

The Evolution of Yunnan's Tile Cats: From Sacred Rooftops as a Bridge to Cultural and Creative Products

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Abstract

As a unique ethnic cultural element, the Yunnan Tile Cats holds an important position in the local society of Yunnan. This study aims to explore the transformation of Yunnan Tile Cats from a sacred roof decoration to a cultural and creative product, analyze its cultural connotation and symbolic meaning, and discuss the development and commercialization process of Tile Cats as a creative product. The research adopts methods such as literature research, field investigation, and case analysis, and analyzes the evolutionary trajectory of Yunnan Tile Cats and its new vitality in modern society from the perspectives of cultural transformation theory and creative product development theory. The study finds that Yunnan Tile Cats has experienced a transformation from a religious symbol to a cultural symbol and then to a creative product, reflecting the survival and development.

Keywords: Evolution; Yunnan's Tile Cats; Sacred Rooftops; Cultural; Creative Products

Introduction

Yunnan is one of the settlements of ethnic minorities in China. It has a long cultural history and rich and diverse ethnic cultural resources. As a unique ethnic cultural element in Yunnan, Tile Cats plays an important role in the life of local residents. As a traditional roof decoration, tile cat 's unique shape and pattern decoration not only reflect the aesthetic pursuit of local residents, but also contain profound religious and cultural connotations.

Yunnan tile cat, as a traditional art form with a long history and cultural connotation, its unique shape and decoration style not only occupies an important position in local architecture, but also an important carrier of local national culture. This kind of tile cat decoration originated from the Bai folk was originally mainly used for the roof decoration of residential houses, which has distinct regional characteristics and profound cultural connotation (Liu, 2015).

The Bai people have been good at ceramic production since ancient times and have a unique aesthetic pursuit for architectural decoration. As a representative element of the architectural decoration of the Bai nationality, the cat 's modeling is lively or presents animal modeling or integrates natural elements, which is full of the yearning of the Bai people for a better life. In the traditional architecture, the tile cat not only bears the practical roof decoration function, but also bears the worship and awe of the ancestors, nature and gods of the Bai people, which has become an important symbol of the traditional belief and culture of the Bai people.

However, with the acceleration of the modernization process and the wide application of new building materials, traditional buildings in many areas of Yunnan are gradually being replaced by modern buildings. In this context, the tile cat, which was originally used as a roof decoration, has gradually lost its original functional positioning and is facing the fate of

marginalization. At the same time, people's awareness of the protection of traditional culture is increasing, and the attention to the unique cultural symbol of the tile cat is also paying more and more attention. Some local governments and cultural institutions have begun to try to incorporate tile cats into the intangible cultural heritage protection system and explore the transformation of them into cultural and creative products with market value in order to realize the innovative inheritance of tile cat culture (Wang, 2017).

This transformation from sacred roof decorations to cultural and creative products not only reflects the cultural transformation of Yunnan tile cat itself, but also reflects the cultural coping strategies of traditional handicrafts in the whole region in the face of modernization challenges. The evolution of tile cats from roof decorations to cultural and creative products fully demonstrates the arduous process of traditional culture seeking innovation and development under the new social background. The cultural identity, aesthetic pursuit, industrial integration and many other issues embodied in this transformation process deserve our in-depth exploration.

Through the systematic study of the transformation of the representative traditional handicraft culture of Yunnan tile cat, it not only helps to promote the protection and inheritance of the tile cat culture, but also provides useful enlightenment for the transformation and development of other traditional handicrafts, which is of great significance for promoting the development of local cultural and creative industries.

Conclude the Research Problems:

The primary research problems addressed in this paper revolve around the cultural transformation and preservation of Yunnan's Tile Cats, a traditional art form with profound historical and cultural significance. The paper investigates how the Tile Cat, originally a sacred roof decoration, has undergone a shift in its cultural and functional roles due to modernization. It explores the challenges posed by the marginalization of traditional architecture and the Tile Cat's evolving status as it transitions from a practical element of local architecture to a cultural and creative product. Additionally, the research examines the broader implications of this transformation on traditional handicrafts in Yunnan, focusing on issues such as cultural identity, aesthetic values, and industrial integration.

Giving the Reason for Presenting This Paper:

This paper is presented to address the urgent need for the protection and innovative inheritance of the Tile Cat culture in Yunnan, particularly in the face of rapid modernization and the decline of traditional architectural practices. By systematically studying the transformation of the Tile Cat from a sacred roof decoration to a cultural and creative product, the paper aims to contribute to the broader discourse on the preservation and development of traditional handicrafts. It seeks to provide valuable insights that can guide efforts to sustain and rejuvenate local cultural heritage, not only for the Tile Cat but also for other traditional crafts facing similar challenges. This research is significant for fostering the growth of cultural and creative industries in Yunnan, ensuring that the rich cultural history of the region is preserved and adapted to contemporary contexts.

