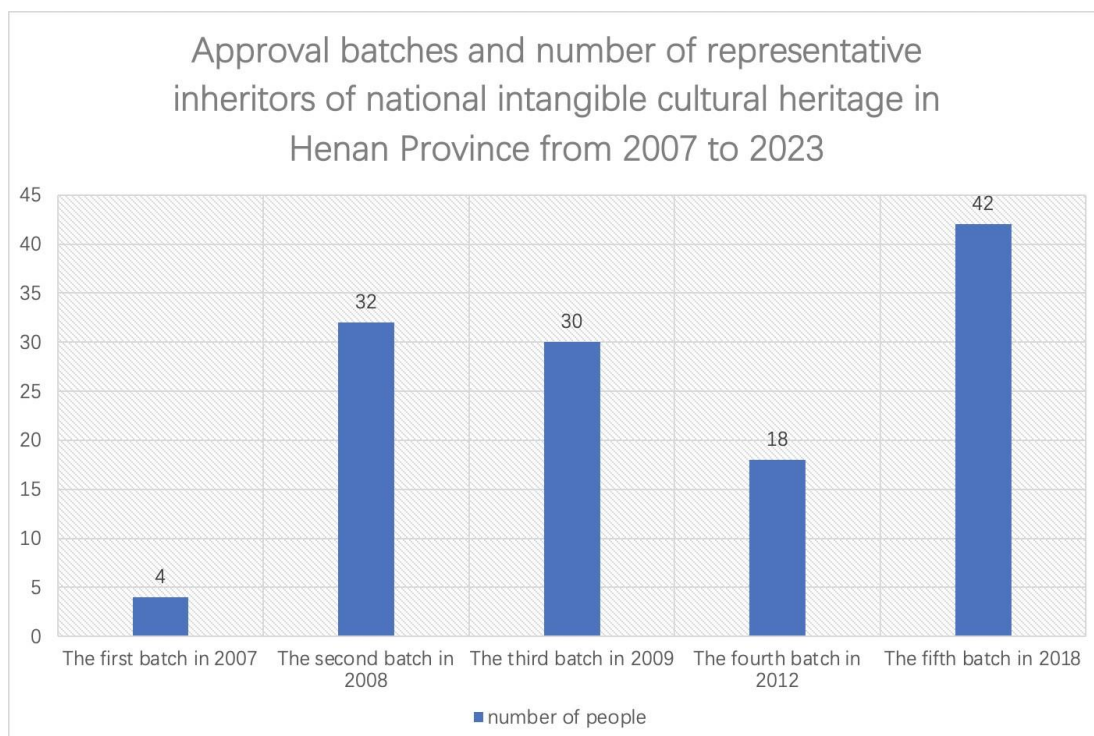


Figure 18 Illustration of the Approval Batches and Number of National-level Representative Inheritors of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Henan Province

Source: Created by the authors (2023)

Based on a comparative analysis of data from the China Intangible Cultural Heritage website for Henan Province and the entire country, it can be observed that Henan Province's national-level intangible cultural heritage is at a moderate level in terms of both the quantity of resources and the number of representative inheritors. Among them, Henan Province ranks 14th in the country in terms of the number of national-level intangible cultural heritage projects, accounting for 4% of the total. It also ranks 7th in the country in terms of the number of national-level inheritors, accounting for 4% of the total. Excluding factors such as ethnic concentration and regional differences, although Henan Province is rich in historical and cultural resources, there is still a certain gap in the exploration of intangible cultural heritage resources compared to economically developed provinces such as Zhejiang, Guangdong, and Jiangsu. This indicates that

further efforts are needed to comprehensively promote and enhance the protection of intangible cultural heritage through strengthened policy support, resource exploration, talent cultivation, and industrial development.

The distribution of intangible cultural heritage in Henan Province is relatively extensive. Looking at the national-level intangible cultural heritage projects (113 in total), they are distributed across all 18 prefecture-level cities in the province. Some projects, such as Yu Opera, Qu Opera, and Henan Zhuizi, are shared by the entire province, covering multiple regions within the province.

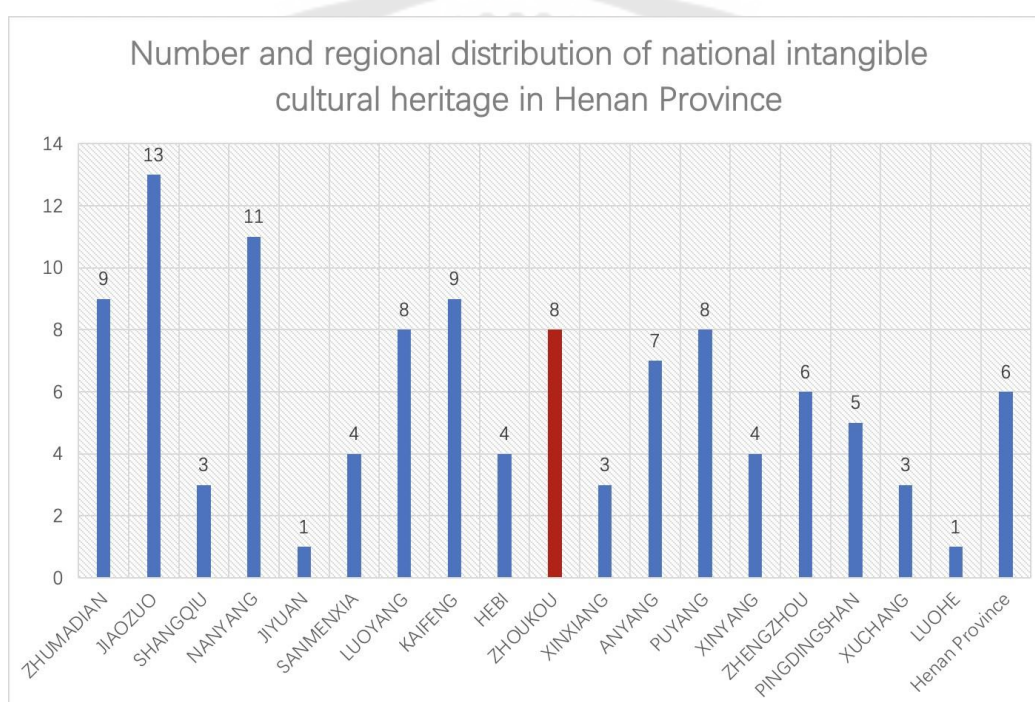


Figure 19 Number and Distribution of National-level Intangible Cultural Heritage in Henan Province

Source: Created by the authors (2023)

China has a vast number of intangible cultural heritage resources, and as a representative of Central Plains culture, Henan Province has a wide range of intangible cultural heritage types, including the following ten categories. As shown in Figure 3-4, the distribution of national-level intangible cultural heritage projects in Henan Province by category and the proportion of each category in the total number of intangible cultural heritage in Henan are as follows: ① Folk Literature (9 items, 8%); ② Traditional Music (13 items, 11%); ③ Traditional Dance (10 items, 9%); ④ Quyi (4 items, 3%); ⑤ Traditional Fine Arts (13 items, 11%); ⑥ Traditional Crafts (11 items, 10%); ⑦ Traditional Medicine (4 items, 4%); ⑧ Folk Customs (11 items, 10%); ⑨ Traditional Sports, Games, and Acrobatics (9 items, 8%); ⑩ Traditional Theater (29 items, 26%).

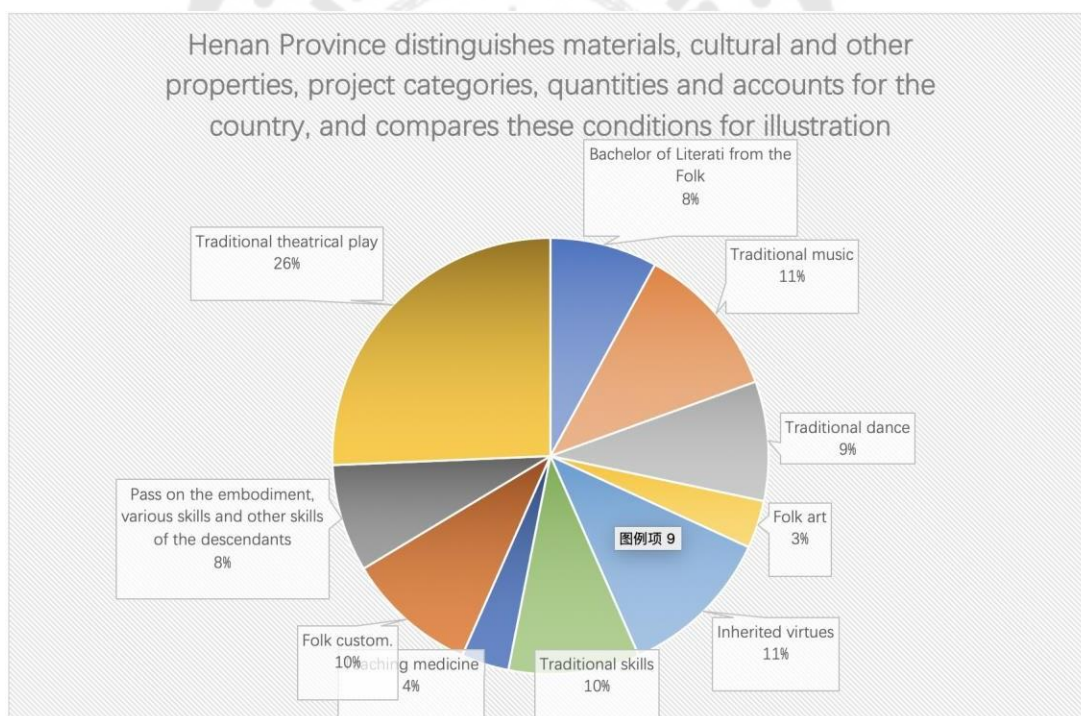


Figure 20 Illustration of Categories, Quantities, and Proportions of National Intangible Cultural Heritage Projects in Henan Province

Source: Author's self-made (2023)

Based on the above data, Henan Province's intangible cultural heritage resources have the following cultural characteristics and advantages:

Firstly, they have high research value. Henan Province's intangible cultural heritage bears the early cultural characteristics of the Chinese nation, such as the legends of Pangu and Dong Yong, as well as the Junxian and Huaiyang clay sculptures (Junxian clay Gugu and Huaiyang clay Ninigous), which are either mythical or exhibit ancient and simple forms. They concentrate on the mythical stories, totems, and worship practices of early Chinese civilization. These cultural elements serve as vital materials for studying anthropology and folklore in Henan and even in Chinese culture as a whole. They hold significant academic and social value for the research and inheritance of traditional Chinese culture.

