

Translation and Reconstruction of Regional Cultural Symbols in Modern Commercial Space Environment Art Design

Changjiang Jin*, Sheng Zhang

Luxun Academy of Fine Arts, Shenyang, 110003, Liaoning, China

*Corresponding author

Abstract: This paper focuses on the translation and reconstruction of regional cultural symbols in modern commercial spatial environment art design, and deeply analyzes their importance, methods, and significance. This paper reveals through the study of relevant cases at home and abroad that while regional cultural symbols bring unique charm and value to commercial spaces, they also face challenges in inheritance and innovation. In modern commercial space design, designers should use techniques such as extraction, abstraction, and integration to transform regional cultural symbols into unique spatial elements, thereby enhancing the cultural connotation and competitiveness of commercial spaces, and achieving the inheritance and development of regional culture.

Keywords: Regional Cultural Symbols, Modern Commercial Space, Environmental Art Design

1. Introduction

In the current era of accelerated globalization, commercial space design is increasingly converging, lacking regional characteristics and cultural connotations. However, regional culture, as a unique identifier formed during the development of human society, contains rich historical, artistic, and humanistic values. Integrating regional cultural symbols into modern commercial space environment art design not only endows commercial spaces with unique charm and meets the growing cultural needs of consumers, but also promotes the inheritance and development of regional culture, enhancing the cultural image and competitiveness of the city. Therefore, in-depth research on the translation and reconstruction of regional cultural symbols in modern commercial spatial environment art design has important practical significance.

Foreign countries started earlier in the integration of regional culture and design, forming a relatively mature theoretical and practical system [1]. The theory of "place spirit" proposed by Norwegian architect Norberg Schultz emphasizes that architecture and environment should reflect regional cultural characteristics, laying a theoretical foundation for the application of regional culture in architectural and spatial design. In practice, many foreign commercial projects have successfully integrated regional cultural elements, such as the Shinsaibashi Commercial Street in Osaka, Japan, which retains the traditional street layout and architectural style, incorporates modern commercial elements, and becomes a commercial landmark that combines traditional and modern charm.

The research on the application of regional cultural symbols in design in China has gradually increased in recent years [2]. Scholars have explored the relationship between regional culture and design from different perspectives, such as analyzing the expression of regional cultural symbols in design from a semiotic perspective, and studying the application of folk cultural elements in commercial spaces from a folkloric perspective. In terms of practice, a number of excellent cases have also emerged in China, such as the Kuanzhai Alley in Chengdu, which has created a characteristic block integrating cultural experience and commercial consumption through the protection and transformation of traditional Western Sichuan dwellings. However, compared to foreign countries, there is still room for improvement in the theoretical system and innovation in practice in China.

This paper adopts the literature research method to sort out relevant research results at home and abroad, and understand the research status and development trends of regional cultural symbols in commercial space design. This paper using case analysis method, deeply analyze successful cases at home and abroad, and summarize the methods and strategies for translating and reconstructing regional cultural symbols. At the same time, combined with field research methods, we conducted on-site

inspections of some commercial spaces to obtain first-hand information and provide empirical support for the research.

The innovation of this paper lies in exploring the translation and reconstruction mechanism of regional cultural symbols in modern commercial spatial environment art design from the interdisciplinary perspectives of semiotics, psychology, sociology, and other fields. This paper proposes design strategies based on consumer cultural experience, focusing on transforming regional cultural symbols into spatial elements that resonate with consumers from their perceptions, emotions, and behaviors, providing new ideas and methods for commercial space design.

2. Overview of Regional Cultural Symbols and Modern Commercial Space Environment Art Design

2.1 Connotation and Characteristics of Regional Cultural Symbols

Regional cultural symbols refer to various elements that can represent specific regional cultural characteristics, including material forms such as architecture, clothing, and artifacts, as well as non-material forms such as language, folk customs, and art [3]. These symbols are the accumulation of regional culture in the long-term development process, with characteristics such as uniqueness, inheritance, and identity. For example, as a material cultural symbol, the unique architectural layout of Beijing's courtyard houses reflects the residential culture and family values of the Beijing area. After centuries of inheritance, they have become an important symbol of Beijing's regional culture and can evoke people's cultural identity towards Beijing [4].