Research Objectives

1. To study history and cultural significance of original Yunnan tile cat.
2. To analysis the trans formation of Yunnan tile cat that bring to the creative product market.

Literature Review

1. Cultural transformation theory

Cultural transformation refers to the evolution of a culture from a traditional form to a modern form. Scholars have explored the internal mechanisms and influencing factors of cultural transformation from various perspectives.

Inglehart and Baker (2000) propose that cultural transformation is a dynamic process of cultural adaptation, involving changes in social structures, values, and lifestyles. They emphasize that while societies undergo modernization, some traditional values persist, indicating that cultural transformation is not merely about change but also about the continuity of cultural elements.

Huntington (1996) discusses cultural transformation from the perspective of the collision and integration between traditional cultures and modern civilizations. He argues that cultural transformation is driven by the interaction of different cultural forces, where the external environment, including social, economic, and political factors, plays a crucial role. This perspective highlights the necessity for cultural subjects to actively adapt to and innovate in response to these external changes.

Robertson (1995) introduces the concept of "glocalization," which is relevant to understanding cultural transformation as a process that involves both global influences and local adaptations. He suggests that cultural transformation requires cultural subjects to actively absorb foreign cultural elements and integrate them with local culture, ultimately creating new cultural forms.

Appadurai (1996) further emphasizes the impact of globalization on cultural transformation, noting that global cultural flows significantly affect how local cultures evolve. He argues that cultural transformation is shaped by the interaction between global forces and local realities, requiring a dynamic balance between innovation and tradition.

Sahlins (1999) underscores the proactive role of cultural subjects in cultural transformation. He asserts that cultural change is not merely a passive response to external pressures but involves the active agency of individuals and communities in reconfiguring cultural elements to create new cultural meanings and forms.

In summary, the theory of cultural transformation emphasizes the initiative and innovation of cultural subjects, as well as the significant influence of the external environment. This theoretical framework provides important support for analyzing the transformation of Yunnan Tile Cats from sacred roof decorations to cultural and creative products. The active adaptation and innovation of local cultural subjects are crucial for Tile Cats to gain new vitality in modern society. Moreover, the transformation of Tile Cats reflects the broader collision and integration of traditional culture and modern civilization, illustrating the dynamic process of cultural transformation.

2. Creative Product Development Theory

Creative product development is the process of transforming ideas into products with market value. Scholars have put forward relevant theories from the perspectives of product design and marketing strategy.

According to Kotler (2006), creative product development requires an in-depth understanding of the target consumer group to meet its potential needs. He put forward the '6P' theory of product development, emphasizing the importance of product, price, channel, promotion, personnel and process in the process of innovation. Only by fully understanding

the needs of consumers and designing products with unique cultural characteristics and use value can the successful development and marketing of creative products be realized.

Verganti (2008) put forward the theory of " design-driven innovation, " emphasizing the key role of product design in the process of innovation. He believes that design is not only a change in the appearance of the product, but also a reshaping of the meaning and experience of the product. Excellent design can give new cultural connotation and symbolic significance to the product, so as to enhance its market competitiveness. Therefore, in the development of creative products, the creativity and insight of designers are crucial.

Amabile (1998) discussed the influencing factors of creative product development from the perspective of creative individuals and teams. She pointed out that creative product development requires the professional skills, creativity and intrinsic motivation of creative individuals, as well as the collaboration mechanism and resource support of creative teams. Only by combining the creativity of creative individuals with organizational resources can we promote the successful development of creative products.

In summary, the theory of creative product development provides an important theoretical guidance for this study to analyze the transformation of Yunnan tile cat from traditional cultural elements to creative products.

First of all, as a cultural and creative product with national characteristics, the development of tile cats requires an in-depth understanding of the needs of the target consumer groups. Only by designing tile cat products with unique cultural connotation and use value can they get a good response in the market. Therefore, in the process of product development, it is necessary to fully consider consumer preferences, product positioning, marketing strategies and other factors.

Secondly, the design of tile cat creative products plays a key role in the development process. Designers not only need to retain the traditional modeling features of the tile cat, but also give it a new cultural symbol meaning and use experience. Only through excellent design, can the tile cat be transformed from a simple decoration to a creative product with cultural connotation and market value.

Thirdly, creative product development needs to rely on the joint efforts of creative individuals and creative teams. Designers who are engaged in the development of tile cat creative products need to have profound cultural accumulation and creativity. At the same time, it also needs to rely on interdisciplinary creative teams to integrate resources and collaborative innovation, in order to ultimately achieve the successful development of Tile Cats creative products.

In short, the theory of creative product development provides an important theoretical support for the analysis of Yunnan Tile Cats 's transformation from traditional cultural elements to creative products. By integrating this theoretical perspective, we can better understand the mechanism and influencing factors of Tile Cats 's creative product development, and provide useful reference for the innovation and transformation of other traditional cultural resources.

