

**Designing for the Preservation, Representation, and Evolution of Cultural
Artifacts: How does Design Contribute to the Creation of Cultural Objects for
Chinese Festivals?**

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Designing for the Preservation, Representation, and Evolution of Cultural Artifacts

This paper discusses the role of design in creating Chinese festival culture and its impact on the preservation, representation, and evolution of cultural heritage. First, the paper will introduce and analyze the significance of festivals in Chinese culture and the current role of design in relation to traditional culture. In the following section, informed by several case studies, the article will propose several principles and strategies for designing traditional culture-related items in a contemporary context. Ultimately, I argue, with reference to design thinking, that designers should consider the balance between tradition and innovation while maintaining the authenticity of traditional cultural artifacts, other contemporary design concerns include being friendly to the environment and improving accessibility and inclusiveness.

Through the analysis of case studies, this paper will identify the forms and methods of presenting such traditional items in modern society to conform to the habits and aesthetics of contemporary life while retaining traditional culture. By combining traditional elements with modern aesthetics, the redesigned items can successfully inherit and retain rich cultural connotations, make traditional elements relevant in the contemporary era, increase people's sense of participation in these traditions, and become an indispensable element in holiday activities.

China has a long history of various traditional festivals, including the Spring Festival, which marks the beginning of the New Year and is one of China's most important traditional festivals. Unlike the calendar that people use every day, most traditional Chinese festivals are timed using the traditional Chinese calendar, the lunar calendar. The Spring Festival is the New Year, which is timed according to the Chinese lunar calendar, usually in January or February (Aslaksen, 2017). Since

ancient times, people all over China have held various activities, such as dragon dances, lion dances, temple fairs, lantern displays, Buddha worship, and so on, to attract people to celebrate together, enhance the festive atmosphere, and pray for good luck in the coming year (Asif & Ali, 2019).

These activities are significant to the Chinese people, and the derivative products related to the festival have played an essential role in the protection and sustaining of China's cultural heritage. Festival activities and festival objects are records of people, events, and lifestyles in the past, the holding of annual festival activities will pass on festival customs and concepts from generation to generation, and festival items can be preserved and inherited as substantive items. When future generations see cultural relics, they can feel a continuity with the kind of life ancient people lived. Festival objects serve as a medium for transmitting history, showing respect for the past, and providing a stable cultural foundation for future societies (Aljaberi & Al-Ogaili, 2021). Festival activities and festival derivatives can also show the characteristics of different nationalities and regions so that people can see the characteristics of various places from the past to the present and enhance the diversity of culture (Liu, 2018). Through such festival artifacts, we can learn more about different ways of living habits as cultural knowledge, as well as encourage exchange between cultures.

The spread of festival activities and items also plays an essential role in education. Cultural festivals and festival-derivative items can concretely display folk culture in different periods, and these specific folk characteristic items can help people observe, learn, and study their traditional values and culture in a more practical way (Bunchua, 1999), providing practical support for people to learn and draw lessons from history. With specific objects, experts can have a more comprehensive understanding of history, art, society, and other fields through observation and research of cultural relics, which can serve as a medium for education (Chen & Sharudin, 2023). Therefore, protecting and recreating cultural heritage has profound educational and research value. There is also an economic motivation for preserving

such traditional cultural items because preservation and re-creation of cultural heritage can attract domestic and foreign tourists as they are good tourism resources (Li et al., 2023). The sale of redesigned derivatives can also increase local income.

The design integrates ancient cultural elements into modern creation through various art forms and symbolic languages as a medium for inheriting traditional culture, such as printing ancient typical patterns on modern daily articles (Chen & Sharudin, 2023). The design presents traditional texts to a wider audience through various carriers, such as digital media promotion, 3D projections in modern art galleries, and famous paintings and voice introductions. The importance of design in Chinese cultural texts lies in the inheritance of tradition, the continuation of culture through innovative methods, and the integration with contemporary society until the recognition and use of modern people.

With the development of digital technology, there have been changes in aesthetic concepts and the ability to disseminate artifacts with traditional cultural connotations more widely. In particular, the progress of science and technology provides new possibilities for the process of innovating and developing cultural interpretations of traditional artifacts, patterns, symbols, and images, as they can be reconstructed, reproduced, and recontextualized in modern materials, digitally (such as in virtual reality), and in other fields. This kind of digital reproduction not only injects new vitality into traditional culture but also strongly supports the wide spread of traditional culture in contemporary society (Kozar, 2006).