2.2 Development Trends of Modern Commercial Space Environment Art Design

With the continuous changes in consumer demand and the development of social culture, modern commercial space environment art design presents a diversified, experiential, and ecological development trend [5]. In terms of diversification, commercial spaces are no longer limited to traditional shopping functions, but integrate various formats such as catering, entertainment, and culture. The design styles are also more diverse, meeting the aesthetic needs of different consumers. Under the trend of experiential shopping, commercial spaces focus on creating unique consumer experiences for consumers. Through spatial layout and environmental atmosphere, consumers can enjoy a pleasant emotional experience during the shopping process. Ecologization emphasizes following sustainable development principles in design, using environmentally friendly materials and energy-saving technologies to create a green and low-carbon commercial space environment.

2.3 Relationship between Regional Cultural Symbols and Modern Commercial Space Environment Art Design

Regional cultural symbols provide rich materials and sources of inspiration for modern commercial spatial environment art design. Incorporating regional cultural symbols into design can differentiate commercial spaces from other homogeneous spaces, create unique cultural identities, and attract consumer attention. Meanwhile, as an important carrier of regional cultural dissemination, modern commercial spaces can promote the inheritance and dissemination of regional culture and enhance its influence through the display and interpretation of regional cultural symbols. For example, during the transformation of Xintiandi, Shanghai has retained the Shikumen Alley building, a regional cultural symbol of Shanghai. Through the combination with modern commercial formats, it has not only become a fashionable commercial landmark in Shanghai, but also let more people know and understand the Shikumen culture.

3. Translation of Regional Cultural Symbols in Modern Commercial Space Environment Art Design

3.1 Translation Principles

When translating regional cultural symbols into modern commercial space environment art design elements, the following principles should be followed. The first principle is authenticity, which requires accurately grasping the connotation and characteristics of regional cultural symbols, avoiding

misinterpretation and abuse of cultural symbols, and ensuring that the translated elements can truly reflect the essence of regional culture. For example, when designing commercial spaces with Huizhou culture as the theme, the use of elements such as horsehead walls and courtyards in Huizhou style architecture should maintain their original form and functional characteristics. Secondly, the principle of innovation should not simply copy traditional regional cultural symbols, but should be combined with modern design concepts and consumer needs to innovate and transform them to meet the functional and aesthetic requirements of modern commercial spaces. For example, the pattern of traditional Paper Cuttings art is redesigned through digital technology and applied to the wall decoration of commercial space, which not only retains the cultural charm of Paper Cuttings art, but also shows a sense of fashion. Finally, the principle of integrity is to integrate the translated regional cultural symbols with the overall environment of the commercial space, and to plan them uniformly in terms of spatial layout, color matching, material selection, etc., so that regional cultural symbols become an organic part of the overall environment of the commercial space.

3.2 Translation Methods

3.2.1 Extraction and Simplification

We extract representative symbols from numerous elements of regional culture, simplify them, preserve core features, and remove tedious details for better application in modern commercial space design. For example, in a commercial space themed around Mongolian culture, extracting elements such as cloud patterns and loop patterns from traditional Mongolian patterns, simplifying their lines and shapes, and applying them to ground paving, lighting design, and other designs not only highlights Mongolian cultural characteristics but also conforms to the modern minimalist design style.

3.2.2 Abstraction and Transformation

We use abstract artistic techniques to reinterpret regional cultural symbols, endowing them with new forms and meanings through deformation, exaggeration, and other methods. If the traditional Chinese knot design is abstracted and transformed into three-dimensional decorative sculptures in commercial spaces, it can retain the cultural significance of Chinese knots while showcasing a unique modern artistic sense. This method can make regional cultural symbols more creative and modern, attracting consumers' attention.