Secondly, it is rich in content. Through surveys and research, in addition to the intangible cultural heritage projects that have been included in various levels of lists, Henan Province has over 220,000 clues of valuable intangible cultural heritage. It covers all categories of intangible cultural heritage, and its abundant resources provide a solid foundation for revitalization and dissemination. In terms of folk literature, there are legends such as the story of Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai (Runan County), the story of Dong Yong (Wuzhi County), and the story of Mulan (Yucheng County). In the field of folk music, there are Suona art (Qinyang City), Xiping folk songs (Xixia County), and Fan music (Kaifeng City). In traditional dance, there are Dragon dance (Mengzhou City), Qilin dance (Lankao County), and Pao Weizi dance (Tangyin County). In traditional drama, there are Yu opera, Qu opera, Yue opera, Wan opera, Huai opera, and Erjiaxian. In the field of traditional performing arts, there are Heluo drum (Luoyang City) and Sanxian book (Nanyang City). In traditional sports, games, and acrobatics, there are Shaolin Kung Fu (Dengfeng City), Tai Chi (Jiaozuo City), and Changjia boxing (Xingyang City). In traditional fine arts, there are Zhuxian Town woodblock New Year paintings (Kaifeng City), paper cutting (Lingbao, Huixian, Lushi County), and more. In traditional crafts, there are sword forging (Xiping County), Jun porcelain making (Yuzhou City), and Ru porcelain making (Ruzhou City). In traditional medicine, there are Mai's external

treatment method of traditional Chinese medicine (Zhoukou City) and Guo's orthopedic method (Luoyang City). In folk customs, there are Chongyang Festival (Shangcai County), Majie Book Club (Baofeng County), and iron flower-making (Queshan County), reflecting the profound cultural accumulation and great creativity of the people in Henan Province.

Third, it has distinct characteristics. Located in the Central Plains, Henan has highly inclusive tangible cultural heritage. Taking traditional drama as an example, there have been more than 50 different types of dramas popular in Henan, creating a lively and vigorous masculine characteristic of Henan drama (such as Yu opera, Erjiaxian, Wan opera, etc.). Another example is the Zhuxian Town woodblock New Year paintings, which are on par with the famous Yangliuqing in Tianjin, Wuqiang in Hebei, and Taohuawu in Jiangsu. They are characterized by bold lines, exaggerated imagery, and vibrant colors, possessing high aesthetic value.

Fourth, it has a wide distribution. Intangible cultural heritage projects, representative inheritors, or clues to be explored can be found in all 18 prefecture-level cities, counties, and even every village in the province. Especially in historically and culturally significant counties and towns, such as Zhuxian Town and Weichuan Town, there is a concentrated distribution of intangible cultural heritage projects. It is noteworthy that some projects have a cross-regional distribution. Traditional drama projects like Yu opera, Huagu opera, and shadow puppetry are widely distributed in various regions of the province. Folk legends, traditional music, traditional fine arts, traditional crafts, and folk customs projects are also distributed in different areas, such as gong and drum art, lanterns, woodblock New Year paintings, paper cutting, etc. They not only have significant artistic commonalities but also retain rich local characteristics.

Fifth, it has a strong influence. As one of the birthplaces of Chinese civilization, Henan Province embodies the evolutionary process of Chinese civilization through its intangible cultural heritage, which has a great impact. Traditional festivals and events in Henan, such as the grand ancestral ceremony in the hometown of Huangdi in Xinzheng, Majie Book Club in Baofeng, Fuxi and Taihao Tomb Sacrificial Ceremony in

Huaiyang, Luoyang Peony Festival, and Juyuan Temple Fair in Xunxian, have a significant influence nationwide. Some national-level intangible cultural heritage projects, such as Shaolin Kung Fu, Tai Chi, woodblock New Year paintings, and traditional opera, have gained international fame and become focal points of cultural exchange both domestically and internationally.

Field Investigation - About Huaiyang Ninigou

Overview of the Ninigou Culture

The Ninigou is a general term for the clay toys of the Taiwu Ling Temple Fair in Huaiyang. The first two characters are combined, with the first character functioning as a verb meaning "to knead" or "to mold," and the second character as a noun meaning "clay," referring to the material of the toy. Although it is called the "Ninigou," its forms are not limited to just the shape of a dog. It represents a variety of abstract and distorted primitive totemic creatures, forming a composite of various strange monsters. It is a collective term for all the diverse clay sculptures.

Regarding the history of Ninigou, it should start with the Fuxi Taihao Mausoleum. Located north of Huaiyang County in Zhoukou City, Henan Province, and only two li away from Jinzhuang Village, the concentrated area of Ninigou production, it is the tomb of Fuxi, the ancestor of mankind, also known as the "Ancestral Temple." It is one of China's famous three mausoleums. Fuxi, being the first of the Three Sovereigns, gives the Taihao Mausoleum the title of "the First Mausoleum in the World." According to historical records, emperors of successive dynasties performed sacrificial rituals here for a total of 52 times. In June 1997, Premier Zhu Rongji inscribed the words "Xihuang Ancient Capital" for it.

The Taihao Mausoleum Fair, based on the Taihao Mausoleum, can be said to be the largest and oldest folk temple fair in China. Every year on the 2nd day of the 2nd lunar month, the government holds grand ancestral worship activities at the Taihao Mausoleum. Chinese people from all over the world come here to seek their roots, pay respects to Fuxi, and search for their surnames. In 2008, the number of participants reached a record-breaking 825,000, creating the highest attendance ever. This has

stimulated the development of the local tourism industry. Local people believe that Ninigou is guarding the spirit of Ancestral Father Fuxi and therefore is also called "Ling Dog." Ninigou has been passed down from the ancestral worship and folk customs activities associated with the Fuxi Taihao Mausoleum, and can be regarded as a characteristic of the Taihao Mausoleum Fair. Therefore, it is closely related to the Taihao Mausoleum and the Fuxi culture centered around it, serving as a carrier of Fuxi culture information.



Figure 21 The Taihao Mausoleum Fair

Source: http://k.sina.com.cn/article_7023036995_p1a29b0a4300100hxyz.html

Folk art is the carrier of folk culture and is closely associated with various folk activities. It can be said that folk activities are the "living fossils" that preserve folk art and serve as a supplement to various written records. Folk activities are not formed overnight but have evolved over thousands of years through human activities. They represent festive events that integrate local culture, religious beliefs, entertainment, and

economic activities. Folk activities provide the soil for the survival of folk art and reflect the evolution of human spirit.

In the Huaiyang Temple Fair, the main folk activities include rituals for worshipping the human ancestors, fertility rituals, divination activities, recreational activities, and commercial exchanges. Due to its location in the Central Plains and the influence of local economic development and regional constraints, external cultures have not had a significant impact on the local Huaiyang Temple Fair and folk activities. Many customs still retain their original traces. As a folk custom of the Fuxi culture, the Ninigou is the most eye-catching handicraft at the temple fair. The local people have a desire for prosperous offspring, which is associated with the fertility worship of the Ninigou. There is a saying in the local area that whoever buys more Ninigous will have more descendants, leading to a prosperous family. This greatly promotes the protection and development of the Ninigou.

During the local temple fair held on the second day of the second lunar month each year, people come to the Taihao Mausoleum to offer incense and pay homage. The Ninigou is the traditional handicraft that best embodies the significance of local folk activities. As the guardian deity of the Fuxi Mausoleum, the Ninigou carries auspicious meanings such as blessings, warding off evil, and dispelling disasters. After worshipping and offering incense at the temple, local people will buy several Ninigous as auspicious items for their children, hoping to receive the blessings of the human ancestor. On the day of the second lunar month, one can see the older generation carrying flower baskets filled with Ninigous for sale at the temple fair. At the same time, the devoted followers living in the temple, known as "Laozhaigong," also carry some small clay items to give to the children returning home and tell them the legend of the human ancestor, Nüwa, in the most primitive and natural way, passing down traditional culture to the next generation. This preserves the essence of the Ninigou art and cultural heritage. With the continuous growth of the temple fair, it has brought about economic development. Furthermore, influenced by the Fuxi culture, the increase in the number of tourists has transformed the Ninigou from a mere toy and ritual item into a

collectible and decorative item. It serves as a means to interpret and promote the folk activities and traditional culture of the human ancestor temple fair in various ways.



Figure 22 Ninigous at the temple fair

Source: Author's own photograph (2023)

Cultural Characteristics of Huaiyang Ninigous

Ninigou intangible cultural heritage is an accumulation of historical development, representing non-renewable cultural, economic, and social resources. Merely preserving or conserving Ninigou as a historical accumulation is far from sufficient. It is more important to explore the multiple values of Ninigou intangible cultural heritage and, through integration and development, transform it into a resource that serves modern and future human society. This is the true realization of effective and sustainable protection of Ninigou.

Tangible culture refers to physical or material objects, artifacts, and elements of cultural heritage that can be touched, seen, and experienced in a physical form. It includes items such as buildings, monuments, artwork, tools, clothing, and other physical

artifacts that hold historical, artistic, or cultural significance. Tangible cultural heritage can be preserved, exhibited, and studied in museums, galleries, and heritage sites (Brusaporci, 2015; Vecco, 2010).

On the other hand, intangible culture refers to the non-physical aspects of cultural heritage that are transmitted through generations, encompassing traditions, customs, rituals, language, music, dance, oral history, knowledge, and skills. It includes practices, expressions, and living heritage that are deeply rooted in communities and often passed down orally or through performance. Unlike tangible culture, intangible cultural heritage is more dynamic, evolving, and intimately connected to the social, spiritual, and intellectual life of communities. Its preservation and transmission rely on the active participation and engagement of communities and individuals (Brusaporci, 2015; Chen, 2022).

As a traditional art form of intangible cultural heritage, Ninigou embodies both "technique" and "art" and possesses both tangible and intangible cultural characteristics. Therefore, based on the cultural characteristics of Ninigou, this study categorizes it into two forms: tangible and intangible characteristics.

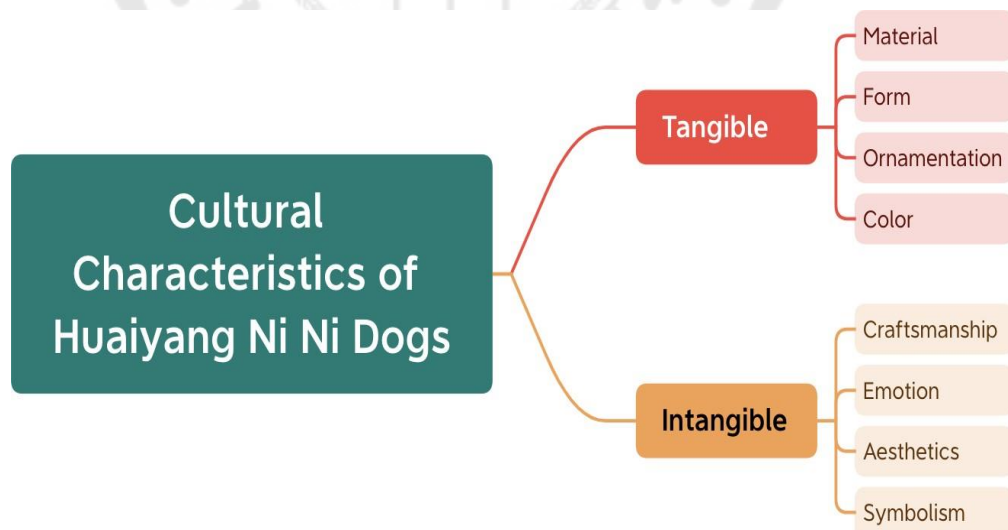


Figure 23 Classification of Ninigou Cultural Characteristics

Source: Created by the authors (2023)

Tangible Cultural Characteristics A Material

The main material used in the production of Ninigou is clay, which is obtained from natural yellow clay soil measuring 2 to 3 feet below the surface of the local area. This clay is deposited by lake water and has a soft and fine texture, making it less prone to impurities. It has good plasticity and flexibility, providing various possibilities for shaping Ninigou. The local people refer to this type of clay as "yellow adhesive clay". In many clay

sculptures, flax threads are also added appropriately to enhance the strength and toughness of the clay sculptures.