This paper will give examples of the significant factors of the Spring Festival for Chinese people, explain the role of design in the inheritance of traditional culture, and study the balance between tradition and modernity through the synthesis of traditional elements with modern aesthetics in the design of Chinese festival artifacts. The case studies explored offer strategies for designers to innovate and reinterpret traditional festival artifacts. Such strategies allow designers to find ways to maintain the core

characteristics of traditional objects while making them appealing to a modern audience. Finally, on top of the strategies identified, a case study is given to analyze how the material of an item affects its design and function in the process of redesigning traditional items. The choice of materials is a crucial part of the design process, so understanding the relationship between materials and design helps to understand the overall design and use of objects (Karana et al., 2008).

What is the Cultural Significance of Festivals in China?

Culture is the core of maintaining national unity, so the culture of the Chinese nation has been spread for thousands of years (Xiao, 2017). During the festival, people will have a common language, clothing, and experience to feel a sense of identity, thus forming a group with similar backgrounds (Lin & Lee, 2020). Since ancient times, China has had a lot of traditional festivals because these festivals can create traditional cultural symbols with spirits and thoughts, unite a nation as a whole, and provide unique opportunities for family reunion and emotional maintenance. For example, important traditional Chinese festivals such as the Spring and Mid-Autumn festivals all contain the cultural connotation of family reunion. People will hold various celebration activities, which usually represent that family members, even relatives scattered around the world, must return to their hometowns to get together with their relatives (Zhang, 1993). Especially in today's social economy and transportation, relatives often live in different cities or countries due to work or life and a lack of daily contact. The lively atmosphere of festival activities provides a specific opportunity for people to miss their families, rediscover their family consciousness, and think of the emotional bond between themselves and their families. China has a high-context culture that emphasizes collectivism and intimacy. People in high-context cultures usually use symbolism and non-verbal expressions based on the same cultural background and social environment (Zhou et al., 2005). Festivals provide a perfect opportunity for this group to create a common background and identity. In such a high-context traditional culture as China, this phenomenon of

homesickness and returning home is widespread, reflecting the Chinese people's collective consciousness and emphasis on family emotion.

Traditional rituals and daily activities can be used by Chinese people to express their love and commitment to each other. For example, during the Spring Festival, even if the conditions are restricted, Chinese people will try their best to go home and sit around with their families to cook, eat, or visit relatives and friends. Xiao (2017) mentioned that during the Cultural Revolution, the government preached that there would be no holiday for the Spring Festival and advocated a "revolutionary" Spring Festival. However, in one area of Hubei Province at the time, villagers still chose to return home despite being assigned to work, and this policy also ended in the face of civic opposition. These phenomena reflect the importance of family relations in the eyes of the Chinese and uphold the Chinese idea of respecting the family. Each region will hold different festival activities according to local characteristics during the festival and make different foods. During the Spring Festival, ice carving activities will occur when it snows in Harbin, Northeast China (Sun, 2015). In the South, where the climate is mild, even in winter, there are other customs, such as puppet shows in Fujian. The North make and eat dumplings with their families during the spring festival, whereas wontons and wontons are more prevalent in the South than in Northern areas, and seafood dishes are popular in coastal regions like Guangdong (Han & Ke, 2023). The traditions manifest themselves differently according to the local culture; rituals and activities are arranged according to their local customs, yet the common theme seen in all variations of the spring festival is the expression of respect for cultural heritage and the display of affection for one's family.

Chinese people have the custom of offering sacrifices, especially during traditional festivals, to express their respect for their ancestors and to users in a desired future (Goran, 1978). For example, during the Qingming Festival, people had to clean tombstones, send flowers, and burn some paper money to express their misses to their deceased relatives and friends. There are many formalized actions in

sacrificial ceremonies and prayer activities, the most typical of which are kneeling, burning incense, and bowing. It is believed that by kneeling and bowing, one can express their gratitude to their ancestors or set their expectations for the future, hoping that in response to the bowing and sacrifices, perhaps God, Buddha, or ancestors will protect them, promote peace, ensure family health, and help bring success (Hsu & Palitsky, 2023). Filial piety is at the core of the Chinese worldview. It is displayed in the behaviours and is the inheritance of traditional moral principles. It can be seen that these practices are inextricably tied to a Chinese worldview.

