

Design and Practice of Cultural and Creative Products for University Campus Youth Memories from the Perspective of Cultural Rapprochement

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Abstract: Cultural enrichment is an important component of the new era's strategy for governing the region, and universities bear a special mission in forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. This study takes university campus youth memories as its starting point, aiming to explore whether and how cultural and creative products can become a perceptible and enduring practical carrier for cultural enrichment of the region. Based on the theories of cultural memory and emotional design, this study analyzes the core emotional structure, typical cultural symbols, and the inherent logic of their transformation into cultural and creative products from university campus youth memories. The study finds that the regionality, ethnic integration, and collective emotional experience in campus youth memories together constitute the core material library for cultural and creative design; cultural and creative products that use the extraction and translation of cultural symbols from memory scenes combined with functional embedding can effectively stimulate students' emotional resonance and cultural identity. The study concludes that campus youth memory cultural and creative products, as a life-oriented carrier of cultural enrichment of the region, subtly strengthen the embodied experience of the sense of community for the Chinese nation through mechanisms of awakening, cohesion, and inheritance, and have theoretical reference and methodological value for the cultural education practice of universities in the new era.

Keywords: Cultural Rapprochement; Forge a Strong Sense of Community for the Chinese Nation; Campus Youth Memories; Cultural and Creative Products

1. The Contemporary Connotation and Strategic Significance of Cultural and Creative Research in Colleges and Universities under the Perspective of Cultural Enrichment of the Region

Cultural enrichment of the region is a major strategic deployment for border governance and cultural construction in the new era. Its core is to cultivate people with culture, educate people with culture, and enrich people's hearts with culture. It promotes the interaction, exchange and integration of various ethnic groups through the gentle immersion of culture [1]. Through "cultural enrichment of the region", the recognition of Chinese culture among the people of all ethnic groups is enhanced, and the consciousness of the Chinese national community is strengthened. In this process, the word "enrichment" embodies the governance wisdom of gentleness, gradualness and internalization. It requires cultural work to shift from "indoctrination" to "experience", "participation" and "memory", and pays special attention to the emotional connection and value guidance function of culture. Behind this shift is a profound understanding of the laws of cultural dissemination. True and lasting cultural identity is never the product of external indoctrination, but grows naturally in the repeated immersion in daily life [2].

As an important base for cultural inheritance and innovation, talent cultivation and value guidance, universities bear the important mission of promoting the excellent traditional Chinese culture, cultivating national sentiment and strengthening the sense of community of the Chinese nation [3]. Therefore, universities are not only places for knowledge transmission, but also core bases for emotional cultivation, value shaping and identity generation. Universities are not only the receiving terminal of cultural enrichment, but also the starting

point of cultural radiation [4]. Therefore, how to transform the strategic requirements of cultural enrichment into daily practices that students can perceive, participate in and retain during their time at school is an important issue facing universities today. Campus cultural and creative products, in a concrete, life-oriented and practical form, transform the abstract campus spirit, school history, youth memories and regional ethnic culture into perceptible, usable and disseminable material and digital products, becoming an important medium for connecting campus culture and individual emotions and realizing the integration of ideological and political education and aesthetic education [5]. In the practice of cultural enrichment, cultural and creative products, as the material medium of cultural memory, have the core function of transforming abstract memory content into a perceptible, usable and disseminable symbol system. Cultural and creative products do not carry abstract grand narratives, but rather specific micro-memories of a dormitory, a late-night chat, or a shared festival. This kind of small and beautiful emotional carrier is precisely the most effective way to achieve the goal of subtly influencing people. Therefore, carrying out cultural and creative practices to enrich the region based on universities has a significant spillover effect and can achieve the multiplier effect of “educating a generation and influencing a whole area” [6].

The core innovation of this study lies in coupling the strategic proposition of “cultural enrichment of the region” with the micro-emotional carrier of “campus youth memories”, and using cultural and creative design as a practical bridge [7]. Unlike existing studies that mostly approach cultural enrichment of the region from macro policies or meso-level positions, this study starts from students' daily emotions and life memories, so that the governance wisdom of “enrichment” can truly be realized at the level of objects that can be perceived, participated in, and inherited; unlike the souvenir positioning of general campus cultural and creative products, this study clearly endows cultural and creative products with the value goal of “cultural enrichment of the region”, so that while evoking youth memories, it can subtly enhance the identification with Chinese culture and the sense of belonging to the Chinese nation community. This coupling is

not a simple superposition of two issues, but rather establishes an internal transformation channel between “memory awakening” and “value guidance” - so that cultural identity is no longer an externally instilled slogan, but a spiritual root that grows naturally from students' own emotional experience [8].