Figure 24 Yellow Adhesive Clay





Source: Photographed by the author (2022)

B Shape

The artistic forms of folk culture are visual and tangible expressions and an integral part of folk culture. The art of Ninigou's shape is characterized by its generalization and the combination of square and round elements. The head is represented by a round shape, the body by a square shape, and the arms by cylindrical shapes. The emphasis is on stability rather than exaggerated movements, with most figures depicted in a frontal posture. The subjects of the designs are mostly derived from various animal forms found in nature, employing exaggerated techniques to magnify the animal's head, eyes, and other features, reflecting people's pursuit and admiration. The overall shape is robust, grand, and conveys a strong sense of volume.

The different forms of Ninigou have their origins, either from mythology or from animal themes in daily life. They are not whimsically fabricated by artists for the sake of pleasing the crowd. These forms possess a strong sense of expression and often depict people's beliefs in life, reverence for reproduction, and respect for ancestors. The range of subjects in the designs encompasses nearly all categories of vertebrates in the animal kingdom, including monkeys, dogs, birds, rabbits, fish, dragons, tigers, turtles, frogs, mud turtles, cat-like monkeys, unicorns, multi-horned creatures, totem pillars, "four-not-alike" creatures, and "ten-great-likes." Although these forms are inspired by real animals, they rarely appear in their original prototypes and are mostly presented in exaggerated and magnified ways. Many of the animal and totemic forms closely resemble the mythical creatures recorded in the "Classic of Mountains and Seas." The forms can be categorized into four major types based on their artistic techniques: primal type, composite type, elfin type, and modern type.

Table 1 Classification of Ninigou

	Original	Composite type	Elf type	Modern type
peculiarity	It is more concrete and can directly correspond to animal prototypes	Non-human and non-beast, cannot directly correspond to animal archetypes	Animal forms disappear, fantasy "gods" or "elves"	Continue the blood gene of Ninigous and add inspiration to the life of the maker
				

Original Type: The most common type of Ninigou, characterized by its inspiration from animals. The contour and shape of the sculptures are derived from animals, reflecting the primitive worship of animals and ancestors by early humans. The forms are relatively realistic and can directly capture the prototypes. Most of these sculptures carry legends or myths that reflect people's beliefs. The most prevalent forms include monkeys, birds, dogs, fish, turtles, frogs, and snakes.

Composite Type: This type of sculpture combines human and animal elements, creating abstract forms that are neither human nor animal. They cannot be categorized as a specific animal prototype and lack precise labels. Representative examples include "multi-horned beasts," "unidentified creatures," and "ten great figures."

Spirit Type: Similar to the "Composite Type," this category features sculptures where the animal prototypes have transformed into "gods" or "spirits" based on human imagination. They reflect the primitive totem worship consciousness and totemic ideas. Many of these sculptures align with the totemic images recorded in the "Classic of Mountains and Seas" (Shan Hai Jing). They possess a strong sense of awe, providing a feeling of safety and dignity. Examples include Chaos, Dongyi, and Four-Eared Three-Faced Beasts.

Modern Type: The modern type emerged mainly in the 1950s. Based on the continuation of the traditional essence of Ninigou, artists incorporated their own creative inspirations derived from rich experiences of real life. In terms of content and form, this type has departed from the traditional consciousness of deity worship and totemism. Instead, it caters more to the aesthetic sensibilities and pursuits of modern people. It represents a rebellious breakthrough. For example, the yellow-based Ninigou created by Xu Chuanko breaks the traditional color concept of a black base, demonstrating the inevitable trend in the development of Ninigou.

C Ornamentation

The Ninigous exhibit a wide variety of ornamentation patterns, many of which are derived from the green stone tablets of the Fuxi sacred relics. Essentially, these patterns represent the symbolization of Fuxi culture, primarily reflecting people's aspirations for procreation and worship. In depicting the patterns, a combination of straight lines and dots is commonly used. The lines are concise, straightforward, and without unnecessary embellishments, while the combination of dots and lines creates a unique aesthetic form. The ornamentation patterns are essentially symbolic abstractions derived from reproductive organs. Through field surveys and research in literature and image collections, the author categorizes the Ninigous into patterns such as female genitalia, sun patterns (concentric circles), floral patterns, triangular patterns, fly-like patterns, horseshoe patterns, leaf patterns, diamond patterns, and Bagua patterns, among others. The author provides a comprehensive analysis of representative patterns.

Table 2 Examples of Ninigou pattern







Name	Legend	Local Pattern
Sun Pattern		
Female Genital Pattern		
FlowerPattern		

Table 2 (Continued)

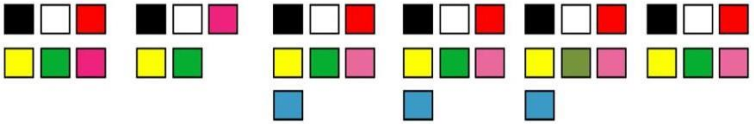
TrianglePattern		
HorseshoePattern		
Fly-likePattern		

D Colour

Ninigous have predominantly used black color in their color application, and it wasn't until the early 1980s that yellow sculptures without black were introduced although they were a small portion of the overall artworks. Traditional Ninigous mainly employed red, blue, yellow, white, and black colors, with black as the base color and red, blue, yellow, and white as ornamentation colors. In recent times, pink and blue colors have been added, and various shades within the same color range have evolved. For example, a brighter shade of pink, known as peach pink, has emerged from the transformation of red. The overall coloration of Ninigous exhibits high purity, vibrant liveliness, and a sense of elegance without being gaudy. The colors are arranged and combined according to a certain order and pattern, reflecting a unique harmony and aesthetic form. These characteristics are relatively rare in traditional black clay sculptures and vividly embody the traditional Chinese concept of the Five Colors and the reverence for black.

In this study, a clustering analysis method is employed to analyze the colors of Ninigou. Based on a sample database and field investigations, the most common Ninigou models are selected, and the color patterns and distinctive characteristics of each color are explored.

Table 3 Color Analysis Chart of Ninigou

Legend		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% 25% 10% 5% 5% 2.5% 2.5%
Colors		

Intangible Cultural Characteristics

A production processes

The art of clay figurines involves shaping and coloring clay to create figurines. Some figurines are made by hand, using clay that is molded and colored, while others may be created using molds. The main production process typically involves the following steps:



Clay Selection: The clay material used for clay figurines comes from natural yellow adhesive clay found locally in Huaiyang, which is 2 to 3 feet below the ground. This type of clay is fine, sticky, and elastic, providing possibilities for various clay figurine shapes.

Kneading Clay: The soil is directly taken from underground, known as raw clay. It needs to undergo sieving treatment. Then, the yellow adhesive clay is soaked in water for several days, filtered, and the settled yellow adhesive clay is extracted. It is

then pounded to form a composite material. Some craftsmen also add hemp fiber to increase its plasticity and flexibility.



Figure 25 Soaking and Sieving of Yellow Adhesive Clay

Source: Photographed by the author (2022)

Mixing Clay: The final step before shaping involves placing the prepared clay on a work surface and kneading it, similar to kneading dough. This process removes air bubbles, smoothens the surface, increases density, and enhances flexibility and plasticity.

Shaping and Modeling: Building upon the previous step, the kneaded clay is further shaped. First, the adhesive clay is kneaded into rough forms that are similar in

shape and size to the final product. Then, comprehensive integration and detailed repairs are carried out to achieve a satisfactory clay model.



Figure 26 Xu Shuzhang during Shaping and Modeling

Source: Photographed by the author (2022)

Piercing Holes: Clay figurines are clay whistle toys, and in order to make them whistle, artists with years of experience use toothpicks of different sizes to pierce holes at appropriate positions. This operation requires the skills of experienced craftsmen.

Drying: As the name suggests, it involves placing the finished clay figurine embryos in a well-ventilated area to allow them to dry completely.

Boiling and Dyeing: Also known as "applying black," the dried clay figurines undergo a second cleaning to remove any surface debris and fingerprints, making them ready for coloring. Next, a mixture of black pigment, glue, and water is prepared and boiled in a large pot. After cooling, the clay embryos are immersed in the pot for dyeing. They are then removed, dried, and prepared for further processes.

Painting: Using modern commercial colors, patterns are painted on the fully dried clay figurines with a black base. To ensure color fastness, many contemporary Huaiyang clay figurines are also coated with a layer of clear varnish, which not only preserves the visual appeal but also enhances the durability of the figurines.



Figure 27 Xu Shuzhang during the Painting Process

Source: Provided by Mr. Xu Shuzhang, the interviewee (2022)

B Emotion

The clay figurines of Ninigou have a wide range of themes, with more than 500 different designs. These designs are the continuation of the original living cultural heritage and reflect the intuitive reflection of the artistic, conceptual, and emotional thoughts of the folk artists in Huaiyang. Local craftsmen utilize various design themes to convey different emotional and spiritual sentiments, using abstract representations with underlying meanings. For example, the motif of "Golden Crow" in mythological legends symbolizes the sun. In the clay figurines, there are many designs featuring the spotted dove, which remarkably resembles the image of the "Golden Crow" depicted in Han Dynasty stone carvings. The local people also refer to the spotted dove as the divine bird or the sun bird, believing that it can reach the heavens as a messenger of light and a symbol of auspiciousness. Therefore, the use of the spotted dove motif signifies good fortune and brightness. Influenced by Fuxi culture, the various design themes of the clay figurines have specific origins and carry cultural significance, conveying the thoughts of the ancestors rather than being randomly created. These different thematic contents mainly embody people's worship of religion, reproduction, life, ancestors, and totem. This research focuses on the thematic contents and analyzes the thoughts, emotions, and symbolic meanings expressed by the representative animal themes

Table 4 Intangible Resources of Design Themes

subject matter	meaning	Symbolism	objective
monkey	Humans evolved from monkeys	Ancestor worship	Sacrifices, blessings

Table 4 (Continued)

bird	The pursuit of reaching the heavens and having many children and blessings	Sun, auspicious, reproductive reproduction	Sacrifices, blessings
lion	auspicious animal	Majestic, noble, sacred, warding off evil	Sacrifices, blessings
fish	Strong reproductive capacity	Harvest, affluence, fertility cult	Sacrifices, blessings
tiger	The god of protection and reproduction	Children and grandchildren prosper and life prosper	Sacrifices, blessings
turtle	Longevity, Fuxi Bagua belief	Ancestor worship, religious worship	Sacrifices, blessings
dragon	The incarnation of the human ancestor Fuxi, the protective deity	Vitality, cohesion, enterprising spirit	Sacrifices, blessings

Table 4 (Continued)

Two-headed animals	When the sexes intercourse, life reproduces	Reproduction, reproduction, reproduction of life	Sacrifices, blessings
Monster elves	Totem concept	Strong strength, strong fighting spirit	Sacrifices, blessings

C Aesthetic

In the depiction of patterns and designs, clay figurines often have straightforward and explicit motifs. Some line decorations hold special symbolic meanings, purely aiming to enhance the uniqueness of the sculptures. In some cases, maternal patterns are directly employed to express inner thoughts. For example, the exaggerated depiction of female genitalia on the belly of a human-faced monkey figurine directly conveys the worship of reproduction and the pursuit of life by the ancestors. The symbolism of patterns in clay figurines mainly revolves around the worship of reproduction, with simplified or direct depictions of female genitalia. There are three main stages in the representation of patterns:

1. The first stage involves direct expression, with a predominant focus on female genitalia as the main motif, directly portraying female reproductive organs. The use of female genitalia patterns is the most common and abundant.