Research Methodology

1. Literature Research

Extensive collection of literature related to Yunnan tile cats. By combing historical documents, ethnographic works, art design research papers, etc., the historical development of Tile Cats will be systematically combed to understand its status and significance in Bai traditional culture. At the same time, relevant policies and regulations, statistical data and other data will be collected to fully grasp the policy environment and development trend of tile cat culture protection and creative transformation in Yunnan.

2. Field research

Carry out in-depth field research. We will go to Dali and other tile cat producing areas in Yunnan to interview local cultural institutions, craftsmen, cultural and creative enterprises and other relevant stakeholders to understand the specific process of tile cat 's transformation from roof decoration to cultural and creative products, as well as the challenges and countermeasures. At the same time, we will visit local museums, exhibition halls, etc.to observe and collect tile cats to feel their unique modeling features and cultural connotations more intuitively.

3. Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative analysis method is used to study the market performance of Tile Cats creative products. Through sales data analysis and other means, we will fully understand consumers ' demand preference for Tile Cats cultural and creative products and their competitive situation in the market. This will provide an important basis for further optimizing the design and marketing strategy of Tile Cats 's creative products.

4. Research scope

The main research area of this study is Yunnan Province, especially Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture. As an important birthplace of Yunnan tile cats, Dali has a long history of tile cat production and a strong cultural heritage. It focuses on the application of Dali Bai tile cat in traditional architecture and its concrete practice of transforming into cultural and creative products.

At the same time, taking into account the domestic and foreign promotion of tile cat cultural products, this study will also pay due attention to its development in other regions. Collect and analyze the cultural communication of tile cats across the country to understand their cultural identity and market performance in different regions. This helps to grasp the overall situation of the transformation of Tile Cats culture more comprehensively.

In addition, this study will also pay attention to the promotion of Yunnan tile cat in the international market. With the increasing attention of Chinese traditional culture on a global scale, tile cat, a cultural and creative product with strong regional characteristics, has begun to emerge in overseas markets. Collect and analyze the sales data and consumer feedback of Tile Cats in overseas markets to explore the opportunities and challenges it faces in the process of internationalization. This will provide a valuable reference for the global promotion of Yunnan tile cat.

At the same time, it pays attention to other traditional handicraft categories related to the tile cat culture in order to find a valuable comparative perspective. Yunnan has many distinctive traditional handicrafts such as Yi embroidery, cloisonne and so on, which are facing the challenge of transforming from traditional crafts to cultural and creative products. Due attention should be paid to the cultural transformation process of these traditional handicrafts

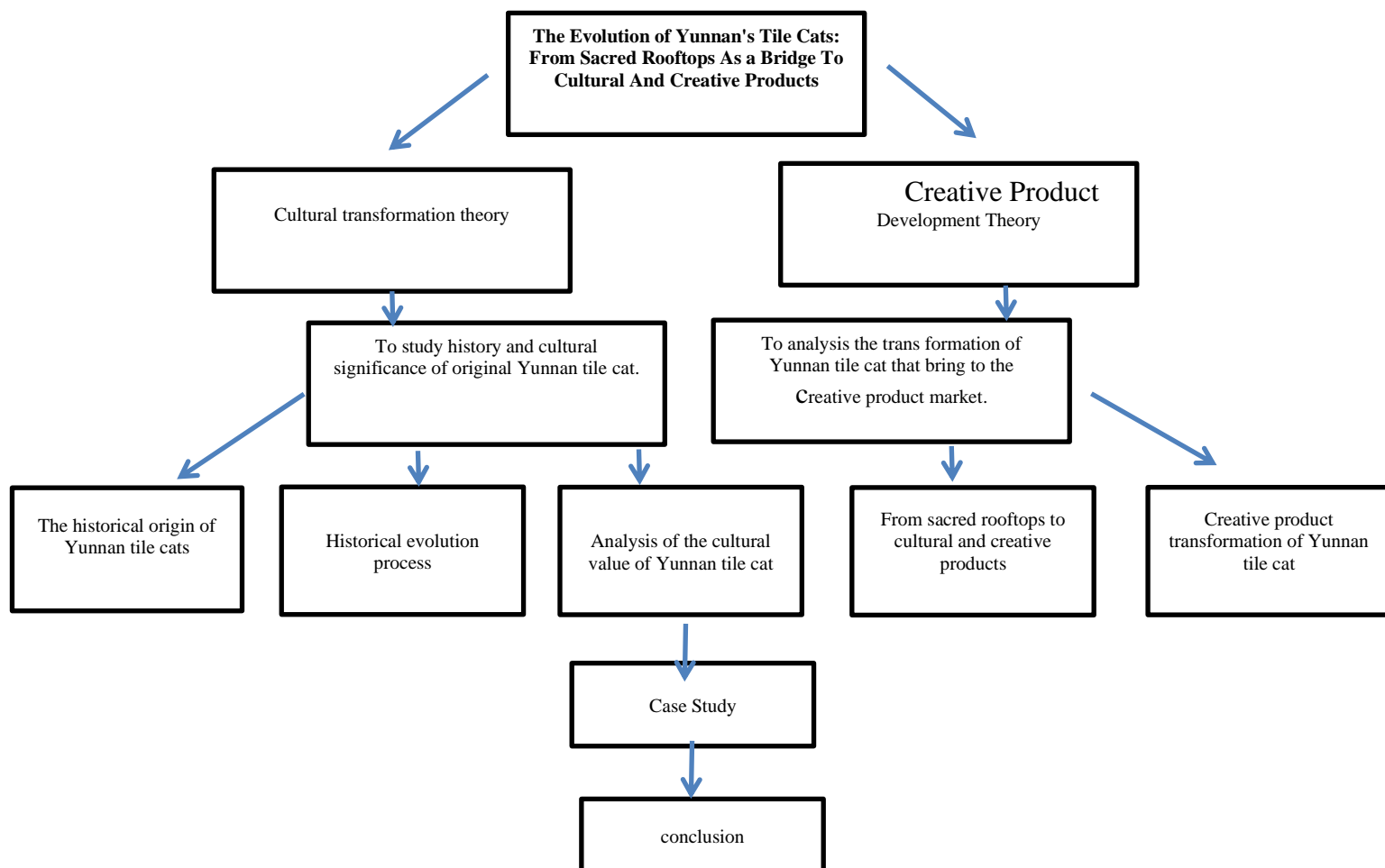
in order to find out the common law of the transformation of Tile Cats culture and provide useful reference for the innovation and development of other traditional cultures.