Hu (2023) proposed that cultural values are expressed through specific rituals, such as those incorporated into traditional festival activities. In addition to showing respect for ancestors and gods, these sacrificial activities are formalized performances that can effectively inform and disseminate the moral values of a society and people's religious beliefs. Ancestor worship has become an indispensable and essential activity in the shape of the Chinese family and society and is codified in rituals and customs, providing a channel for people to communicate with spirits and ancestors (Clobert, 2021).

Beyond the microcosm of the Chinese concept of family, traditional festivals are a time event for the whole society to participate in and celebrate; they function as an essential link in social and national unity (Zhang, 2004). During the Spring Festival holiday, people will participate in traditional group activities such as temple fairs, the lighting of lanterns, and additional contemporary New Year activities. These activities stimulate people's enthusiasm for participation in society and promote interaction and communication between people (Backman et al., 1993); as Minhus and Huie (2021) pointed out, the shared experience can minimize the distance between people and thus promote the harmonious development of society. With the development of transportation, more and more people travel on holidays to celebrate, and access to traditional festival activities in an increasingly connected world makes society and the nation more united (Lehto et al., 2016).

The relationship between traditional culture and modern design

In the various celebrations mentioned above, the Chinese wish to bring good luck and auspicious futures through the celebration. Currently, in China, attempts to redesign modern interactions of traditional cultural practices are increasingly present. Festivals are full of lucky symbols, a prominent example of which is the colour red, which is the most common colour during the Spring Festival, having the perceived effect of driving away evil. Therefore, red decorations, red couplets, red envelopes, and red paper-cuts make for suitable material to be recontextualized in contemporary China while maintaining the function of bringing good luck and an auspicious future (Xu, 2014). These lucky images have become essential to the celebrations, adding to the festive atmosphere and decorating the city and countryside. With the change in The Times, the traditional image gradually began to be eliminated by the modern aesthetic, and modern design started to be noticeable at this time; this section explores the relationship between traditions and this modern recontextualization.

In China, under the influence of modern lifestyle, urbanization and globalization, traditional culture is undergoing a series of changes. Fast-paced modern lifestyle, mature industrial development and globalization have gradually eliminated many traditional customs and cultures, shrinking the market for traditional handicrafts; modern technology has had the effect, for example, of reducing the market for traditional paper-cutting, with many people going for cheaper mass-produced alternatives (Yankozu, 2024). Mass-produced industrial products are replacing the traditional handicraft market due to the considerable workforce and time cost. In this context, designers need to invest in the modern design of traditional culture, so that the new balance point in modern society, not only to retain the traditional cultural value, but also to adapt to the development trend of contemporary society (Wu et al., 2008).

Modern design plays an essential role in promoting aesthetics, practicability, and communication in inheriting traditional culture and has become a tool to solve the problem of outdated traditional goods (Liu, 2024). Through innovation and integration, modern design can make traditional culture more contemporary and attractive, attracting wider attention and participation. Designers can use modern crafts and materials to innovate traditional handicrafts and improve their market appeal. They can also use digital technology and multimedia to provide a platform for the digital dissemination of traditional culture so that more people can easily understand and experience it (Xie, 2023). Designers may produce exciting and fashionable products that fit in with the current era and people, attract the younger generation, and allow the younger generation to experience traditional culture by incorporating modern features into traditional cultural design. For example, the Palace Museum has established its brand by combining traditional culture and modern aesthetics. It has entered thousands of households, simultaneously spreading culture and creating commercial value. Therefore, modern design injects new vitality into the inheritance of traditional culture, making traditional culture more vital in contemporary society.

Design Principles and Strategies in Chinese Festival Cultural Objects

The design of Chinese festival relics aims to convey the unique charm of culture while maintaining the balance between tradition and innovation. In this section, several of these principles and strategies are identified as examples in which designers engage in recontextualizing and creating festival relics to ensure that they not only preserve traditional cultural heritage but also meet almost all the needs of modern society. One way we can better understand the strategies and principles applied by contemporary designers is through the methodology of design thinking. Design thinking is a method designers use to solve problems, usually by exploring, analyzing, practicing, and other non-linear attempts to get results (Razzouk & Shute, 2012). In the aspect of traditional culture design, designers can first investigate and understand

the traditional culture, analyze the product audience, identify the problems to be solved by design and propose various possibilities through analysis, and then implement the output of goods, and find new problems and solve them in the practice process.