2. The second stage involves implicit expression. For example, the triangle pattern is actually a simplified representation of fish scales, which bears some resemblance to the female genitalia shape. Fish are known for their strong reproductive ability, and the triangle pattern subtly expresses the worship of reproduction.

3.The third stage involves metaphorical expression. Dot and line combinations resembling fly patterns are depicted on the bellies of animals, symbolizing fertility and blessings. For instance, horses, frogs, and other animals with dot and line combinations on their bellies represent blessings and abundance of offspring. Through these abundant dot and line combinations, people express their worship of reproduction in a metaphorical and implicit manner.

D Symbol

Clay figurines, known as "Ninigous," are hailed as the origin of Chinese painting and sculpture. In terms of color usage, they prefer vibrant and highly saturated colors. This aesthetic concept has been shaped by the local people's long-term living experiences. The use of bright colors is employed to express joy and a pleasant mood. For example, during festive occasions, people often favor bright red and purple colors, symbolizing prosperity and carrying a strong folk cultural atmosphere. The color palette of Ninigous is greatly influenced by the traditional Chinese concept of "Five Colors" and the belief in the predominance of black. The decorations are outlined using black as the primary color, supplemented with blue, red (crimson), yellow, and white, the five colors. In folklore, black represents righteousness and the suppression of evil. It is derived from China's primitive totemic beliefs. During the Spring and Autumn Period, black was the dominant color in the attire of successive emperors. The lacquerware of the Chu State, which relocated to Chenying (Huaiyang), was characterized by a black tone. Therefore, the lacquerware culture of the Chu State also exerted a significant influence on the color expression of Huaiyang's Ninigous. The five colors carry auspicious and peaceful meanings, originating from the "Five Elements Theory" in the Book of Changes (Yijing). Different colors symbolize different meanings and representations (refer to Table 3-6). At the same time, different colors can evoke various emotions and feelings in people, conveying the changes in their inner emotions. This is a psychological implication inherent in colors.

Table 5 Five Elements Theory

color	Ideological sentiment	Symbolism
black	Suppressing evil has the intention of warding off evil and eliminating disasters	Solemn, noble, orthodox and noble
white	Reflect people's yearning for a better life	A symbol of life
cyan	The color of all things reflects people's love for nature	A symbol of nature and life
red	Bring good luck and good luck	A symbol of auspicious and festivity
Yellow	Reverence for the monarch	The color of the earth, the color of the emperor, the symbol of nobility

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The author has formulated a four-step process for narrative design of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) creative products, which includes cultural selection, narrative theme setting, plot development, and product narrative design. These four steps are analyzed and summarized, and specific feasible design approaches are proposed. Finally, design practice is conducted based on these steps.

1. Cultural Selection

Cultural selection is the primary step in the narrative design of intangible cultural heritage creative products. Intangible cultural heritage is vast and profound, characterized by its regional nature and representativeness. Conducting preliminary research on a specific region and a particular type of intangible cultural heritage is necessary. From the phase of cultural selection, we interpret the essence of intangible cultural heritage, analyze and study the target audience and market, search for representative cultural elements, and choose suitable cultural expressions.

Directly applying cultural elements to modern product design may result in a stiff and low integration design. Therefore, it is preferable to prioritize culturally representative, aesthetically pleasing, and easily expressible cultural materials. By breaking down and reconstructing these materials, we can retain the cultural characteristics while adapting to the design requirements of modern products.

2. Narrative Theme of the Product

The narrative theme serves as the cultural core of the product and provides guidance for the expression of the narrative in cultural and creative products. In the design process, determining the narrative theme is the most important step, and cultural selection is also aimed at identifying an appropriate narrative theme. While the plot may be flexible in narrative design, the design theme must be clear. The narrative and plot elements are realized through design, and the design process begins with establishing the design theme. When designing a product, designers conceive the theme of the product and then proceed with the design of materials, functionality, form,

color, and other aspects. In narrative design, once the narrative theme text is established, the plot is filled in within the framework, forming a specific narrative text, also known as a script.

Determining the narrative theme requires criteria for evaluation. Not every piece of text can be considered a narrative theme. Firstly, the theme needs to be representative, embodying condensed narrative content and cultural ideas. Secondly, the theme of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) creative products should have profound cultural connotations, conveying the cultural spirit embedded in intangible heritage. Thirdly, since a story consists of two or more logically related events, the construction of the narrative theme text requires at least two logically related events. The richer the events, the more complex the logical relationships in the text, and the more elaborate the plot. Fourthly, the three essential elements of a narrative work are characters, plot, and setting. The setting includes the concepts of time and space, and when determining the narrative theme text, the scope of the story's time and space should be set.

The narrative theme text serves as the "outline" of the narrative text. Based on the narrative theme text, the design of the plot, perspective, temporal and spatial structure, and other elements can be conceptualized, constructing a complete narrative text. Through the product's narration, the design influences user behavior, allowing users to grasp the essence of the narrative text through personal experiences.

3. Plot Development in Product Narration

The plot development in a product refers to the guiding principles in establishing a narrative theme. Not every piece of text can be considered a narrative theme. Firstly, the theme needs to be representative, embodying condensed narrative content and reflecting cultural ideas. Secondly, the theme of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) creative products should possess profound cultural connotations, conveying the cultural spirit embedded in intangible heritage. Thirdly, since a story consists of two or more logically related events, the construction of the narrative theme text requires at least two logically related events. The more diverse the events, the more complex the

logical relationships in the text, and the richer the plot. Lastly, the three essential elements of a narrative work are characters, plot, and setting. The setting includes the concepts of time and space, and when determining the narrative theme text, the time and spatial scope in which the story unfolds should be established.

Dynamic storytelling is an important component of product narration. The content includes the presentation of the product's plot and the user's experiential interaction with the product. The richness of the story plot design varies for different types of products. Behavior-oriented cultural and creative products have rich plot development, mainly manifested in the interaction between the product and the user. Atmosphere-oriented cultural and creative products have a moderate level of plot development, mainly manifested in the product's own narrative. Symbol-oriented cultural and creative products have a relatively weaker level of plot development, primarily expressed through symbols, patterns, and designs.

The setting of the plot also considers the narrative perspective, whether to adopt a linear or non-linear narrative structure, and the medium through which the narration takes place. Therefore, concepts such as narrative perspective, structure, and medium are incorporated into the plot development stage.

The structure of the research includes the beginning, development, climax, and ending, which correspond to the initiation, development, intensification, and resolution of a conflict. The conflict conveys information and drives the story forward. In product design, the ways in which the plot progresses mainly include chronological order, reverse order, flashback, and foreshadowing. Different plot progression methods yield different effects.

4. Product narrative design

Product narrative design encompasses two main aspects: static narrative and dynamic narrative. The static narrative aspect includes the product's form, materials, colors, functions, and other static elements. The dynamic narrative aspect includes the user experience, context, and behavioral aspects. In the plot development stage, the story

plot is established, and the user's experience and behavioral aspects are combined with the product's static elements to determine the final design.

One of the primary ways in which narrative is expressed in product design is through its form or shape. The form should effectively "tell a story" and serve the narrative theme. It should visually represent the characters or depict the story plot. The form in narrative design is generally vivid and allows people to grasp the meaning conveyed by the product at a glance, encouraging reflection and imagination. Metaphorical techniques are commonly used in product form design, including similarities and analogies, as well as synonymous substitutions. For example, in traditional Chinese culture, the bat motif symbolizes "good fortune."

Material serves as the medium for implementing narrative design. For instance, soft materials can evoke a sense of warmth and familiarity, while hard materials can convey a strong, reliable, and stable impression. Materials are associated with visual, tactile, and olfactory senses. For example, velvet fabric appears visually soft and feels gentle to the touch, while metal gives a visual impression of solidity and feels cold to the touch. Sandalwood can stimulate the sense of smell.

Colors have the ability to express emotions directly, and the warmth or coolness of colors can evoke distinctly different psychological feelings in people. In ancient China, there was a great emphasis on the study and significance of colors, surpassing the attention given to colors in modern times. Taking inspiration from nature, ancient people extracted colors and gave them poetic names, reflecting the corresponding natural scenes. For example, "bamboo green," "moon white," "vermillion red," "grass green," and so on. The five primary colors in Chinese culture are blue, red, yellow, white, and black, corresponding to the Five Elements theory and representing the color tonality of Chinese culture. Colors in the Five Elements theory and history are also imbued with cultural meanings. For instance, the color blue corresponds to wood and symbolizes life, while yellow garments were predominantly worn by the imperial family and nobility, representing nobility and prestige. The design of intangible cultural heritage creative products should consider the demands of cultural background

and learn from the sophisticated color combinations of ancient times, utilizing colors that hold historical and cultural significance. The color palette and its application are crucial elements in the design process of Ninigou and other similar products.

According to the theories and methods constructed in the previous text, the narrative design process of intangible cultural heritage creative products can be summarized into four stages: cultural selection, theme establishment, plot and text development, and product narrative design. The first three stages aim to ultimately determine the narrative text, while the fourth stage focuses on the technical implementation.

The first step is cultural selection. With a clear design direction in mind, appropriate design materials are chosen from tangible cultural elements such as architecture, cultural relics, and landscapes, as well as intangible cultural aspects such as history, stories, characters, and institutions.

The second step is to determine the theme based on the selected materials. The theme should define the basic category and essential story information, ensuring the accuracy and coherence of the narrative theme.

The third step is to design the plot and text. The plot, expressed through words, images, and other forms, is equivalent to the narrative text. When establishing the plot, factors such as narrative structure, perspective, and medium need to be considered to construct a complete narrative text.

The fourth step is to conduct product narrative design, starting with the static narrative aspect, including design elements such as shape, material, and color. Then, the dynamic narrative aspect of the product is addressed, considering experiences, contexts, and behavioral patterns. The design task integrates various aspects of narrative design levels and factors for analysis. By following this process, the narrative design of intangible cultural heritage creative products can be realized, resulting in a cohesive and culturally meaningful narrative experience.