Through this coupling, this study attempts to provide a bottom-up implementation path for cultural enrichment of the region that combines emotional warmth and practical operability. This path differs from the traditional “mobilization-execution” model. Its core logic is: taking youthful memories as the emotional entry point, cultural and creative products as the material carrier, and daily use as the continuous activation, the grand cultural strategy is broken down into specific, operable, and perceptible design actions [9]. Under this logic, cultural enrichment of the region is no longer an abstract policy discourse, but a notebook in the hands of students to record their struggles during exam week, a badge with a dormitory building pattern, and a bookmark that carries the stories of Han and ethnic minority roommates. When these items enter students' schoolbags, desks, and graduation bags, cultural enrichment of the region transforms from “work” to “life” and from “task” to “memory”. The proposal of this path is not only an innovative exploration of the way cultural enrichment of the region is implemented, but also provides a replicable and scalable practice paradigm for the construction of campus culture in universities in multi-ethnic regions.

2. Cultural and Creative Practice Path and Design Strategy under the Vision of Cultural Enrichment of the Region

Campus youthful memories, as emotional resources and collective memory carriers generated by students during their university years, have the characteristics of personal experience, high emotional concentration, and cross-cultural integration. How to transform this vibrant cultural resource system into perceptible, usable, and inheritable cultural and creative products is a key issue facing the practice of cultural education in universities. Based on the core logic of “memory scene extraction - cultural symbol translation - functional embedding,” this study proposes a three-stage practical path for the development of campus youth memory cultural and creative products,

and on this basis, extracts four design strategies, which together constitute a complete operational framework.

2.1 Practical Path

The development of memories of youth's cultural and creative products on campus should follow the three-stage practice path of “resource collection-design transformation-production embedding”. First of all, in the resource collection stage, field investigation is the basic method, and through in-depth interviews, oral records, collection of old photos and daily objects, a multi-dimensional material library including spatial memory, behavioral memory, sound memory and narrative memory is systematically constructed. In the process of collection, we adhere to the theme perspective, record the original memories with students' own expressions, and pay attention to the differences and intersections of students' memories with different cultural backgrounds, so as to provide real basis for subsequent design. Secondly, the core of the design transformation stage lies in three links: emotional anchor point extraction, symbol extraction and visual translation, and multi-sensory fusion expression: identifying emotional trigger points with universal resonance from interview texts, transforming them into visual graphics, colors and layout languages, and integrating tactile, auditory and even olfactory dimensions to enhance the authenticity and immersion of memory awakening. Finally, in the production and embedding stage, small batch flexible production mode is adopted, and the products are embedded in specific campus scenes such as freshmen's entrance packages, graduation souvenirs, dormitory culture festivals, etc., and students become providers and co-creators of memory content through participatory co-creation mechanism, thus enhancing the sense of belonging and communication of products. Cultural and creative products are not simple copies of static memories; rather, they provide a writable, fillable, and customizable framework. Through blank modules, “semi-finished” products, and online guidance for secondary creation, each user becomes an active constructor of their personal memories. This section systematically elaborates the core proposition of designing campus youth memory cultural and creative products from the perspective of cultural enrichment of the

region—covering design strategies through practical implementation—and aims to explore a complete transformation pathway from policy concepts to design practice, and from cultural resources to product carriers.

Campus youth memory cultural and creative products are effective media for transforming “cultural enrichment of the region” from policy discourse into lived experience. Cultural enrichment of the region emphasizes cultivating and nurturing people through culture; ultimately, it requires grounding grand narratives in the tangible, perceptible daily lives of individuals. The uniqueness of campus cultural and creative products lies in their ability to turn memory fragments—classroom buildings, tree-lined paths, late-night dormitory talks, shared festivals—into illustrations in notebooks, short phrases on bookmarks, patterns on badges—into tangible items that can be touched, carried, and given away. When students open a notebook to record the daily life of the exam week, or hang a key chain with the dormitory house number in the drawer of their new home, those days about their alma mater, about youth and about spending time with students of different nationalities will be awakened again. This way of embellishment does not take the road of preaching or rely on the repetition of slogans, but allows objects to speak for culture in daily use. Compared with an exhibition or a report, a canvas bag carried on the shoulder every day is silent, but it lasts longer.

The productization of shared multi-ethnic memories provides a “light” yet “substantial” micro-pathway for forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. Everyday scenarios in universities—mixed-ethnicity dormitories, shared festival celebrations, language mutual assistance—are themselves living practices of integration. The problem is that these warm moments easily fade after graduation. Productizing them—not as propaganda posters, but as postcards exchanged among dormmates or custom commemorative badges for a class—is like pressing a “save button” for those fleeting interactions. Importantly, these products do not work by directly proclaiming “we must be united,” but by allowing students from different ethnic groups to recognize fragments of their own lives in the same product. When a Uyghur student and a Han student both smile knowingly at the same dormitory doorplate design, the

sense of “us” arises not from demand but spontaneously. It is in this sense that campus youth memory cultural and creative products are not merely souvenirs of personal youth, but micro-level practical carriers of a sense of community.