First of all, to sustain the connotations of the redesigned item, the design needs to follow the design principle of preserving. This is also the first step in design thinking - exploration. Designers need to grasp the core of traditional elements as much as possible by digging deeply into the history, significance, and ceremony of traditional festivals, deeply understand the connotation of traditional cultural elements, and ensure the proper and accurate transmission of cultural connotations expressed by cultural relics (Francois & Van Ypersele, 2002). Working with cultural experts is the way to avoid over-commercialization and over-innovation and maintain cultural authenticity (Sun & Aziz, 2023). At the beginning of the design, cooperation with relevant experts can thoroughly learn and understand the cultural connotation, understand the characteristics and meaning of local culture, and ensure that the design of cultural relics does not deviate from the natural face of traditional culture from the perspective of design professionals. The selection of materials and techniques in design should reflect the essence of tradition.

Traditional cultural relics often pay attention to carefully selecting handicrafts and materials. Designers should respect this tradition in their new creations, choose raw materials in line with tradition, and pay attention to exquisite craftsmanship (Wang, 2019). For example, the cultural and creative products of the Palace Museum are a very successful case of combining traditional patterns with innovative designs (Figure 1). Traditional patterns and lamps made of paper preserve traditional culture, and the presentation form of the page is innovative in modern design. In this way, cultural relics can not only convey the traditional sense of history but also show the characteristics of modern design in the innovation of materials and processes. The design of cultural and creative products requires strategies such as a deep

understanding of traditional cultural elements, careful selection of materials and processes, consideration of audience acceptance, and emphasis on practicability so that cultural relics not only have inherited cultural connotations but also can adapt to the aesthetic and functional needs of modern society. This combination of inheritance and innovation makes traditional cultural relics radiate new vitality in contemporary society.



Figure 1 The Palace Museum cultural product

As shown by Zhou (2021), objects that are too traditional are often not popular with modern people. Therefore, the redesign of Chinese festival artifacts needs to consider its audience and pursue a unique and attractive aesthetic from an aesthetic point of view. Understanding and analyzing the audience is also important in design thinking. Designers need to focus on the representation of goods, emphasize the most characteristic side of goods, take the consistency of traditional items and modern design connotation as well as the aesthetics to modern times as design principles, and cater to modern audiences based on preserving the authenticity of traditional culture. Innovative strategies such as planarization, exaggeration and deformation, or abstraction can be adapted to inject traditional culture into a contemporary design language and make it more modern (Chen & Zhang, 2021).

Color is a good way to show the characteristics of traditional culture. Traditional festivals are often associated with specific colours through the reasonable collocation and application of traditional colours to maintain traditional recognition and create a

sense of visual harmony (Hutchings, 2003). In the eyes of modern young people, some traditional patterns or styles have been outdated and gradually withdrawn from the urban market, so how to skillfully use these traditional patterns and colours is an essential issue for designers to consider. For example, the oversized floral jacket and large pattern in northeast China have long been no longer popular, and The Times considers its colour and style to be completely eliminated. After the designer combined it with modern clothing style, although the result is still controversial, it is still worn by contemporary Chinese star Zhang Xinyu on the red carpet at Cannes, which not only promotes national patterns but also promotes national confidence. Traditional cultural objects often have unique shapes and structures, and designers can draw inspiration from traditions and innovate through artistic techniques. This innovation is not only a breakthrough in form but also a reinterpretation of traditional modeling language so that cultural objects have both traditional charm and a modern sense of aesthetics and are very local characteristics.



Figure 2 Northeast traditional pattern



Figure 3 Dress with traditional pattern

Evolution is the most critical link for traditional goods to enter the modern market. Designers must design objects with modern functionality, sustainability, communicability, and accessibility. Wang (2019) pointed out that the use of new technologies is a crucial method for the redesign of traditional objects, mainly through the use of advanced industrial technologies so that cultural relics have a richer presentation form and enhance the interactive and modern sense of objects. For example, popular virtual reality (VR) can create a more immersive exhibition