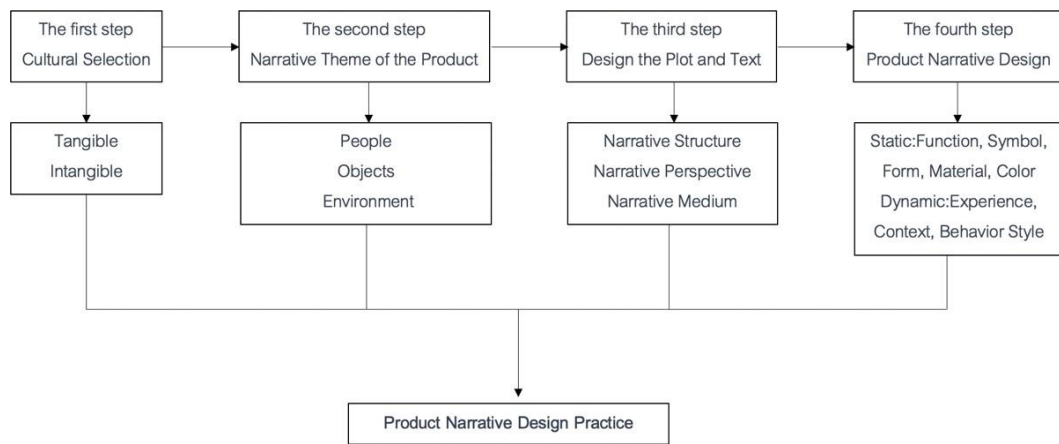
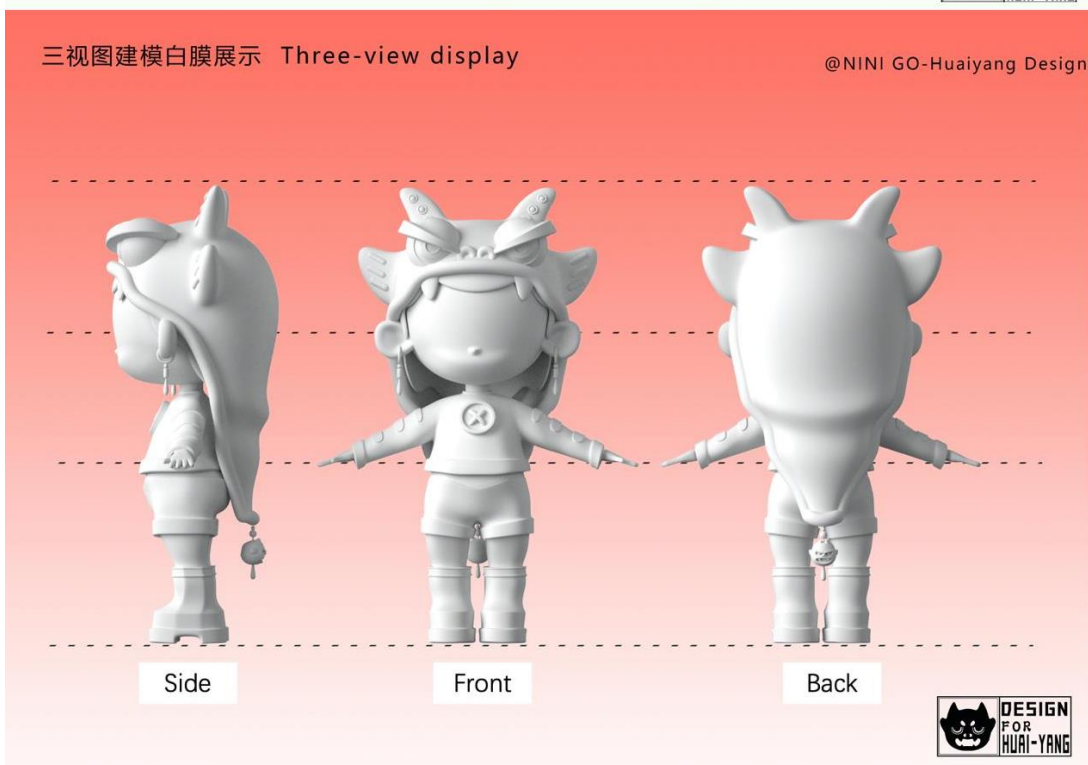


Figure 28 Narrative Model for Intangible Cultural Heritage Creative Products

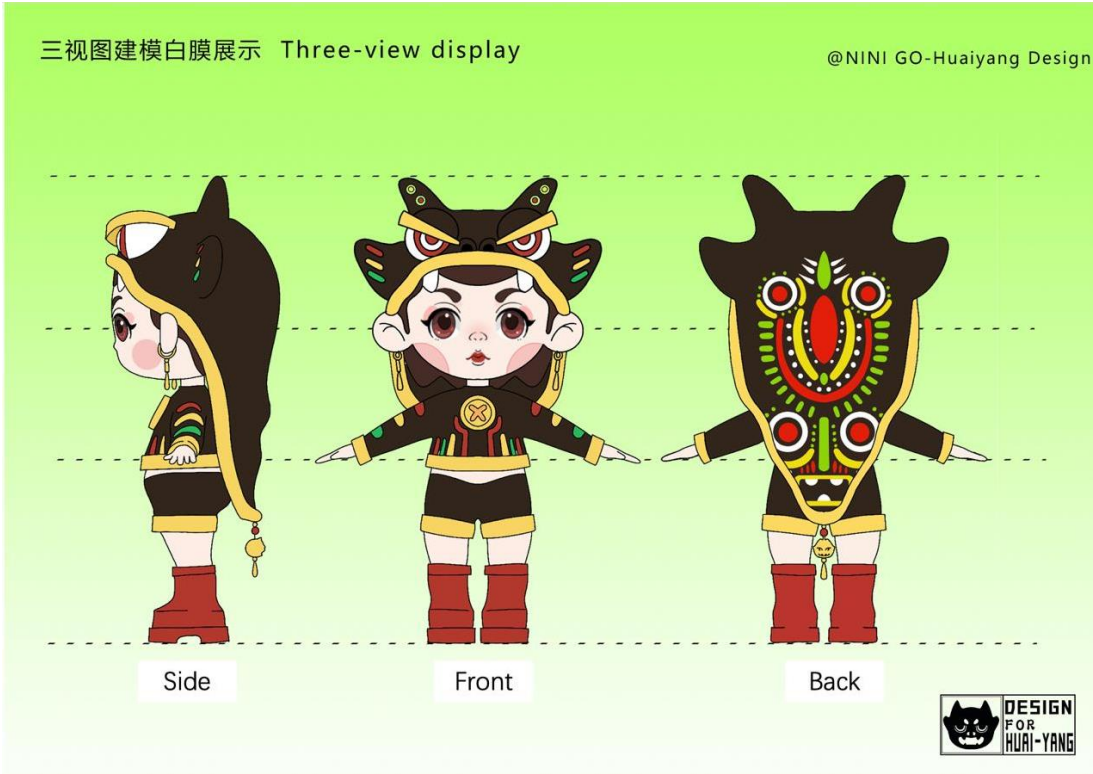
Source: Created by the authors (2023)

Design Practice

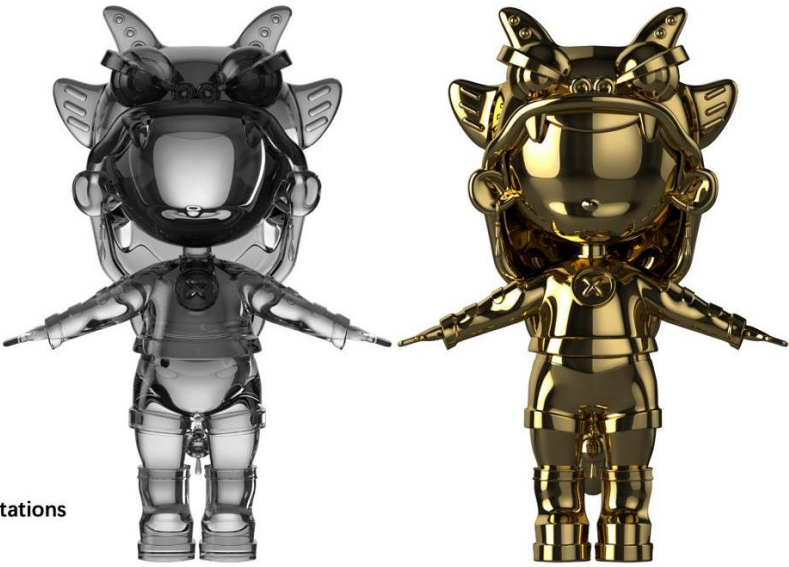
To use and validate the constructed design methods, design and present various types of design proposals, including symbol-based design proposals, atmosphere-based design proposals, and behavior-experience-based design proposals.



1.Trendy Toy "Nini" (Created by the author)



Different material presentations





Poster display

2.Spiritual Beings, Blessings, and Disaster Avoidance Set (Created by the author)



風調雨順

人物康阜

國富民強

山河無恙

人間皆安

T U A N T U Y U N



CHARM

TUANTUYUN
THE CHARM OF MUD
INITIALS
→ C ←



先去了文化则民族也就失去了存在的意义

转土成韵 感受中国传统独特魅力

文化遗产属于一个国家与民族生存的根本




风调雨顺

YUN
FENG TIAO





THE CHARM OF MUD

TUANTUYUN



风调雨顺
THE WIND AND RAIN COME IN THEIR TIME

唯愿祖国安康
-风调雨顺-

IF I WERE A BIRD
I SHOULD ALSO SING WITH
A HOARSE THROAT
THIS IS THE LAND HIT BY
THE STORM
THIS RIVER IS ALWAYS
SURGING OUR
INDIGNATION
THE WIND OF FURY
BLOWING ENDLESSLY
AND THE TENDER DAWN
FROM THE WOODS



AND THEN I DIED
EVEN FEATHERS ROT IN THE SOIL
WHY DO MY EYES OFTEN CONTAIN
TEARS?
BECAUSE I LOVE THIS LAND DEEPLY



THE CHARM OF MUD 转土成韵
非物质文化遗产
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF ZHOUKOU

ONLY WISH

ALL THINGS ARE HEALTHY
THE WIND AND RAIN COME IN
THEIR TIME
THE MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS
ARE ALL RIGHT
THE WORLD IS PEACEFUL
THE NATION IS PROSPEROUS
AND THE PEOPLE ARE STRONG
AND POWERFUL

BEAUTIFUL VISION

T U A N T U Y U N

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國泰民安

THE COUNTRY IS PROSPEROUS AND THE PEOPLE ARE AT PEACE

唯愿祖国昌盛
-國泰民安-

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MUD 抔土成韵**

非物质文化遗产
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF ZHOUKOU

國泰民安



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MINQIANG
GUOFU





THE CHARM OF MUD

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THE CHARM OF
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WUJANG SHANHE

山河无恙



THE CHARM OF MUD

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-山河无恙-

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**THE CHARM OF
MUD 转土成韵**

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF ZHOUKOU

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★ T U A N T U Y U N ★



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抟土成韵

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人间皆安
THE WORLD IS PEACEFUL

唯愿山河无恙
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THE CHARM OF MUD

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Brief Summary of the Study

This study starts from the research on the design methods of cultural and creative products and combines narrative theory to explore the narrative design process and specific methods of intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products. Through research, it investigates the narrative themes that consumers prefer and obtains the core demands of consumers for cultural and creative products. This paper classifies intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products and researches different narrative design methods for different types of cultural and creative products. It analyzes intangible cultural heritage and summarizes corresponding narrative themes, designing cultural and creative products based on intangible cultural heritage. A comparative analysis of consumer experiences with products and services is conducted under different narrative design methods.