In a word, the main focus of this study is Dali, Yunnan, but at the same time, it will also pay due attention to the spread of Tile Cats culture in other regions and the transformation and development of other traditional handicrafts related to it in order to analyze it from an overall perspective.

The internal logic and external influence of the transformation of Tile Cats culture in Yunnan. This will provide a more comprehensive research basis for promoting the protection, inheritance and innovative development of Tile Cats culture.

Research Conceptual Framework

Table 1 Conceptual Framework of the Paper



Noted: Dai Nanxin

Research Results

1. To study history and cultural significance of original Yunnan tile cat

1.1 The historical origin of Yunnan tile cats

As an important element of the traditional architectural decoration of the Bai nationality, Yunnan tile cat has a long history and is closely related to the life of the Bai people. The Bai people have been good at ceramic production since ancient times and have applied this technique to architectural decoration to form a unique tile cat shape.

Archaeological discoveries show that the Bai ancestors began to use tile cats for architectural decoration as early as in Dali area. In the ancient wooden architecture of the Bai nationality, the tile cat is often placed in an important position on the roof to decorate the house with lively modeling. It has both practical functions and rich regional cultural characteristics. This practice of integrating ceramic technology into architectural decoration reflects the Bai people's yearning for a better life and their respect for nature and gods (Figure 1).



Figure 1 Tile cat in the building
Source: Photographed by researcher

With the continuous development of Bai culture, the shape and production process of tile cats are becoming more and more diverse. Some tile cats use animal shapes such as dragons, phoenixes, cats, etc. to signify auspiciousness. Others incorporate natural elements such as clouds, flowers, and leaves to highlight the magical charm of nature. These rich and varied modeling styles not only meet the aesthetic needs of the Bai people for architectural decoration, but also become an important carrier and symbol of the Bai culture (Li, 2018).

The cat also plays an important role in the traditional belief system of the Bai nationality. The Bai people generally believe in nature worship and believe that roof decorations such as tile cats can pray for the protection of gods to bring happiness and well-being to the family. Therefore, in the traditional architecture of the Bai nationality, the tile cat is often regarded as a sacred decorative element symbolizing good luck, peace and happiness.

In general, Yunnan tile cat is an important part of the traditional architectural culture of the Bai nationality. Its modeling characteristics and cultural connotation are closely related to the living customs, aesthetic pursuit and belief system of the Bai people. Through the in-depth exploration of the historical origin of the tile cat, we can not only fully understand the cultural value of this traditional handicraft, but also better understand the life wisdom and spiritual world of the Bai people.

1.2 Historical evolution process

Yunnan tile cat as a unique national architectural decoration elements, its historical development can be traced back to hundreds of years ago. Through combing the relevant literature and on-the-spot investigation, we can comprehensively restore the evolution of the cat from ancient times to the present.

The moral of Dali tile cat exorcising evil town house is born by folk totem worship. Taking the cat as a symbol of consciousness, on the one hand, it shows the unique ideological and cultural connotation of the local people, and on the other hand, it explains the unique inheritance of the local people 's beliefs. The history of making tile cats in Dali began in the Ming Dynasty, and most of the craftsmen were skilled in tile kilns. In the belief of the Bai nationality, the cat is a sacred animal image, representing auspiciousness, blessing and auspiciousness. Therefore, tile cats often play an important role in decorating and beautifying and praying for blessings and avoiding evils in temple buildings and residential houses of these ethnic groups.