2.2 Design Strategies

Based on the above practical approaches, this study extracts four core design strategies to guide the value orientation and operational principles of product development. First, the emotional anchor priority strategy: instead of using official symbols such as school badges and mottos as the starting point for design, it uses micro-memories that resonate emotionally in students' real lives (such as dormitory room numbers, pre-exam seat reservations, and late-night chats) as core materials. Each product corresponds to a specific emotional anchor, replacing grand emotional expressions with concrete details. Second, the everyday translation strategy: “Reducing” cultural memories to frequently used everyday functional carriers, prioritizing personal items such as notebooks, bookmarks, card holders, and water bottles, embedding cultural symbols into functional details rather than simply printing them on the surface, making the product first a useful everyday item, and secondly a cultural carrier. Third, the fusion-style expression strategy transcends symbol juxtaposition or pattern collage, achieving organic integration through narrative design of shared life scenarios—finding common experiences shared by students from different cultural backgrounds, replacing fragmented symbolic piling up with complete life scenes, while avoiding stereotypical and sensational expressions. Fourth, the memory reproduction strategy: cultural and creative products are not simple copies of static memories, but provide a framework that can be written, filled, and customized. Through blank modules, “semi-finished” products, and online secondary creation guidance, each user becomes an active constructor of personal memories.

A collaborative operation mechanism is formed between the practical path and the design strategy: in the resource collection stage, materials are selected with “emotional anchor points first” as the guide, avoiding the collection of visually gorgeous but emotionally empty content; in the design transformation

stage, the strategies of “fusion-style expression” and “memory reproduction” are comprehensively used to elevate the original materials into product language with resonance and participation; in the production embedding stage, “everyday translation” is used as the evaluation standard to ensure that cultural and creative products become practical companions accompanying students' daily lives rather than window display items. Through the organic integration of the above paths and strategies, campus youth memory cultural and creative products can transcend superficial visual replication and truly become cultural carriers that carry emotions, inspire resonance, and can be preserved and passed on, providing a perceptible, operable, and replicable implementation path for the cultural education work of colleges and universities.

3. Suggestions for Cultural and Creative Practices under the Perspective of Cultural Enrichment of the Region

Based on the above understanding, the following suggestions are proposed for the regular implementation of cultural and creative activities on university campuses.

3.1 Memory-Driven: Establishing a Regular Mechanism for Updating Creative Materials

Memories should be collected before cultural and creative products are developed, and a normalized mechanism for material updating should be established. Currently, most university cultural and creative projects start with the question “What should we make?” rather than “What memories are worth making into something?” It is recommended that student affairs departments or design-related disciplines take the lead in conducting small-scale oral history collection, old photo solicitation, and keyword collation from graduation season social media posts among graduates and alumni each year. These materials should then be incorporated into a memory repository accessible to designers. With continuous accumulation of materials, cultural and creative development can break free from the homogenization trap of “rebranding and reuse,” achieving a distinctive identity for each university and a genuine heartfelt touch for each graduating cohort.

3.2 Embedded in Daily Life: Leveraging

Existing Scenarios for Natural Distribution

Cultural and creative products should be integrated into existing student work scenarios—not by starting from scratch, but by embedding them into daily routines. The greatest strength of such products lies in their “silent influence,” which can only be realized through authentic everyday use. It is recommended to link campus cultural and creative products with existing initiatives such as freshman welcome packages, graduation souvenirs, prizes for ethnic unity activities, and commemorative items for outstanding dormitory selections, allowing these products to reach students naturally at those touchpoints. Compared with setting up standalone cultural and creative stores or sales channels, this “embedded” distribution approach is lower in cost, broader in coverage, and more conducive to fostering emotional connections through use.

3.3 Teacher-Student Co-Creation: Activating On-Campus Design Practice Resources

In terms of design capacity, a “student-participating, professionally-supervised” approach should be adopted. Most universities have fine arts, design, or related disciplines, as well as student clubs focused on cultural and creative products—valuable on-campus resources that can be activated. It is recommended to explore a “teacher-guided, student-led” design model, introducing cultural and creative development into course assignments, graduation projects, or club activities, while professional instructors or experienced designers ensure quality control. This approach not only reduces the cost of external outsourcing but also provides students with a genuine hands-on platform. More importantly, products made by students are most convincing to students themselves—a notebook designed by peers is far more attuned to what is currently popular and meaningful on campus than a template-based product outsourced to an external company.