The work and achievements of this paper are as follows:

1. Extensive literature review was conducted on narrative theory, with a focus on the application of narrative perspectives, narrative text theory, and the extension of narrative concepts to the field of product design. This research completed the application study of narrative perspectives, narrative text, and storylines in the field of product design, and constructed a narrative model for intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products based on narrative theory.

2. From a design perspective, design methods and narrative design processes for intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products were proposed. Based on the hierarchical relationship of narrative design and considering the narrative design factors of products, two design dimensions were defined for intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products: static narrative design and dynamic narrative design. These design dimensions were applied in the design practice of Mud Clay Dog cultural and creative products.

3. In order to design intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products that align with user expectations, user needs were researched and analyzed to uncover their deep-seated desires and expectations. In response to the development

challenges faced by intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products, narrative design was utilized to integrate resources and guide the design and service experience of these products. Finally, design proposals for Mud Clay Dog cultural and creative products were presented based on narrative design methods.

Discussion of the Results

To address the shortcomings of the Ninigou cultural and creative products, such as lack of distinctive features and weak emotional interaction, we have chosen appropriate intangible cultural heritage elements for the design, aiming to create a narrative theme. We conducted research centered around the consumers and identified their demands for cultural and creative products. The focus was on designing the storylines of the products to enhance user experience. We also studied the usage context and user behavioral experiences associated with the products, thus elevating the cultural core of the Ninigou cultural and creative products. These efforts have played a guiding role in the product design process.

Recommendations for Future Studies

During the research process, the number of participants and the quantity of questionnaires were relatively small, which may have led to less accurate results in terms of consumer demands. In future studies, it would be beneficial to expand the scope of research to obtain more precise data, ensuring that the design aligns better with consumers' psychological needs.

The level of design in intangible cultural heritage creative products has a significant impact on the development of the cultural and creative industry. Researching the design of intangible cultural heritage creative products from the perspectives of narrative viewpoints and storytelling can contribute to customers' enhanced emotional experiences. Researchers need to further explore the connection between narrative studies and design studies, delve into the feasibility of integrating narrative theory and design theory, and refine and construct methods for narrative design



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APPENDIX

- 1.Survey Questionnaire for Consumers of Taihao Mausoleum Cultural and Creative Products
- 2.Interview Transcript with Xu Shuzhang, the Inheritor of Handcrafting Huaiyang Mud Figurines in Henan Province
- 3.Henan Province National Intangible Cultural Heritage List

Appendix details

1. Survey Questionnaire for Consumers of Taihao Mausoleum Cultural and Creative Products

Hello! I am a Ph.D. student in Art and Cultural Research at Srinakharinwirot University. In order to understand the consumer market of Taihao Mausoleum cultural and creative products, I kindly request your honest answers to the following questions. This survey guarantees anonymity, and the data collected will be used solely for the analysis and research of this study. The information you provide will be strictly confidential. Thank you for your support!

1. Gender

Male Female

2. Age

15-25 26-30 31-40 41-50 Older than 51

3. Education level

below High school High school/Technical secondary school

Associate degree/Bachelor's degree Graduate degree and above

4. Where are you from?

Zhoukou Not from Zhoukou City but from Henan Province

From another province

5. The purpose of your purchase of cultural and creative products.

Commemoration and Collection Gift-giving to Family and Friends

Practical Value

Interests and Hobbies

1. Do you understand the regional culture of Taihao Mausoleum?
 - Veryfamiliar Quitefamiliar Notfamiliaratall
2. What aspects might attract you when purchasing cultural and creative products?(Multiple-choice question)
 - Appearance Utility Creativity Brand
 - Amusement
 - Culturalsignificance Commemorativevalue Price
3. Statistical Chart of Product Features that Attract Consumers.
 - Lack of cultural connotation Lack of distinctive local characteristics
 - Poor quality Weak practical functionality
 - Lackofemotionalinteraction limitedrangeofproductoptions
4. What type of cultural and creative products do you prefer to purchase? (Multiple-choice question)
 - Handicrafts Stationeryandtoys Furniture
 - Pendants and small accessories Clothing and bags
 - 3C product accessories Others
5. What is your expected price range when purchasing cultural and creative products?
 - <50 50-100 101-200 >200

Remarks

The questionnaire is presented in English format here, and it exceeds one page. In actual use, the questionnaire is distributed at the Taihao Mausoleum scenic area, and the questionnaire language is Chinese, with only one page. Keeping the questionnaire within one

page encourages respondents to fill it out more willingly.

2. Interview Transcript with Xu Shuzhang, the Inheritor of Handcrafting Huaiyang Mud Figurines in Henan Province.

Interviewee Profile: Xu Shuzhang is a male born in 1951 in Xulou Village, Bailou Township, Huaiyang County, Zhoukou City, Henan Province. From a young age, he learned the craft of making Huaiyang Mud Figurines from his grandfather and father. He has dedicated his entire life to this folk-art form. Currently, he serves as a representative inheritor of the national-level intangible cultural heritage project, Huaiyang Mud Figurines.

Q1: As an inheritor of the Ninigou craftsmanship, could you please tell us how you acquired your skills? Could you also share your lineage and learning experiences with us?

A: I learned this craft from my grandfather and father since I was young. At that time, everyone in our family was involved in making Ninigous, and it continues to be the case today. I am now 72 years old and have been crafting Ninigous for over 60 years. I remember when I was a child, I once saw my grandfather deeply engrossed in making them that he forgot to eat. This sparked my strong interest in Ninigous. I was curious about their magical allure. Seeing my interest, my grandfather pulled me closer and asked if I would like to give it a try. I was eager and curious, so I took the tools from my grandfather's hand and began to learn by imitating his movements. Soon, I successfully crafted a clay monkey. I was delighted with the result, and my grandfather thought it was well done too. From then on, I became more involved and worked alongside my grandfather and father during the farming off-season. Gradually, I tried my hand at recreating all the Ninigou shapes they had taught me, and with practice, I became proficient in the artistry and techniques. As I grew older, around the age of 15 or 16, my father called me aside. He mentioned that I had already studied for a few years and completed junior high school, and he wanted to know what I planned to do as I became an adult. I told him that I didn't feel suited for further education, and my academic performance wasn't outstanding. I expressed my desire to help out with the family's

agricultural work and continue making Ninigous, carrying on our ancestral craftsmanship. In reality, I understood my father's intentions. With my grandfather no longer with us and my father getting older, he wanted me to continue the tradition of crafting Ninigous alongside him. Our family's craftsmanship had gained some local fame, and we were able to earn a decent income selling Ninigous at temple fairs. We couldn't let go of this craft. My father happily agreed, and since then, I have been molding Ninigous for over 50 years.

Q2: What kind of content and form do Ninigous have? What historical and cultural significance do they possess? Which ones can be considered representative works?

A: Ninigous from Huaiyang, also known as "Ling Dogs," "Ling Dogs," or "Zhong Dogs," are the most unique folk clay sculptures found in the Taishao Ling Temple Fair. The term "Nini" is an endearing nickname given by people. They are called "Ling Dogs" because it is believed that they were fed by Fuxi, the mythical figure, and they serve as guardians of the tomb. The name "Ling Dogs" refers to the spiritual energy and protective power they possess. The term "Zhong Dogs" is used because some of their forms symbolize the union of Yin and Yang, fertility, and reproduction, representing the worship of reproduction. Many people bring back numerous Ninigous from the temple fair held on the second day of the second lunar month. The more Ninigous one brings back, the more prosperous and blessed their family will be. It is believed that only Ninigous purchased within the tomb area possess spiritual energy.

Furthermore, my research and comparisons with other sources have revealed multiple symbolic meanings associated with Ninigous. Its connotations primarily encompass three aspects:

Firstly, its origins are influenced by religious rituals. Most Ninigous have a black background with colorful patterns, abstract forms, and lines that seem to carry deep and mysterious meanings, reminiscent of ancient totems. Indeed, it is connected to tribal totems from ancient times, and experts have suggested that it is an evolution of

totemic symbols. These patterns passed down from our ancestors serve as specific symbols in witchcraft and rituals.

Secondly, it signifies fertility worship. Although Ninigous come in various breeds,

there is a certain pattern. Many of them depict fantastic creatures with human and animal characteristics, such as "multi-headed monsters," "two-headed dogs," "human-headed dogs," "nine-headed birds," "monkey-faced swallows," "human-faced beasts," "human-faced monkeys," and so on. Experts have also suggested that they reflect the ancient praise of Fuxi and Nuwa's creation of human beings from clay, as well as the worship of female reproduction.

Lastly, it symbolizes the desire for warding off disasters and evil. The exaggerated and bizarre forms of Ninigous, combined with the vibrant colors on the black background, create an indescribable sense of mystery. They are believed to counteract evil spirits and ensure our auspiciousness and safety.

While Ninigous are commonly referred to as "dogs," the dog is just one of the many depicted forms and not the only one. There are over 500 different breeds of Ninigous, and among the ones I have made, the most common ones amount to around a hundred or so. I have consulted our local county annals, specifically the "Huaiyang County Annals," which states that our Ninigous can be classified into three categories based on size and coloring: Xiaoni Bie (small mud turtles), Xiaozhong Ban (small and medium-sized plates), and Dahua Huo (large colorful ones). In our actual production process, we don't usually categorize them in such detail. With experience, we naturally develop a sense of size. For example, the Dahua Huo is the largest, reaching a height of 17 centimeters. The Xiaozhong Ban is slightly shorter, about three to five centimeters less, and the Xiaoni Bie is the smallest, measuring only two to three centimeters. This is a classification based on size.

In terms of their artistic characteristics, there are three main types of mud figurines. The first type is the biomimetic type, which is the most common one. These figurines imitate the realistic forms of animals found in nature, with highly detailed and

lifelike features. Examples include fish, birds, frogs, snakes, scorpions, turtles, monkeys, horses, and dogs.

The second type is the composite type, which combines human, bird, and animal forms by assembling and integrating them together. This combination adds deeper symbolism and meaning to the artworks. Representative examples include "monkey riding a horse," "monkey with a swallow's head," "cat pulling a monkey," and so on. For instance, the figurine "monkey riding a horse" depicts a mischievous and joyful monkey riding on a galloping horse. Through wordplay, it symbolizes the desire for wealth and high social status ("immediately promoted"). Another representative example is the "monkey with a human face," which closely resembles the image of Fuxi and Nüwa. It is also known as the "monkey ancestor" and has a colorful sunburst pattern on its belly. Thus, it represents both the utmost Yang and Yin symbols. Its resemblance to the female genitalia signifies reverence for motherhood and worship of reproduction.

The third type is the mythical and monstrous type, which shares similarities with the composite type. These figurines have bizarre and exaggerated forms that do not exist in reality. Examples include creatures like the nine-headed beast, the four-legged snake, the eight-legged turtle, and others whose names I cannot recall at the moment. In ancient times, these "unlike anything" creatures were believed to possess immense divine power and the ability to intimidate demons and monsters, thereby protecting our safety.

Overall, these different types of mud figurines reflect the creativity and artistic expressions of the craftsmen, as well as the cultural and religious beliefs of ancient people.