3.2.3 Application of Color and Material

Color and material are important means of translating regional cultural symbols. The cultures of different regions have unique color preferences and material application habits. For example, the water towns in Jiangnan are often dominated by the elegant colors of pink walls and black tiles. The use of materials and color elements such as white walls and gray bricks and tiles in commercial space design can create a gentle atmosphere of Jiangnan water towns. At the same time, combining modern new materials such as glass and metal with traditional materials can not only reflect regional cultural characteristics, but also showcase the fashion and technology of modern commercial spaces.

3.3 Case Analysis of Translation

Taking the "Yangtze River Twelve Cities" block in Nanjing as an example, this project cleverly incorporates regional cultural symbols in its design. In the core area, Wuhan's "Yellow Crane Tower" miniature landscape and "Tota Li Tianwang" sculpture are set up to showcase the cultural characteristics of cities along the Yangtze River. At the same time, the specialty products of twelve cities along the Yangtze River are displayed in the Yangtze River North South Goods Store, forming a taste of the Yangtze River corridor. In the "Twelve Xiu Fang" composite space, it is a buffet area during the day and switches to a bar and performance space at night. In the evening, it presents intangible cultural heritage performances such as Nanjing White Bureau and Hubei Han Opera. By extracting, simplifying, and recombining these regional cultural symbols, the block has successfully created a commercial space with rich Yangtze River cultural characteristics, attracting a large number of tourists and consumers and achieving the integration of regional culture and commercial value.

Another example is the W Hotel in Xi'an, whose landscape design revolves around the theme of "Tang style new interpretation" and innovatively translates regional cultural symbols. The designer took inspiration from the ritual pattern of the "Three Dynasties and Five Doors" in the Hanyuan Hall of the Tang Dynasty Daming Palace, and transformed the landscape belt along the central axis into a "time-space corridor". The ground paving adopts the texture of Tang Dynasty "blue bricks" interwoven with

laser etched star charts, echoing the modular aesthetics of "Creating Method" during the day, and projecting dynamic constellation trajectories through LED light strips at night, creating an immersive experience of "stepping on the feet for a thousand years, looking up at the Milky Way". At the entrance of the hotel, there is a 12 meter tall "Bronze Crown" art installation that uses CT scanning technology to analyze the molecular structure of Tang Dynasty gold artifacts, and then uses 3D printed titanium alloy skeletons to reconstruct streamlined contours. The surface is covered with mirrored stainless steel plates reflecting the sky, symbolizing the contemporary expression of "technological archaeology". Through the modern translation of traditional axis spaces and innovative expression of cultural symbols, W Hotel Xi'an has successfully injected a sense of the future into its historical context, constructing a "three-dimensional poem" that connects time and space, and becoming a landmark building in Xi'an.

4. Reconstruction of Regional Cultural Symbols in Modern Commercial Space Environment Art Design

4.1 The Significance of Refactoring

The reconstruction of regional cultural symbols in modern commercial spatial environment art design has significant implications in various aspects. From the perspective of cultural inheritance, reconstruction can give new vitality to regional cultural symbols in the context of modern society, avoiding the loss and forgetting of traditional culture. By combining tradition with modernity, it makes it easier for the younger generation to accept and understand regional culture, promoting the inheritance and development of culture. From a commercial value perspective, the reconstructed regional cultural symbols can create unique competitive advantages for commercial spaces and attract more consumers. Commercial spaces with cultural characteristics can meet consumers' needs for personalized and differentiated consumption experiences, enhance consumer loyalty and willingness to consume, and thus bring higher economic benefits to commercial projects. In addition, from the perspective of shaping urban image, the reconstruction of regional cultural symbols in commercial spaces helps to enhance the cultural taste and image of the city, and strengthen its attractiveness and influence.

4.2 Refactoring Strategy

4.2.1 Reconstruction of Spatial Layout

We have redesigned the spatial layout based on the functional requirements of the commercial space and regional cultural characteristics. For example, traditional water towns in Jiangnan are built along the water system, with buildings built along the water, forming a spatial pattern of front streets and back rivers. When designing commercial spaces with the theme of Jiangnan water town culture, this spatial layout can be used as a reference to create an artificial water system. Commercial shops can be distributed along both sides of the water system, with elements such as waterfront platforms and bridges to create a unique atmosphere of Jiangnan water towns, while meeting various functional needs such as leisure, shopping, and viewing for consumers.