experience, allowing the audience to feel like they are on the scene of traditional culture or combine cultural relics with entertainment, integrating traditional patterns and objects into the game. Using such methods can attract younger audiences and make traditional cultural relics presented in a novel way. The application of three-dimensional technology can also make cultural relics more interactive. When some cultural relics cannot be genuinely exhibited, three-dimensional projection can be considered for display. In addition, products can consider embedding technologies such as sensors and touch screens to enable viewers to interact with cultural relics. For example, visitors to the exhibition area in some museums can get more stories and cultural implications of cultural relics by touching the screen, thus enhancing their understanding and participation in cultural relics, which is very attractive to children (Savkina & Zhegulskaya, 2019). TV shows, online platforms, and social media are essential cultural dissemination channels. Professional designers can offer relevant courses online or share their creations on social media so that the spread of cultural relics can be expanded to the world and more people can understand and appreciate traditional Chinese culture. The design must be combined with the characteristics of The Times in order to maintain the sense of The Times and the attractiveness of cultural relics. This innovative design approach not only meets the expectations of contemporary audiences but also helps to promote the inheritance and development of traditional cultural relics in the digital age.

The redesign of Chinese festival cultural items needs to consider sustainable development. This ensures that festival items can be passed on continuously to ensure their long-term cultural inheritance (Coffay & Bocken, 2023). The environment-friendly design concept is very much in line with the values of contemporary society. Designers can choose environmentally friendly and durable materials combined with modern advanced industrial technology to redesign cultural relics, which can not only extend the service life of the articles, reduce the frequency of the replacement of the articles, but also reduce the waste of resources, and ensure that cultural articles can be passed on for a long time. For example, in the following case analysis, modern

couplets often use cardboard that is thicker and stronger than traditional paper, so that the couplets can be used for a longer time, so as to achieve the purpose of reducing waste. At the same time, designers also need to consider the use of holiday items so that they can be adapted to more scenarios and needs. Such a design can not only cope with different environments of use but also increase the attractiveness of cultural relics in different periods, saving materials, protecting the environment, and promoting the lasting inheritance of cultural relics. In short, redesigning Chinese festival cultural relics needs to consider sustainability. This design concept not only expands the heritage value of the objects but also reflects the values of contemporary society and provides a solid foundation for the objects to adapt to various situations in the constantly evolving social environment (Reubens, 2016).

More community members can be called on to participate in redesigning Chinese festival items. This is both a way to get people together to brainstorm ideas and an effective way to investigate audience preferences and needs in design thinking. In the process of understanding the audience, the traditional culture is also publicized to more people. For example, courses and handicraft classes related to the redesign of cultural heritage can be held in cooperation with the community (Handler, 2023), providing people with more opportunities for activities after work and study and promoting the spirit of co-creation. Involving community members in the design process also increases human resources for cultural design and advocacy, making it possible for handmade products to be designed per local requirements and preferences. When community members actively participate in the design process, people may develop feelings for the objects they design or make and thus learn more about the related culture. In addition, designers can use the Internet to solicit ideas from community members and even more people and share the creative process with them. In this way, we can obtain as many ideas and opinions as possible at a low cost and stimulate people's interest in traditional culture, which inadvertently plays a role in dissemination.

Case Studies: Common Spring Festival Items - WeChat Red Envelopes and Couplets

One of the most important traditional festivals for Chinese people is Spring Festival. From the first day of the New Year to the Lantern Festival, Chinese people have many things to do. Some of their activities include greeting friends and family with gifts, going to temples and altars to pray or visiting the graves of their ancestors, hoping to attract good luck and good health in the New Year (Scott, 2012). Giving red envelopes is a typical tradition during the Spring Festival. Parents, grandparents or other relatives and friends will give the young generation a red envelope with money inside, which means blessings and good luck. Chinese people call the money in red envelopes as New Year's money, because in the past, people believed that red envelopes placed under the pillow could suppress evil spirits and protect the safety of children (Siu, 2001). During the Spring Festival, every family will also do a thorough cleaning and then decorate their homes with window flowers and couplets, which are objects with blessing meaning to add to the festive atmosphere (Li et al., 2021). This vital festival has many successful cases of traditional items redesign; the following will take WeChat red envelopes and couplets as an example to analyze.