Q3: Regarding the mud figurines of Huaiyang, their variety, symbolism, and legendary stories are extremely rich. Since they possess such great charm, we would like to delve further into the specific craftsmanship, procedures, and process of making mud figurines in Huaiyang. Could you please provide detailed insights on this matter?

A: The technique of making "Ninigou" in my family has been passed down from my father and grandfather, and it hasn't changed much. Generally speaking, based on the size of the desired shape, there are two methods of production: hand-molding and

mold casting. The process generally involves kneading the clay, shaping the clay, poking holes (also known as eye punching), dyeing the clay black, and adding decorative patterns.

In Huaiyang, the production of "Ninigou" starts with using local materials. We use

clay from our region for the clay material. By digging one to two meters underground, we can find yellow loam clay. This type of clay is relatively common in Huaiyang. It has fine texture, few pores, and is both sticky and hard, ensuring that the molded "Ninigou" doesn't crack or deform. What makes me even happier is that this clay is unaffected by drought or flooding. Even if you were to buy it, it's very affordable, with 100 yuan being able to purchase a large cartload from a farming vehicle.

Now, let's talk about clay preparation. If the excavated clay is dry, it needs to be crushed with a hammer first. Then, an appropriate amount of water is added and mixed using an iron rod, followed by repeated pounding. If the clay is wet, it needs to be placed on a grinding stone and repeatedly pounded with a large stick to make it uniform, fine, and elastic, just like a well-prepared dough. Although these steps may seem simple, they require a lot of effort and skill. Factors such as the fineness of the clay particles, the amount of water added, and the intensity of pounding are all crucial. If the clay is too soft, it becomes prone to deformation, while if it is too hard or inadequately pounded, it is prone to cracking. As the saying goes, "With well-prepared clay, the divine dogs of Fuxi will run everywhere!"

Next comes the process of kneading and shaping. First, based on the desired size of the sculpture, the clay lump is kneaded into a clay billet. Then, depending on the complexity of the object being made, if it can be achieved through hand kneading, it is directly shaped according to the intended appearance. If it is more complex, molds are used.

There is also a time factor involved in the process. According to our local saying, "Ninigous made in March are sold in February." This means that Ninigous are made during the spring season in March, during the agricultural off-season, taking it slow

and steady. They are then brought to the temple fair in February of the following year for sale. This is because in winter, the clay can freeze and crack, while in summer, the clay becomes slippery when kneading due to the heat. These conditions are not conducive to shaping the sculptures effectively.

Next is the process of making holes or eyes. After the sculptures are formed, bamboo sticks are used to create two intersecting holes in inconspicuous areas, one large and one small. This allows them to produce a sound when blown into. "Hoo hoo la, hoo

hoo la, Grandfather Fuxi is singing." By making sound, the sculptures become more spirited. This is somewhat similar to the principles of sound production in the Xun, an ancient Chinese wind instrument. In fact, here in our region, black Xun is also a type of Ninigou sculpture. As we know, the Xun is an ancient Chinese musical instrument, but according to legends, it was originally invented by Fuxi and made from clay. Therefore, the Xun and Ninigou complement each other in our context.

The next step is coloring. First, the molded Ninigou sculptures are placed in a well-ventilated area to dry. Then, the entire surface is dyed black as the base color. The black dye used was originally made by ourselves, mixing wheat seedling juice with potash and water. Although this process is cumbersome, it saves costs, so it was widely used for a long time. When I was a child, my family used this method as well, but we added a bit of "boiled black" to the dye to make the color darker. "Boiled black" is a dye commonly used in rural fabric dyeing, and it is called so because it becomes darker the more it boils, according to the locals. However, nowadays I use commercial dyes, which are convenient, affordable, and environmentally friendly. Previously, sharpened sorghum stalks were used as tools for coloring, but now we use brushes. During the coloring process, the sculptures can be soaked or repeatedly brushed. As the saying goes, "Drenched in black, Grandfather Fuxi blesses us!" It means that the sculptures must be completely black to ward off evil spirits.

After the black base color has dried, various patterns can be painted on the entire surface of the Ninigou using colors such as red, yellow, green, blue, and white. This process is often done during the winter. When creating the patterns, a pen is used

for outlining, and it requires a slow, accurate, and steady hand. There's a saying, "Precise strokes, steady lines, rolling Ninigous with each stroke," which means that the lines should be precisely and steadily drawn. In order to prevent the colors from fading and to maintain a bright and vibrant appearance for a longer time, we used to apply a layer of "pine resin water" on the sculptures. "Pine resin water" is made by grinding pine resin into powder, diluting it with "98# gasoline," and then boiling it with water. It was applied after a day and night of coloring the Ninigou. However, since the 1990s, some people have stopped using "pine resin water" and switched to using varnish. However, varnish has its drawbacks. After a few years, the Ninigou may crack and lose its color. That's why I have always adhered to the traditional method of using "pine resin water." Nowadays, many buyers prefer a more "natural" look, without the application of "pine resin water." They believe it adds more charm and character. Some of the Ninigous I currently produce follow this approach.

Q4: Since we've talked about dyeing black, adding patterns, and coloring, why is there such emphasis on color in Huaiyang's Ninigous? Are there any new changes in this aspect?

A: Translation: In Huaiyang, we use black as the base color and red, green, yellow, white, and blue for the patterns in the production of Ninigous. This color combination is indeed significant and deeply rooted in our historical and cultural heritage.

On one hand, our culture has revered black since the early Xia Dynasty. People believe that black is mysterious, orthodox, and solemn, capable of overshadowing and dominating everything. From the Spring and Autumn Period to the Han Dynasty, the attire of kings and nobles favored black. As Huaiyang is located in the heartland of Central Plains culture, this cultural tradition has been preserved to this day.

On the other hand, black has a close association with Fuxi, the ancestor deity. Before Pangu and Fuxi, the world was in a chaotic state, enveloped in darkness. Black can be seen as the original appearance of all things in the world. Moreover, Fuxi drew the Eight Trigrams, and not far from us, there is a site called "Painting the Trigrams

Platform." In the Eight Trigrams, black and white represent the contrasting Yin and Yang forces. This is because white represents emptiness, while black can overshadow everything and encompass all. The complementary nature of black and white symbolizes the interplay and harmony of Yin and Yang, reflecting the entire universe.

From this, we can understand why we hold black in such high regard. Therefore, using black as the base color for the "Ling Dog" holds extraordinary significance.

The selection criteria and reasons for choosing colors when adding patterns to the "Ling Dog" deserve further discussion. The most commonly seen colors on the "Ling Dog" are red, green, yellow, and white, in addition to black. These four colors, together with black, correspond to the "Five Elements" in the Book of Changes (Yijing). This is also known as the "Theory of Five Colors" in some books, where these five colors correspond to the Five Elements.

We should all be aware that in the Five Elements theory, gold, wood, water, fire, and earth represent the composition and transformational patterns of all things. Therefore, the presence of these five colors on the Ninigou further reflects the cosmological views of our ancestors, adding a sense of spirituality to the Ninigou. Of course, there are now some additional colors being used, but those colors are auxiliary and do not constitute the main part.

Q5: Please elaborate on the patterns and lines of the Ninigou.

Overall, the patterns and lines of the Ninigou are concise and straightforward. My personal works also adhere to this style. The traditional Ninigou designs have limited range of motion, and that's how they have been passed down through generations. The predominant posture is upright, with bold and exaggerated deformations, emphasizing key features. For example, the "human-faced monkey" design omits the upper limbs and portrays the lower limbs as very small, but it focuses on depicting the head and the torso with female reproductive symbols, creating a visually striking and easily recognizable effect. This is also related to the worship of reproduction, as exemplified by this artwork.

The patterns depicted on the Ninigou are diverse, but they can be broadly categorized as sun patterns, female genital patterns, horseshoe patterns, triangle patterns, leaf patterns, and so on. Upon careful observation, even within the same category, these patterns vary in length and size. Moreover, the basic elements of the designs are dots and lines. It is truly remarkable how these simple elements can convey such a rich variety of forms. In fact, these patterns, designs, and lines are all associated with the worship of reproduction, totem worship, and the seeking of blessings and protection against evil.

Q6: What changes have occurred in the function of the Ninigou during its inheritance process?

The Huaiyang Ninigou carries a long history and is associated with a series of worship, but in reality, as a type of clay sculpture, especially as a clay whistle that can be blown, its main function is as a children's toy. However, through it, we can discover many profound meanings. In our local area, adults rarely use the Ninigou themselves; they buy Ninigous at temple fairs to bring home and play with their children. Once children receive the Ninigou, they compete to see who has the biggest one and who can make it whistle the loudest.

In our region, there is a popular saying during the temple fair on the second day of the second lunar month: "Old Zhaigong, walk slowly, give us a Ninigou, may you live toninety-nine." This means that according to our tradition, during the temple fair on the second day of the second lunar month, elders often bring back many Ninigous for their own children. The more they bring back, the more it signifies a prosperous family with many descendants. The more blessings they bring back home. Therefore, it is essential to bring back an ample amount of Ninigou. Even on the way, children may approach you and ask for one, and you should give it to them. At this moment, you are a transmitter of the divine energy of our ancestors, and the ancestors are watching your actions. When children ask you for a Ninigou, they will chant, "Give us a Ninigou, may you live to ninety- nine," which is a blessing for your health and longevity.

It can be said that the Ninigou here serves as a medium, carrying the mutual well-wishes between people. Adults bring joy and health to the children, while children wish for the adults' health and longevity. (Author's note: At this point, the Ninigou actually becomes a medium for cultural interaction between people, reflecting the harmony and peace of human relationships and the ideal of unity.)

Q7: I am hopeful for the future development of our Huaiyang Ninigou after hearing your sentiments. However, we cannot ignore the challenges and concerns that exist in its inheritance and development. So, what specific problems do we still face? How can we ensure a better future for the Ninigou? In your opinion, what efforts should we make in terms of inheritance and innovation?

A: That is indeed the most important issue to address. In the collision between tradition and modernity, the development of Huaiyang Ninigou faces both opportunities and challenges. I believe the approach to solving this problem should be as follows: Firstly, we need to protect it, as preservation is crucial for inheritance. Secondly, in order to inherit, we must innovate. Only through innovation can we synchronize with the times, continuously be embraced and loved by generations, and ensure the continuous inheritance of the Ninigou.

Currently, there are around ten villages in Huaiyang that specialize in making Ninigous, mainly located northeast of the Taihao Mausoleum. Since the 1950s, through the extensive household surveys conducted by Mr. Ni Baocheng, it has been determined that these villages include Baiwangzhuang, Wugu Tai, Xulou, Duangzhuang, Dinglou, Shizhuang, Wuzhuang, and Chenlou, among others. As their names suggest, most of the villagers in these villages share the same surname. The craftsmen who sculpt the Ninigous in these villages pass down their skills from generation to generation, often within the same family. It is through this lineage that the tradition of Ninigous has been preserved to this day.