With the passage of history, cats have gradually changed from simple religious decorations to tile cats (Table 2), which is an important part of residential buildings. In rural areas of Yunnan, tile cats not only become the main decorative elements of house roofs, but also are widely used in temples, ancestral halls and other religious buildings. During this period, the tile cat not only gave the building a unique visual charm, but also became an important embodiment of the local residents ' lifestyle and aesthetic pursuit.



However, in the late 20 th century, with the development of social economy and the acceleration of urbanization, the traditional rural architectural forms are gradually disappearing. At the same time, the younger generation 's recognition of traditional culture is also decreasing. In this context, the tile cat, a unique national cultural element, is facing the challenge of survival and development. On the one hand, the production skills of tile cats are facing the risk of being lost ; on the other hand, how to make this cultural symbol with national characteristics gain new vitality in modern society has become an urgent problem to be solved.

Fortunately, in recent years, with the joint efforts of the government and all sectors of society, tile cats have begun to transform from simple architectural decorations to cultural and creative products, and have gained a certain degree of attention in the market. This transformation not only provides a new path for the protection and inheritance of traditional cultural elements, but also reflects the important role of cultural and creative industries in promoting cultural transformation.

In a word, through combing the historical evolution process of Yunnan tile cat, we can see the transformation track of this national cultural element from religious decoration to architectural decoration and then to cultural and creative products, as well as the changes of its cultural functions and social significance in different historical periods. This provides a necessary historical basis for the subsequent analysis of the cultural transformation of tile cat.

Table 2 Changes in the image of cats in Dali, Yunnan

S/N	PERIODS	SIGNIFICANCE	PICTURE
01	Tang and Song Dynasties, about 1,400 years ago	<p>1. The ancient text "Huangdi's Book on Houses" notes To ensure the peace of their dwellings, they chose auspicious locations and orientations and employed reasonable layouts. Additionally, they used objects or talismans to enhance the Feng Shui effect, a practice known as establishing household guardians.</p> <p>2. Culturally, the tile cat, believed to drive away ghosts and ward off evil spirits, likely has its roots here. In Yunnan folklore, tile cats are also referred to as descending auspicious tigers, auspicious tigers, or mountain-guarding tigers, names that directly reflect their original purpose</p>	
02	Modern times, about 180 years ago	<p>1. the tile cat is placed on the roof with its tail facing inside the house and its mouth facing outside, implying that the wealth should be kept within the family.</p> <p>2. because the tile cat has an unusually large mouth, it means that it can swallow gold, silver and demons quickly and accurately, bringing good luck to the owner.</p>	
03	Modern tile cat, about 50 years ago	<p>1. the tile cat's belly is hollowed out, implying that it can eat and store endlessly, and it can eat any amount of gold, silver and treasures</p> <p>2. the tile cat stands on the tile, with its buttock transparent and facing inward, so it eats more and poops more, and the wealth it poops out flows along the tiles into the house.</p>	

04	Modern Tilecat Cultural Creation, about 5 years ago	1. The Tile Cat series inherits and promotes the traditional culture of the nation. 2. The Tile Cat series is a beautiful embellishment of modern life.	
05	This year, Tilecat Cultural and Creative	Yunnan Tile Cats A New Cultural Landmark for Exhibition and Inheritance of Innovation	

Noted: Photographed by researcher

1.3 Analysis of the cultural value of Yunnan tile cat

As an important part of the traditional architectural culture of the Bai nationality, Yunnan tile cat contains profound cultural connotation and aesthetic value. Through the systematic analysis of the cultural value of the tile cat, we can more fully understand the status and significance of this traditional handicraft in the Bai culture.

First of all, as a representative element of the Bai architectural decoration, the unique modeling language of the cat reflects the unique aesthetic pursuit of the Bai people. The tile cat adopts the animal modeling cat to mean good luck. This style not only meets the aesthetic needs of the Bai people for architectural decoration, but also becomes an important visual symbol of the Bai culture.

Secondly, the cat plays an important role in the traditional belief system of the Bai nationality. In the Bai culture, the cat is regarded as a symbol of auspiciousness and is closely related to the life of the Bai people. The Bai people believe that cats are animals that bring luck and happiness, so cat rituals and activities are held on many traditional festivals and important occasions of the Bai people. For example, in the celebration of the Spring Festival of the Bai nationality, a cat dance performance will be held to symbolize auspiciousness and happiness with the image of the cat.

In addition, cats are also regarded as a symbol of art in Bai culture. Bai 's cat painting and cat sculpture have a unique position in the field of art and are considered to be the treasures of Bai art.

However, the Bai people 's admiration for cats is not only because of the symbolic significance of cats, but more importantly, the actual role of cats in the life of the Bai people. Cats can catch mice and protect food, which has an important impact on the life of Bai people.