4.2.2 Restructuring of Functions and Business Models

We Reconstruct and expand the traditional functions and formats carried by regional cultural symbols in response to the needs of modern consumers. For example, traditional ceramic production workshops can add ceramic experience courses, ceramic cultural and creative product sales and other formats while retaining the display function of production processes, transforming traditional ceramic cultural spaces into modern commercial spaces that integrate cultural experience, shopping consumption, leisure and entertainment, and better adapt to market demand.

4.2.3 Construction of Narrative Space

By constructing narrative spaces and integrating regional cultural stories into commercial space design, consumers can feel the charm of regional culture during the spatial experience. For example, in a commercial space with the theme of Silk Road culture, different spatial scenes are set up, such as desert stations, camel caravans, exotic markets, etc., accompanied by corresponding landscape ornaments, lighting and sound effects, to tell the story of trade and cultural exchange on the Silk Road, allowing consumers to feel as if they have traveled through time and space during the shopping process and deeply experience Silk Road culture.

4.3 Case Analysis of Refactoring

The Longhua Club in Shanghai is a successful case of reconstructing regional cultural symbols in modern commercial spaces. The Longhua Temple Fair in Shanghai is a long-standing folk activity in the region, carrying a profound historical heritage. The Longhua Club in Shanghai extends the architectural style of the Jiangnan water town with Longhua Tower as the axis. The above ground part consists of scattered standalone buildings and street alleys, using modern glass facades and showcasing the four seasons of blooming flowers through unique techniques. In terms of business formats, Longhua Hui not only has traditional commercial activities, but also introduces various formats such as opera performances, intangible cultural heritage exhibitions, and retro markets. For example, the Longhua Theater has been "replicated" and revived, reproducing the Song Dynasty's "hanging flower style" craftsmanship. During the opening period, national first-class actors from the Shanghai Peking Opera House were invited to present exciting traditional plays. Traditional intangible cultural heritage such as puppet shows and shadow puppetry are displayed in the streets and alleys of temple fairs. Through the reconstruction of spatial layout, functional formats, and the creation of narrative spaces, Shanghai Longhua Fair has revitalized traditional temple fair culture in modern commercial operations, becoming a new cultural and commercial landmark in Shanghai.

Changsha Central Impression City also showcases the charm of reconstructing regional cultural symbols. Changsha was formerly known as "Tanzhou", and the ancient culvert of the Xiangjiang River witnessed the prosperity of the city. Changsha Central Impression City brings the "Tanzhou Market" back to the bustling city, creating a commercial district inspired by the aesthetic style of the Song Dynasty. Not only did it preserve the ruins of the ancient canal, but it also collaborated with a well-known variety show professional set team to create a film and television level Song style scene, highly restoring Song Dynasty architecture such as yamen and money shops. In the city center, tourists can experience woodblock printing, traditional games, and more. Through these reconstruction strategies, Changsha Central Impression City allows the traditional culture of the millennium old city to continue and develop in the modern commercial environment, bringing consumers a unique cultural consumption experience and enhancing the cultural connotation and commercial value of the commercial space.

5. Challenges and Countermeasures of Applying Regional Cultural Symbols in Modern Commercial Space Environment Art Design

5.1 Challenges Faced

In the process of applying regional cultural symbols to modern commercial space environment art design, there are many challenges. Firstly, there is the issue of one sidedness in cultural understanding. Some designers lack a deep understanding of regional culture, only using superficial symbols and failing to accurately grasp the connotation and spiritual essence of regional culture, resulting in a lack of cultural depth and connotation in their design works. For example, some commercial spaces simply stack traditional architectural symbols without reflecting the cultural significance and values behind them. Secondly, there is a lack of design innovation. Many commercial projects lack innovative thinking when using regional cultural symbols, often blindly copying traditional models, which makes it difficult to meet the needs of modern consumers for novel and unique designs. The design of some commercial districts in ancient towns is monotonous, lacking individuality and creativity, and unable to attract long-term attention from consumers. In addition, balancing commercial interests with cultural preservation is also a major challenge. In the process of commercial development, some developers excessively pursue commercial interests and carry out excessive commercial transformation of regional cultural symbols, which destroys the authenticity and integrity of cultural symbols and has a negative impact on the inheritance of regional culture.