3.4 Narratives of Interaction: Transforming Multi-Ethnic Co-Living Scenarios

Multi-ethnic interaction scenarios should be consciously transformed into design themes, rather than focusing merely on decorative patterns. Ethnic elements in cultural and creative products do not have to be represented through patterns like Atlas silk or Kazakh

embroidery to be meaningful. Far more worth mining are the everyday moments: learning common phrases in each other’s languages while sharing a dormitory, cooking a pot of hand-pulled rice together during festivals, or being mixed into teams with students from different ethnic backgrounds at sports meets. It is recommended to actively select these cross-cultural daily scenarios for visual expression in thematic planning, so that products tell not “the characteristics of each ethnicity” but “the stories of all ethnicities together.”

3.5 Respecting Diversity: Balancing Grand Themes with Individual Memories

The private and diverse nature of memories should be respected, avoiding excessive “thematization” that leads to emotional alienation.” Youth memories are personal and delicate. For some students, the most memorable thing might not be an ethnic unity exchange activity, but a song played by the evening campus radio, or the seat by the window in the library during exam week. Cultural and creative products need to carry value guidance functions, but this should not squeeze out the space for genuine memory expression. It is recommended to maintain a balance between “big themes” and “small pleasures” in product line planning – having both a “Pomegranate Blossoms” series pointing to the sense of community and a “Time Marks” series recording personal daily fragments – so that students with different preferences can find something they are willing to buy and keep for a long time. Only then can cultural and creative products avoid becoming yet another form of preaching, and truly uphold the original meaning of “enrichment.”

4. Future Outlook

Future research can be deepened in the following directions: conducting longitudinal tracking to examine the retention of alumni’s memories of cultural and creative products and changes in cultural identity several years after graduation; and exploring hybrid cultural and creative forms that combine “digital + physical,” such as AR scanning to awaken dynamic memories and binding blockchain digital collectibles with physical products, to adapt to the media habits of the new generation of students. Overall, this study provides a bottom-up path for the micro-implementation of

cultural rapprochement in universities, which combines emotional warmth and practical operability. Despite many shortcomings, it has initially verified the value of the “cultural and creative products for youth memories” approach. We look forward to more research and practice in this direction in the future.

5. Conclusion

This study takes “cultural enrichment of the region” as its macro perspective and campus youth memories as its entry point, systematically exploring the design strategies and implementation pathways for cultural and creative products as a “perceptible and preservable” practical vehicle for cultural enrichment. Through theoretical synthesis, resource collection, design practice, and user feedback, the study draws the following core conclusions.

First, memories of youth's cultural creation on campus is an effective medium to transform culture from policy discourse to life experience. The research proves that cultural and creative products based on real campus life scenes and oriented by “communicative memory” can transform the abstract concept of cultural embellishment into a material carrier that students can perceive, use and transmit. When memento mori, such as teaching buildings, tree-lined streets, night talks in dormitories and festivals, is transformed into illustrations on notebooks, short sentences on bookmarks and patterns on badges, cultural identity will gain emotional foundation and emotional support in daily use.

Second, the productization of multi-ethnic common memory provides a “light” and “real” micro-path for casting the consciousness of the Chinese nation community. Daily scenes such as people and Chinese living together in colleges and universities, festivals celebrating together, and language mutual assistance are living blending practices. Through the collection, translation and dissemination of cultural and creative products, these perishable contacts are instantly solidified into a material form that can be preserved and transmitted. The way the product works is not to preach directly, but to let students of different nationalities recognize their own life fragments on the same product, so that the feeling of “we” changes from being asked to growing naturally.

Thirdly, this study constructs a methodology of

cultural and creative design that adapts to the resource conditions of colleges and universities. On the level of design principles, three core principles are established: the priority of communicative memory and the solidification of cultural memory, the juxtaposition of blending expression and collage, and the balance between memory authenticity and artistic processing. At the level of practical path, a complete closed loop from resource collection to design transformation to production promotion has been formed. User feedback preliminarily verified the feasibility and effectiveness of this methodology.

This study provides a bottom-up, emotionally warm, and practically operable pathway for the micro-level implementation of cultural enrichment in universities. However, limitations include a small sample size, lack of longitudinal tracking, and the absence of a control group; thus, the external validity of the conclusions requires further testing. Future research can expand the sample range, conduct quasi-experimental designs, perform longitudinal follow-up, and explore mixed forms combining “digital + physical” cultural and creative products. Overall, this study preliminarily validates the value of the “youth memory-based cultural and creative” approach, and we look forward to more research and practice continuing to cultivate deeply in this direction.

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