Therefore, the Bai people 's worship of cats is a double recognition of the actual role and symbolic significance of cats (Zhang, 2019).

In general, the Bai people 's worship of cat culture is an important part of the Bai culture, reflecting the Bai people 's love and respect for nature and life.

The Bai people generally believe in nature worship and believe that roof decorations such as tile cats can pray for the protection of the gods to bring auspicious health to the family. Therefore, in the traditional architecture of the Bai people, the tile cat is often regarded as a sacred decorative element carrying the worship and awe of the ancestors, nature and gods of the Bai people. The cultural connotation of this worship belief has become an important part of the unique cultural value of Tile Cats.

Once again, as an important carrier of Bai traditional culture, Tile Cats plays an important role in the daily life of Bai people. In the living environment and lifestyle of the Bai people, the cat is everywhere becoming an important medium for the Bai people to perceive and recognize the world. The inheritance of this cultural identity makes the tile cat an indispensable cultural symbol in the memory of the Bai people and an important carrier of the Bai cultural identity.

Finally, the unique modeling characteristics and cultural connotation of the tile cat also make it an outstanding representative of the traditional handicraft of the Bai nationality. The Bai people have been good at ceramic production since ancient times. This process has been integrated into architectural decoration to form a tile cat shape with regional characteristics. This craft tradition, which combines practicality and aesthetics perfectly, not only embodies the creative wisdom of the Bai people, but also becomes a valuable intangible heritage of the Bai culture.

In a word, Yunnan tile cat, as an important part of the traditional culture of the Bai nationality, its unique modeling language, cultural connotation and social function all reflect its important position in the Bai culture. Through the in-depth analysis of the cultural value of the tile cat, we can not only fully understand this tradition handicraft, but also better understand the rich connotation of Bai culture and its value and significance in modern society.

2. To analysis the trans formation of Yunnan tile cat that bring to the creative product market

2.1 From sacred rooftops to cultural and creative products

Although Yunnan tile cat has always played an important role in the historical development as an important part of the traditional architectural culture of the Bai nationality, this traditional handicraft is facing the fate of marginalization with the acceleration of the modernization process. With the wide application of modern building materials, more and more Bai traditional buildings have been replaced by new buildings. The tile cat, which was originally used as roof decoration, has gradually lost its functional orientation.

However, at the same time, people 's awareness of the protection of traditional culture is also increasing. Some local governments and cultural institutions have begun to try to incorporate the traditional handicraft of tile cat into the intangible cultural heritage protection system and explore its transformation into cultural and creative products with market value in order to realize the innovative inheritance of tile cat culture.

This transformation from sacred roof decorations to cultural and creative products not only reflects the cultural transformation of Yunnan tile cat itself, but also reflects the cultural coping strategies of traditional handicrafts in the whole region in the face of modernization challenges. On the one hand, the evolution of tile cats from roof decorations to

cultural and creative products fully demonstrates the arduous process of traditional culture in seeking innovative development under the new social background. On the other hand, the cultural identity, aesthetic pursuit, industrial integration and many other issues embodied in this transformation process are also worthy of our in-depth exploration.

In this process of transformation, the cultural value of Tile Cats has been reinterpreted and promoted. From simple practical decorations to symbolic cultural and creative products, the aesthetic characteristics and cultural connotation of tile cats have been rediscovered and highlighted. Some designers and cultural and creative enterprises integrate the traditional modeling elements of tile cat into modern product design to better meet the aesthetic needs of contemporary consumers on the basis of maintaining the original cultural connotation.

At the same time, the development of Tile Cats cultural and creative products has also injected new impetus into the transformation and development of local cultural industries. Some local governments and cultural institutions have incorporated tile cat products into the local characteristic cultural and creative industry system to enhance their influence in the market through policy support, marketing and promotion. This not only provides a new path for the protection and inheritance of traditional handicrafts, but also injects new vitality into local economic development.

In short, the transformation of Yunnan tile cat from sacred roof decoration to cultural and creative products reflects the complex process of traditional culture seeking innovative development in the context of modern society. The problems of cultural identity and industrial integration presented in this transformation process are worthy of our in-depth exploration in order to provide useful reference for the protection and inheritance of other traditional handicrafts.

2.2 Creative product transformation of Yunnan tile cat

Although Yunnan tile cat as an important part of the traditional culture of the Bai nationality, its unique modeling language and cultural connotation have been widely recognized, with the rise of modern architecture, the traditional tile cat architecture is facing the fate of marginalization. In order to protect and inherit this precious intangible cultural heritage, local governments and cultural institutions have begun to try to transform tile cats into cultural and creative products with market value.

This transformation process is not achieved overnight but has undergone a series of cultural remodeling and innovative design. First of all, relevant institutions and designers have deeply explored and reinterpreted the traditional modeling language and cultural connotation of the tile cat. Through the systematic study of the original form, production process and cultural implication of the tile cat, they refined and condensed the core cultural symbols of the tile cat to give it more rich modern significance.