WeChat red envelopes

WeChat red envelope is a traditional red envelope combined with modern technology redesign, a product developed by Tencent with digital payment and social interaction. It has been widely used in modern Chinese society. WeChat red envelopes use modern technology to transform traditional paper gifts into electronic forms through digital payment, making the process of sending red envelopes simpler and faster, which is deeply loved by Chinese adults and children. The success of WeChat red envelopes is inseparable from its design, in which cultural integration and traditional elements, the improvement of interactive experience, social communication, the stimulation of economic activities, data analysis and personalized

services play a crucial role. According to official data, 8.08 billion red packets were sent on WeChat in 24 hours on New Year's Eve in 2016, an increase of 505 times in three years (Li & Yang, 2016).

WeChat red envelopes usually use red, the most representative colour in the traditional Spring Festival, as the primary colour, following the design principle of preserving traditional culture and maintaining the continuity with cultural connotation. As previously stated in traditional Chinese culture, red symbolizes happiness, auspiciousness, and prosperity (He, 2009). By incorporating red into the design of the digital red envelope, the designer has succeeded in giving this digital payment tool a unique Spring Festival signifier to convey the inheritance and promotion of traditional values while inheriting culture.

The cute illustrations and memes in the digital red envelope design further emphasize the elements of cultural integration (Figures 4 and 5). Modern design elements on the red envelope are a visual emphasis and innovative interpretation of traditional culture, which caters to the modern audience and follows the design principles of modern aesthetics. By adding traditional Spring Festival elements to modern cartoon characters in a cute, vivid form, designers have successfully attracted the attention of users and fans of cartoon characters, making digital red envelopes more interesting. This design strategy enables digital red envelopes to better integrate into the festive atmosphere of the Spring Festival and, at the same time, inherits traditional cultural elements innovatively, injecting new vitality into modern society. The WeChat red envelope design successfully achieves cultural integration through traditional elements of red and creative illustrations and memes. This design is not only to respect and inherit the tradition but also to embed traditional cultural elements into life in a novel way in the digital era, making digital red envelopes an exciting

expression of the cultural tradition of the Spring Festival.



Figure 4 WeChat Red envelopes.



Figure 5 WeChat Red envelopes

Another feature of WeChat red envelopes is their interactive experience, which increases the modern usability of red envelopes. Through digital interactive experience, users can have the most direct experience, so as to realize the substantive display and publicity of traditional culture under the framework of modern science and technology, and create a more active and pleasant experience for users (Pratt & Nunes, 2012). In the current digital age, the traditional red envelope giving activity has been presented in an innovative way, and the introduction of the red envelope grabbing game has become a prominent interactive experience. By clicking on the screen, the user's sense of participation is enhanced, and the traditional red envelope distribution activity is more lively and interesting. Personalized innovation of voice blessing is also an important part of enhancing user interactive experience (Harris, 2004). By providing a voice blessing to the person who sends the red envelope or the person who receives the red envelope needs to open it by voice, the digital red envelope is no longer just a means of transferring money, but integrates a more warm and personalized human element. Such a special form of red envelope with interactive experience provides users with a more novel and interesting experience, attracting more people's curiosity and sense of participation. Therefore, interactive experience is also an important factor in the success of WeChat red envelopes, stimulating people to participate more.

WeChat envelopes also allow users to share happiness in group chats, which increases its spread. This innovative design emphasizes the communicability of Spring Festival blessings and celebrations. This innovative design expands the spread of Spring Festival blessings and celebrations. Due to the intervention of social networks, digital red envelopes are no longer just a traditional fixed-point-to-point gift-giving social behaviour and are no longer constrained by time, place, and people but have become a group, a family, a community carnival. (Wang et al., 2023). Users can share their joy and blessings in the shortest time, maintain their social relations easily and quickly, and even make more friends, further expanding the role of WeChat red envelopes. Technological progress and economic development have made digital red envelopes very mature, and the design of WeChat red envelopes has made digital red envelopes an indispensable element of social activities during the Spring Festival. This allows traditional culture to progress over time, passing on the ideas of generation after generation. Therefore, digital red envelopes are not only a simple money interaction but also a powerful social and cultural communication tool in social networks.