My old friend, Fang Guofu, is over 90 years old, and he is still personally sculpting Ninigous. I am no exception; I haven't taken a break in all these years. I have also been encouraging my son and daughter-in-law to make Ninigous, and

coincidentally, my in-laws are also involved in making them. I have decided to renovate and expand the handicraft workshop in my yard to facilitate year-round production of Ninigous. I have two daughters and one son. As for my daughters, I have accepted that they will marry and pursue their own paths. However, I have "commanded" my son to come back and wholeheartedly inherit the ancestral craft. I haven't sent him to an art academy for further studies because I'm afraid that he might lose his focus on making Ninigous if he goes away and comes back. Nevertheless, he understands my intentions and the efforts I have put in, and he is willing to contribute to the preservation and inheritance of Ninigous.

It is true that there are very few households in Huaiyang County, like mine, where young people are still following the older generation in making Ninigous. There are not many who engage in making Ninigous throughout the year, and in the entire Huaiyang County, there is only our family who does it consistently. This indeed reflects the issue of the lack of successors in the inheritance of Ninigous. Although the Taihao Mausoleum Temple Fair still attracts large crowds and remains prosperous, the number of artists selling clay dogs has been decreasing. The "Laozhai Gong" who used to buy a pack of Ninigous for children among the visitors is also becoming less frequent. Despite the government's efforts in promoting and protecting the tradition, the actual situation is still not optimistic. As a member of the Political Consultative Conference in the county, I have raised these series of issues multiple times in meetings. I am a person who speaks the truth, so I directly stated that we must protect it first in order to carry on the tradition, and the protection work should primarily be undertaken by government departments. The inheritance, on the other hand, relies mainly on the artists taking the lead.

I also believe that it is necessary to promptly and systematically organize various materials related to this folk craft, laying the foundation for cultivating successors. Moreover, the protection and inheritance of this art require the joint participation of veteran artists, young successors, and the general public. For example, I have always expressed my support for extracurricular education on intangible cultural heritage, and I

do not charge any fees in this regard. Students from different places can come to learn about and experience the process of sculpting Ninigous. My goal is to prevent the next generation from forgetting about Ninigous and to ensure that young people in the future remember it. However, I have been disappointed by the lack of response from people who come to participate. Finally, of course, the government should provide strong support and guidance. I believe that as long as government departments can genuinely carry out protection work, we artists and future generations will be able to pass on this national culture.

Let's talk about innovation now. Many people believe that the mud figurines in Taihao Mausoleum have acquired spiritual power, and altering their shapes randomly may diminish their aura and divinity. In reality, the traditional shapes of mud figurines have been passed down from ancient times and should not be easily changed. Initially, I also adhered to the ancestral forms. However, I discovered that there are hundreds of different shapes for mud figurines, many of which have been lost over time due to lack of practice. Therefore, I believe that reviving these lost shapes is a form of innovation. These rarely seen styles can bring a refreshing feeling to people.

So, in a way, I have always been "innovating." Since the 1990s, I have been engaging in various learning and exchanges with experts in the field from Tianjin, Wuxi, and other places. I have also collected information from ancient books, documents, and preserved old artworks. I'm delighted to share that I have restored and compiled over 200 different styles of mud figurines. Moreover, I have integrated the Chinese zodiac culture into the mud figurines, filling the gaps with snake and rat designs that were missing in the traditional mud figurines. These additions have been well-received by everyone.

I believe that my knowledge and abilities are limited, and to improve my artistic skills, I must continue to learn. Therefore, I have been focusing on studying the culture of Fuxi, repeatedly reading mythological texts such as the "Shan Hai Jing" and "Sou Shen Ji" to seek inspiration. Furthermore, I have made multiple visits to Beijing, Zhengzhou, and other places to meet with folklorists, seeking their guidance and

discussing the cultural background and significance behind certain mud figurine designs. I have been doing my best, and that's all I can do.

3.Henan Province National Intangible Cultural Heritage List



梁祝传说

The legend of Liang Zhu



董永传说

The legend of Dong Yong



The first batch in 2006—— Traditional Drama



豫剧
Henan Opera



宛梆
Wanbang



怀梆
Huaibang



大平调
DaPing Tune



越调
Yue Tune



大弦戏
Daxian Opera



四平调
SiPing Tune



曲剧
Qu Opera



道情戏
DaoQing Drama



目连戏
MuLian Drama

The first batch in 2006—— QuYi



河洛大鼓
Heluo Drum



河南坠子
HeNan Zhuizi

The first batch in 2006—— Traditional sports, entertainment, and acrobatics



少林功夫
Shaolin Kung Fu



太极拳
Tai Chi

The first batch in 2006—— Traditional Art



朱仙镇木版年画
Zhuxian Town Woodblock New Year
Picture



泥塑
Clay sculpture

The first batch in 2006—— Folk custom

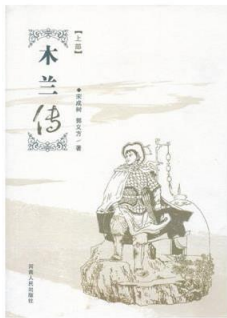


太昊伏羲祭典
Taihao Fuxi Festival



马街书会
Majie Bookstore

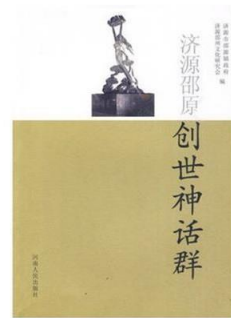
The second batch in 2008—— Folk customt



木兰传说
The Legend of Mulan



盘古神话
Pangu mythology



绍原神话群
Shaoyuan Mythology Group



The second batch in 2008—— Traditional music



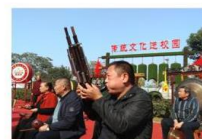
信阳民歌
Xinyang Folk Songs



西坪民歌
Xiping Folk Songs



江河号子
Jiang He Hao Zi



笙管乐
Shengguan Music



锣鼓艺术
Gonggu Art



大相国寺梵乐
Buddhist music of Daxiangguo
Temple

The second batch in 2008—— Traditional Dance



小相狮舞
Xiaoxiang Lion Dance



槐店文狮子
Huaidian Wen Lion



高跷
stilts



麒麟舞
Kirin Dance



苏家作龙凤灯舞
Su Family Performs Dragon and
Phoenix Lantern Dance



跑帷子
Running curtains



官会响锣
The official meeting rings the gong

The second batch in 2008—— Traditional Drama



越调
Yue Tune



柳子戏
Liuzi Drama



罗山皮影戏
Luoshan Shadow Play



二夹弦
Two clip string



罗卷戏
Luojuan Drama



二股弦
Two strand string

The second batch in 2008—— QuYi



南阳三弦书
Nanyang Sanxian Book



大调曲子
Major tune

The second batch in 2006—— Traditional sports, entertainment, and acrobatics



月山八极拳
Yueshan Baji Fist



心意六合拳
Linking Luhe boxing



苕家拳
Changjia Fist



东北庄杂技
Dongbei Zhuang Acrobatics

The second batch in 2008—— Traditional Art



灵宝剪纸
Lingbao Paper Cuttings



卢氏剪纸
Lu's Paper Cuttings



辉县剪纸
Huixian Paper Cuttings



洛阳宫灯
Luoyang Palace Lantern



汴京灯笼张
Bianjing Lantern Zhang



方城石猴
Fangcheng Stone Monkey



镇平玉雕
Zhenping Jade Carving



滑县木版年画
Huaxian Woodblock New Year Picture



汴绣
Bian embroidery

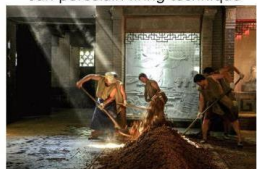
The second batch in 2006—— Traditional skill



钧瓷烧制技艺
Jun porcelain firing technique



唐三彩烧制技艺
Tang Sancai firing technique



宝丰酒传统酿造技艺
Traditional brewing techniques of
Baofeng liquor



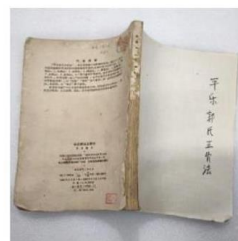
真不同洛阳水席制作技艺
Really different Luoyang water mat
making techniques

The second batch in 2006—— Traditional medicine

四大怀药种植与炮制、平乐郭氏正骨法



四大怀药种植与炮制
Planting and Processing of the Four
Major Huaiyao Medicines



平乐郭氏正骨法
Pingle Guomin Bone Setting
Technique

The second batch in 2008—— Folk custom



新郑黄帝拜祖祭典
Xinzheng Huangdi Ancestral
Worship Ceremony



浚县民间社火
Junxian Folk Community Fire



百泉药会
Baiquan Medicine Association



禹州药会
Yuzhou Pharmaceutical Association



关公信俗
Guan Gong's Belief in Customs



打铁花
Strike iron flower



洛阳牡丹花会
Luoyang Peony Festival

The third batch in 2011—— Traditional music



中州大鼓
Zhongzhou Drum

The third batch in 2011—— Traditional dance



火龙舞
Fire Dragon Dance



睢县麒麟舞
Juxian Kirin Dance

The third batch in 2011—— Traditional Drama



大平调
DaPing Tune



越调
Yue Tune



桐柏皮影戏
Tongbai Shadow Play



淮调
Huai Diao



落腔
Falling cavity

The third batch in 2011—— Traditional sports, entertainment, and acrobatics



攞石锁
Stacked stone lock

The third batch in 2011—— Traditional skill



地坑院营造技艺
Construction techniques of
underground pit courtyard



汝瓷烧制技艺
Ru porcelain firing technique

The third batch in 2011—— Folk custom

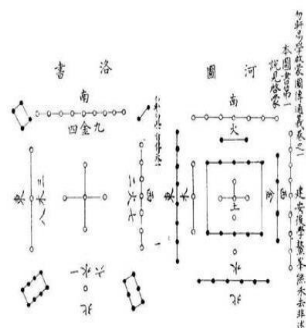


上蔡重阳习俗
Shangcai Chongyang Customs

The third batch in 2011—— Folk literature



老子传说
The Legend of Laozi



河图洛书传说
Legend of Hetu Luoshu



杞人忧天传说
Legend of Qiren Worrying about the Sky

The third batch in 2011—— Traditional music



古筝艺术中州筝派
Zhongzhou Zheng School in
Guzheng Art



锣鼓艺术
Gonggu Art

The third batch in 2011—— Traditional drama



光山花鼓戏
Guangshan Flower Drum Opera



罗卷戏
Luojuan Drama

The third batch in 2011—— Traditional dance



耍老虎
Playing with tigers

The third batch in 2011—— Traditional sports, entertainment, and acrobatics



和氏太极拳
He's Tai Chi

The third batch in 2011—— Traditional Art



淮阳泥泥狗
Huaiyang Mud Dog



麦秆剪贴
straw collage

The third batch in 2011—— Traditional Skill



棠溪宝剑锻制技艺
Tangxi Sword Forging Technique



信阳毛尖茶制作技艺
Xinyang Maojian Tea Making
Techniques



登封窑陶瓷烧制技艺
Ceramic firing techniques of
Dengfeng kiln



当阳峪绞胎瓷烧制技艺
Dangyangyu Twisted Porcelain
Firing Technique

The third batch in 2011—— Traditional Medicine



毛氏济世堂脱骨疽疗法
Mao's Jishitang osteonecrosis
treatment



买氏中医外治法
Mai's Traditional Chinese Medicine
External Treatment Method

The third batch in 2011—— Folk custom



VITA