On this basis, designers began to try to integrate these cultural elements into the design of various cultural and creative products. From home decorations, clothing accessories to cultural and creative gifts, the modeling features and cultural connotations of tile cats are widely used (Table 3), which makes these products not only maintain the traditional cultural characteristics, but also meet the aesthetic needs of contemporary consumers. At the same time, some cultural creation



The enterprise also developed a new production mode by digitizing the production process of tile cat, which improved the production efficiency and quality stability of the product.





This process of creative transformation not only enables the inheritance and development of Tile Cats culture in modern society, but also injects new vitality into local cultural and creative industries. Some local governments and cultural institutions have incorporated tile cat products into the local characteristic cultural and creative industry system to enhance their influence in the market through policy support, marketing and promotion. This not only provides a new path for the protection and inheritance of traditional handicrafts, but also injects new momentum into local economic development.

However, in this transformation process, Tile Cats cultural and creative products also face many challenges. First of all, how to meet the aesthetic needs of contemporary consumers on the basis of maintaining the traditional cultural connotation is the key problem that designers need to solve. Secondly, how to establish a complete Tile Cats cultural and creative industry chain to realize the effective connection from design and production to marketing promotion is also an urgent problem to be solved. Once again, how to seek a balance between cultural heritage and industrial development to maintain the purity of traditional crafts is also a common concern of relevant institutions and enterprises.

In short, the transformation of Yunnan tile cats from traditional handicrafts to cultural and creative products not only reflects the innovative development of this intangible cultural heritage in modern society, but also injects new vitality into the local cultural industry. However, at the same time, this transformation process also faces many challenges that require the joint efforts of relevant parties to achieve the continuous inheritance and innovative development of Tile Cats culture.

Table 3 The multi-element use of Yunnan cats.

S/N	USAGE	PICTURE
01	Mascot Sculpture	
02	paper drinking cup	

03	Tie-dye keychain	
04	chain	
05	Bag	
06	refrigerator magnet	

Discussion

Research Findings 1: The Historical and Cultural Significance of Yunnan Tile Cats
 Discussion:

The study found that Yunnan tile cats, as a traditional roof decoration, can be traced back hundreds of years and are mainly popular among the Bai and other ethnic minorities in Yunnan. The shape of tile cats usually includes the shapes of cats and other animals, symbolizing the worship of ancestors, nature, and gods. This symbolic meaning is consistent with the view put forward by Zhao (2016) in his study that traditional architectural decorations

often carry deep religious and cultural connotations. However, this study further pointed out that the shape of tile cats not only has religious significance, but also reflects the local residents' yearning for a better life. This finding expands the understanding of the function of tile cats in the existing literature.

Research Findings 2: The Transformation of Tile Cat Culture in the Process of Modernization

Discussion:

With the widespread application of modern building materials, traditional tile cats have gradually lost their original roof decoration function and turned into a cultural symbol. This study found that in this transformation process, tile cats gradually shifted from practical functions to decorative and artistic. This is consistent with the study of Ji (2022), in which Ji pointed out that many traditional handicrafts have regained symbolic meaning in modern society. However, this study further explored the cultural positioning of tile cats in this transformation and found that tile cats are gradually transforming from a symbol of religious belief to a symbol of cultural identity.

Research Findings 3: Marketization of Tile Cat Cultural Creative Products

Discussion:

The study shows that with the continuous transformation of tile cat culture, tile cats are gradually entering the market as cultural creative products. Through the analysis of cultural and creative product development, it is found that tile cat elements in creative products not only preserve their traditional cultural values, but also bring new economic opportunities. Gong (2019) pointed out that the marketization of traditional cultural elements is conducive to the protection and dissemination of culture. This study is consistent with this, but it also finds that there is a risk of product homogeneity in the marketization process, which may weaken the unique cultural connotation of tile cats.

Research Findings 4: Enlightenment of Tile Cat Culture on the Protection of Other Traditional Handicraft Cultures

Discussion:

This study shows that the transformation of tile cat culture is not only of great significance to its own protection and development, but also provides inspiration for the protection of other traditional handicrafts. The study found that the successful transformation experience of tile cat culture can be applied to other similar traditional crafts to promote the development of cultural and creative industries. This finding is consistent with the research of Wang (2011), who pointed out that the protection of traditional handicrafts can be achieved through innovation and marketization, but this study further emphasizes the cultural sensitivity in the development of cultural and creative products, pointing out that if not handled properly, it may lead to cultural alienation.

Summary:

These research results show the transformation process of tile cat culture from traditional roof decoration to cultural and creative products, and the implications of this transformation for the protection of tile cat culture itself and other traditional handicraft cultures. The research results support some existing literature views, and also expand the understanding of how traditional culture evolves and innovates in modern society through further empirical research.