5.2 Response Strategies

In response to the problem of one sidedness in cultural understanding, designers should strengthen their research and learning of regional culture, deeply understand the historical origins, development trends, values, etc. of regional culture, and enhance the depth and breadth of their understanding of regional culture through on-site inspections, exchanges with local cultural experts, and other methods. For example, before designing a commercial space with a cultural theme of a certain ethnic minority, the designer goes deep into the ethnic minority settlement to understand their living customs, religious beliefs, art forms, etc., in order to accurately grasp the regional cultural characteristics and provide a solid cultural

foundation for the design.

To solve the problem of insufficient design innovation, designers should actively apply modern design concepts and technological means to innovate the design of regional cultural symbols. By utilizing digital technology, virtual reality technology, etc., new forms and contents can be brought to the display and experience of regional cultural symbols. At the same time, designers are encouraged to break through traditional thinking patterns, reinterpret and combine regional cultural symbols from different perspectives, and create innovative and contemporary commercial space design works. For example, in the design of a commercial space, 3D printing technology is used to create decorative components with regional cultural characteristics, combined with lighting projection technology to create a dynamic cultural display effect, bringing consumers a new experience.

In terms of balancing commercial interests and cultural protection, the government should strengthen the supervision of commercial projects, formulate relevant policies and regulations, regulate commercial development behavior, and ensure that regional cultural symbols are reasonably protected and utilized in commercial applications. Developers and designers should also establish correct values, recognize the importance of cultural protection for sustainable commercial development, and pay attention to the inheritance and protection of regional culture while pursuing commercial interests. For example, in the process of commercial project development, buildings, sites, etc. with historical and cultural value should be properly protected and integrated into commercial space design to achieve a win-win situation between business and culture.

6. Conclusion

The translation and reconstruction of regional cultural symbols in modern commercial space environment art design is of great significance for enhancing the cultural connotation of commercial spaces, promoting the inheritance and development of regional culture, and enhancing urban cultural competitiveness. By following the principles of authenticity, innovation, and integrity, using translation methods such as extraction simplification, abstract deformation, color and material application, as well as reconstruction strategies such as spatial layout reconstruction, functional format reconstruction, and narrative space construction, regional cultural symbols can be cleverly integrated into modern commercial space design. Despite facing challenges such as one-sided cultural understanding, insufficient design innovation, and balancing commercial interests and cultural protection in the application process, these challenges can be effectively addressed by strengthening cultural research, utilizing innovative design methods, and improving policy supervision. In the future, as consumers' demand for cultural experience continues to increase, the application of regional cultural symbols in modern commercial space environment art design will have broader development prospects. Designers should constantly explore and innovate, creating more excellent commercial space works that combine cultural characteristics and commercial value.

References

- [1] Yu Y, Li W. *Design Strategies for Exhibition Spaces Oriented Toward Multi-Dimensional Integration of Regional Culture* [J]. *Journal of Xuzhou Institute of Technology: Social Sciences Edition*, 2025, (1): 60-65.
- [2] Tang T T, Li Y H, Jiang J. *Exploration of the Application of Regional Culture in the Renewal Design of Urban Public Spaces—Taking Nanchang Wanshou Palace Historical and Cultural Block as an Example* [J]. *SHOES TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN*, 2025, (3): 149-151.
- [3] Ma K. *The Transformation of Regional Cultural Symbols in Design under the Integration of Culture and Tourism* [J]. *Journal of Zhejiang Wanli University*, 2025, (2): 66-72.
- [4] Wu J M, Zhu Q P. *A Study on the Revival Model of Shiheyuan Block in Beijing's Old Town* [J]. *Housing Science*, 2017, (10): 7-13.
- [5] Tang J, Zhong L. *STUDY ON MODERN CITY COMMERCIAL SPACE LANDSPACE DESIGN* [J]. *Architecture Technology*, 2018, (2): 137-140.