Yi (2020) proposed that the WeChat red envelope design reflected the following two innovations in stimulating economic activities: the incentive mechanism of red envelope fission and the customized red envelope for business cooperation. By using the "fission" mechanism, a red envelope can be claimed by multiple objects, which greatly stimulates the user's use behaviour, which is also the snatch red envelope mentioned earlier. Such a design will stimulate the psychological needs of users so that users more actively participate in sending and receiving red envelopes. This has also effectively transformed the single act of giving red packets into an activity that more users can participate in, thus stimulating the spread of the economy and traditional culture (Wang & Zhuang, 2019). WeChat red envelopes also often cooperate with businesses to launch customized red envelopes containing shopping rolls or cash, which stimulate users to grab red envelopes in the form of entertainment and stimulate users' shopping desire during the Spring Festival. Such a model is

conducive to the development of WeChat but also stimulates online and offline consumption; the two complement each other, forming a win-win situation. In this way, merchants can also obtain an effective promotion and brand promotion, which jointly promotes the prosperity of online economic activities during the Spring Festival (Liu et al., 2015). The combination of these two innovative designs has played a role in stimulating economic activities, making WeChat red envelopes not only a digital alternative to traditional gifts during the Spring Festival but also a powerful tool to promote online economic activities and business cooperation.

Many people like using WeChat red envelopes because Tencent back-office technicians can conduct an in-depth analysis of the behaviour data of users who grab red envelopes so that the WeChat red envelopes platform can have a more comprehensive understanding of users' behaviours and preferences (Zhang et al., 2022). Data analysis can help the platform better understand user needs, develop a clear user portrait, provide personalized services, and increase user stickiness. Specifically, the platform can understand users' frequency, time, and participation, create more accurate personalized recommendations, optimize services, and improve the experience to significantly improve the user's experience and attract more people to participate. In addition, WeChat red envelopes adopts targeted strategies to attract user participation by launching various activities, such as grabbing red envelopes to win big prizes (Guo, 2017). Such promotion activities are not only a simple digital red envelope distribution but also designing various interesting and challenging activity forms, increasing the motivation of users to participate. Through these activities, WeChat red envelopes have improved the user stickiness of digital red envelopes, making users more willing to participate in red envelope activities and further promoting the spread and socialization of digital red envelopes.

In summary, these designs promote traditional cultural elements during the Spring Festival and organically combine digital red envelopes with traditional Spring Festival activities, improve user experience, promote social interaction, stimulate economic

activities, and realize more personalized services through data analysis. This reflects the indispensable role of design in the Spring Festival culture in the digital age. The example of the red envelope is one in which there is a radical shift in materiality, from tangible objects to intangible online experience, as well as having historical continuity with the function of the traditional festival artifact. In the following example of couples, the shift in the material is less radical, but contemporary manufacturing processes are central to the dissemination and revitalization of couplets.

Couplets

In the design of Spring Festival, couplets, red paper, rice paper, cardstock paper and silk are different material choices, showing their characteristics and effects. These different materials show unique effects in the Spring Festival couplet design and diversity in expressing the theme, the audience and the artistic style.

Traditional Spring couplets are usually made of red or white rice paper with hand-written calligraphy. In the past, due to technological limitations, people would use a variety of wood pulp or hemp paper and dye it; such paper was usually rough and had impurities (Brown et al., 2017). Rice paper is more expensive because it is a more detailed and clean paper made from the bark of an ancient Chinese tree called sandalwood (Mullock, 1995). The couplets are neat, antithetical, rhyming words of blessing written in ink. Red paper (Figure 6) is a common choice of traditional Spring couplets, and its warm and festive colour makes it a representative material in the Spring Festival culture. This choice aligns with the traditional Chinese festival atmosphere, which makes the Spring Festival couplets more visually attractive and conveys the cultural connotation that red can ward off evil spirits and pray for good luck in Chinese culture (Chen & Zhang, 2021). In contrast, rice paper's beige and light texture presents a light and elegant effect (Figure 7). The delicate texture of rice paper makes the Spring Festival couplets present a subtle atmosphere. It is the paper ancient literati and scholars used for writing and painting (Zhang et al., 2008). The modern

choice of rice paper for Spring Festival couplets is very few, different from the warm red paper. It pays more attention to the expression of literature and art, making the couplets more delicate and elegant.