Through the in-depth discussion of the historical origin, cultural value and the transformation process of creative products of the Bai tile cats in Dali, Yunnan, we draw the following conclusions:

First of all, Yunnan tile cat is an important part of the traditional architectural culture of the Bai nationality. Its unique modeling language and cultural connotation are closely related to the living customs, aesthetic pursuit and belief system of the Bai nationality. As a representative element of the architectural decoration of the Bai nationality, the brick cat not only meets the needs of the Bai people for architectural beautification, but also becomes an indispensable cultural symbol in the memory of the Bai people, carrying the worship and awe of the Bai people to nature and gods. This profound cultural value makes the tile cat occupy an important position in the traditional culture of the Bai nationality.

Secondly, with the rise of modern architecture, traditional tile cat architecture is facing the fate of marginalization. In order to protect and inherit this precious intangible cultural heritage, local governments and cultural institutions have begun to try to transform tile cats into cultural and creative products with market value. This transformation process is not achieved overnight, but has undergone a series of cultural remodeling and innovative design. Relevant institutions and designers have deeply explored and reinterpreted the traditional modeling language and cultural connotation of tile cats, endowed them with richer modern significance, and integrated them into the design of various cultural and creative products.

Thirdly, this process of creative transformation not only makes the Tile Cats culture inherit and develop in modern society, but also injects new vitality into the local cultural and creative industries. Some local governments and cultural institutions have incorporated tile cat products into the local cultural and creative industry system, and enhanced their influence in the market through policy support, marketing and promotion. This not only provides a new path for the protection and inheritance of traditional handicrafts, but also injects new momentum into local economic development.

However, in this process of transformation, Tile Cats cultural and creative products are also facing many challenges, such as how to meet the aesthetic needs of contemporary consumers on the basis of maintaining the connotation of traditional culture, how to establish a complete Tile Cats cultural and creative industry chain, to achieve effective connection from design and production to marketing promotion, and how to seek a balance between cultural inheritance and industrial development, and maintain the purity of traditional crafts. All these require the joint efforts of relevant institutions and enterprises in order to realize the continuous inheritance and innovative development of Tile Cats culture.

In short, the transformation of Yunnan tile cats from traditional handicrafts to cultural and creative products reflects the complex process of this intangible cultural heritage seeking innovative development in modern society, and also injects new vitality into the local cultural industry. We need to constantly explore the path of innovation and development on the basis of protecting traditional culture, so as to realize the lasting inheritance of Tile Cats culture.

Suggestions

Through the systematic study of the transformation of Yunnan tile cat culture, we not only fully understand the status and significance of this traditional handicraft in the Bai culture, but also provide a new perspective for its protection, inheritance and innovative development. But at the same time, we also found some research directions to be further explored.

Theoretical Suggestions

Further explore the cultural connotation of Yunnan tile cat. This study mainly analyzes the status and value of Tile Cats in Bai traditional culture from the macro level, but the research on its internal semiotic significance and aesthetic characteristics needs to be deepened. In the future, we can combine ethnography, aesthetics and other perspectives to analyze the cultural symbol system of Tile Cats in more detail, in order to understand the internal logic of its cultural value more comprehensively.

Policy Suggestions

Expand the research on the promotion strategy of Yunnan Tile Cats in the domestic and foreign markets. This study mainly focuses on the development of Tile Cats cultural and creative products in the local market, but there is still a lack of in-depth discussion on its promotion path in the national and international markets. In the future, we can study the differentiated marketing strategy of tile cat products, as well as its positioning and development prospects in global cultural exchanges, according to the consumer needs of different regions and cultural backgrounds. This helps to promote the comprehensive dissemination and influence of Tile Cats culture.

Pay attention to the far-reaching impact of the transformation of Tile Cats culture in Yunnan on the development of local society. This study preliminarily explores the social impact of the transformation of tile cats from traditional handicrafts to cultural and creative products, but its impact on local cultural identity and social memory still needs further in-depth analysis. In the future, we can comprehensively evaluate the multi-level impact of Tile Cats cultural transformation on local social development from the perspectives of regional development and cultural anthropology, so as to provide valuable reference for local cultural revitalization.

Further research Suggestions

Pay attention to the innovative application of Yunnan tile cat in the digital age. With the continuous development of scientific and technological means, how to use digital technology to better record and protect the production process of tile cats, and how to develop more attractive cultural and creative products of tile cats based on digital platforms are worthy of attention. In the future, we can combine 3D scanning, VR / AR and other technical means to explore the protection, inheritance and innovative application path of tile cats in the digital era, and inject new impetus into the sustainable development of traditional handicrafts.

In a word, this study provides a new perspective for promoting the protection, inheritance and innovative development of Yunnan tile cat culture, but there are still many research directions worthy of further discussion. We hope that in the future, we can continue to pay attention to this representative traditional handicraft, dig deeper into its cultural connotation, expand its market influence, and contribute more to the innovation and development of Chinese traditional culture.

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