Figure 6 Red paper couplets

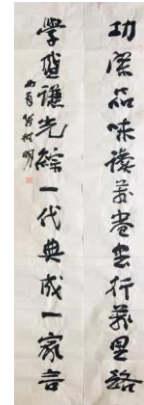


Figure 7 Rice paper couplets

With the modernization of production that comes with the development of industry, there are more options or materials for couples, such as cardboard and silk (Hauptmann & Majschak, 2011). The application of cardboard and the development of modern printing technology have injected more creative elements into the design of Spring Festival couplets. Its thickness and texture make the couplets more durable and suitable for creative designs, such as three-dimensional effects (Figure 8). The solid characteristics make the couplets more durable and follow the design principle of increasing sustainability. At the same time, the rich colour choices provide designers with more space to flexibly use different colours and shapes to create more



Figure 8 3D cardboard couplets



Figure 9 Silk couplets

personalized and stylish couplets. Silk (Figure 9), as one of the material of the Spring Festival couplets, gives the whole work a soft and smooth texture, showing a noble effect. Silk Spring couplets usually appear grand and noble due to their price and gorgeous appearance, which is more like a work of art, suitable for display on formal occasions, adding a sense of luxury to the Spring Festival. Generally, designers can use the different materials to provide a richer expression of the Spring Festival couplet design.

Illustrations are widely used in modern Spring couplets, adding vivid and interesting elements. Similar to the design principle of adding cartoon patterns to WeChat red envelopes, the design of adding illustrations to Spring Festival couplets is also follows the design principles of modern aesthetics. Illustrations can be plants, animals, people and other images, usually related to the year's zodiac. Such a design adds a lively and childlike interest to the Spring Festival couplets, making them more amiable. Therefore, couplets with illustrations often attract the audience's attention and convey a pleasant and cheerful festival atmosphere. Some people use gold powder to give the couplets a sense of luxury and a unique luster. In traditional culture, gold is a special colour with positive meaning, which symbols of wealth, power and luxury (Luk, 2015). Therefore, golden powder is often regarded as a symbol of good luck and prosperity (Blair, 2000). Couplets made with gold powder or hot stamping will display a gold-like effect, highlighting the meaning of gold in the Chinese cultural context, which is the expectation of wealth and good luck. The design of gold powder produces a unique light and shadow effect on the Spring Festival couplets, making the entire work more dazzling, suitable for display on some formal occasions or places that need to highlight noble temperament and is very suitable for display with silk.

With the development of science and technology, Spring Festival couplets have been presented in more forms. Through the superposition of layers and the

highlighting of objects, the three-dimensional design can make the Spring Festival couplets show an interesting and realistic effect. This design element is often realized by means of relief and three-dimensional painting, which makes the image of Spring Festival couplets more vivid and three-dimensional (Figure 8). This design method often reflects the designer's meticulous elaboration of details and forms, making the Spring Festival couplets more complex and rich in art. In contrast, the hollow design presents a light and transparent effect through the creation of perspective and voids (Figure 10). Hollow is the use of modern technology through cutting or engraving, forming a virtual and real staggered artistic effect. Such design elements make the Spring Festival couplets have a sense of light and transparent, suitable for expressing a fresh and bright atmosphere. Different materials and design methods can make the Spring Festival couplets present different effects, modern people have more choices with the support of scientific and technological development, and designers have greater space to play.



Figure 10 Hollow out couplets

Conclusion

In creating cultural objects for Chinese festivals, design is an artistic expression and an engine of cultural inheritance, identity, and economic development. Through integration and innovation, design injects new vitality into cultural heritage so that it can be inherited and evolved continuously in contemporary society. In the process of

disseminating traditional culture, design intervention is necessary to preserve and re-create cultural objects in a contemporary Chinese festival context. As demonstrated in the above case studies, some design principles can be extrapolated as guides for designers, and they also have a strong alignment with a design thinking methodology. In recontextualizing festival artifacts for a contemporary setting, designers must integrate traditional elements with modern aesthetics and materials to maintain the authenticity of the artifact's traditional cultural function. All of this happens while allowing for innovation to best preserve its cultural connotation and make traditional elements radiate new life in the contemporary era. Designers can use various methods to allow more people to participate in the process of redesigning traditional culture, which will help shape the cultural identity of individuals and communities and promote and transmit cultural identity. As discussed by Bres and Davis (2001), this sense of identity creates a resonance in society, provides a bond of cultural identity to the community, inspires a sense of participation and festivity, and promotes national unity. Finally, designers should master and use the convenience, efficiency and quality brought by modern science and technology, and based on understanding the needs and preferences of the audience, they can make traditional items that adapt to modern aesthetics and needs, and the culture and cultural objects could be heritage.

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