

Research on Memory Factors of City Souvenir

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Abstract. The city souvenir is developed as an indispensable product in every city, which is also regarded as the significant media of constructing the city image and delivering culture. However, it's a regret that the designs of souvenirs demonstrate great homogenization, whose boring and repetitive images cannot arouse interests and city memories from consumers nowadays and this has become a dilemma designers confronting with. In the design of "weight of Shanghai", we drew support of the questionnaires and case analysis to pick up the most recognized project that represents Shanghai. Then through comparison among the most frequently mentioned designs, we screened out the design elements. The interviewees were also required to marked the products based on the degree that how much the products can arouse their city memories, whose data can help build the relationship between the intensity of city memory and the related design elements, finally contributing to the final edition of design.

Keywords: City souvenir · City memory · Product design

1 Introduction

1.1 Definition of the City Souvenir

City souvenir attaches great significance of the commercial qualities of a certain product, alongside with its rich cultural meanings and commemorative characteristics. It shouldn't basically just be allocated to the common commodity as it's full of the commemorative meanings of a certain traveling, bearing the beautiful and special memory of a city. What's more, it's regarded as the significant symbol and direct reflection of the local customs and practices, cultural customs and natural views. From the communication science's perspectives, the innovation of city souvenir is beneficial for expanding and propagandizing the national and regional cultures, doing favor for the inheritance and development of our national culture. In terms of design science, it urges and promotes the ability of creativity, which is indispensable for enhancing the level of manufacturing techniques and cultivating design talents. On the other hand, the cultural protection experts might say that the city souvenir not only represents the

cultural connotation, artistic level but also demonstrates the utilization of material resources and craft skills. Hence, it cannot wait a minute for us to follow up the development of the era to satisfy the increasingly diverse purchasing requirements of tourists. More specifically, this target requires us to dig into the local culture, create and refine some representative cultural symbols to product city souvenirs with aesthetic, practical, regional, commemorative and cultural characteristics [1].

City souvenir is a significant carrier to highlight the characteristics of a city's culture while the city memory is the foundation to demonstrate the city's specialty. As mentioned in the "City Development" written by the eminent city theorists: the city survives for memories [2]. With the gradual transformation of China's tourism industry, tourism begins to vary from functional consumption to emotional consumption and the requirements of tourists change from mere visiting to experiencing. Thus, in the city traveling, memories can be sold as a component of the traveling production mix. This's true when concerning the historical cities, as the rich experiences of the city help us know, fell and experience, to better know its past, current status and the future. The memory of those who have connected with the city in the historical sections, has also become a shining point of the tourism. To sum up, picking up those exerting the most impressive factors of a city not only provides valuable and special thoughts when designing the souvenirs, but also helps completely and detail-edly preserves the exclusive city memories [3].

1.2 The Relationship of City Memory and City Souvenir

In the view of social psychology, memories are variably considered to be manipulated to correspond with the experiences and personal views as a process that how human brains cope with the external information through coding, saving and extracting. In addition to the personal memory, there exists collective memory shared with a group of member [4]. Commonality is the starting point of collective memory, established by not an established concept, but a concept of social construction [5]. The architecture believes that the city is the place where the collective memories form, whose definition is refined distinguished from family memory and national memory. Besides, Le Goff concludes the five phrases of the development of the human memory, where the part related to city construction belongs to the second phrase, which is formed alongside with the presence of commemorative place [6].

In the design activity, since the development of the urbanization tide swept China, designers focus have serious biased, reducing the sense of culture, belongings and identity of the users. More seriously, this would lead to the lacking and fracture of the cultural and historical development of the city. Additionally, we notice that the changing environment has weakened the relationship with their memories used to locate the city, resulting into some difficulties of week memory and recognition. On the other hand, the history, culture and the material environment consist of the most important part of consent degree of personals and groups. However, the loss of modern urban culture has caused some difficulties of sense of identity and sense of

belonging when someone lives in a certain city. Under such a situation of lacking in collective memories and urban memories, the design of city souvenirs is somehow biased too [7].

2 Method

Our research starts from the perspective of users, with the methodology of case study and focus interview. In the meanwhile, with the thought of Kansei Engineering, we can draw a conclusion of the strong or weak relationship between the interviewees' urban memory and certain design elements, in order to find the theoretical support for the design of urban souvenir. Applying the method of analyzing "urban memory" to consumer analysis and product plot can help satisfy the emotional requirements of a urban souvenir and promote the sense of belonging and identity. The main procedures are as follow:

1. Find out what in the interviewees' mind that can represent Shanghai most through the focus interview.
2. Refine and classify couples of design elements with the thought of Kansei Engineering, based on the frequency of certain thing.
3. Select several cases whose design elements are corresponding to certain Shanghai souvenirs and ask the interviewees to score the products according to the degree that can arouse their memories.
4. Rank the scores given above and endow them with a certain degree of arousing city memories, then apply to the next design.

2.1 Collect the Design Elements

Considering the difference of objectives, we take two groups for comparison, the tourists group and the local group. Each one of group contains 8 persons, the former one consist of local citizens while the latter one is made up of tourists or undergraduate students from other cities. During the investigation process, they are required to describe couples of discrete things to best represent Shanghai (see Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1. The design elements collected from the tourist group

Oriental pearl tower	The bund	Jin Mao building	Expo building	Shanghai center	Fried dumpling
Shanghaihese	Cheongsam	City temple	Rickshaw	Mahjong	Alley
Shikumen	Xintiandi	Huangpu river	Phonograph	Soup dumpling	Yangcheng lake crabs

Table 2. The design elements collected from the local group

Oriental pearl tower	The Bund	Jin Mao building	Expo building	Shanghai center	Fried dumpling
Shanghainese	Cheongsam	City temple	Rickshaw	Dashijie	Alley
Shikumen	Racecourse	Huangpu river	Bailemen	Soup dumpling	Yangcheng lake crabs

Comparing the results from the two groups, except for the traditional things, the most distinguished difference from the citizen group is that the tourist group highly value the mahjong, the Xintiandi and phonograph. Apart from the tourist group, the local group put forward the Dashijie, the Racecourse and the Bailemen. These result show that the ambiguity existing in the different group concentrates about the past Shanghai since the local can be more familiar with the eminent constructions of the old Shanghai while the tourist prefer some intentions of the Bund in the old Shanghai by mentioning mahjong, phonograph and rickshaw.

With the results above, we can classify them into three groups: the architecture group, language group and living group. Through sub-division, we get 9 design elements (see Table 3).

Table 3. 3 elements groups and 9 design elements

A: architecture group	B: living group	C: language group
A1: landmark building	B1: food	C1: character
A2: traditional building	B2: entertainment tools	C2: pronunciation
A3: building groups	B3: clothing	
	B4: transportation	

2.2 Case Analysis

For better research consumers’ emotional recognitions of the combination of some certain design factors and the real production, our project picks up 12 representative modern souvenirs (see Fig. 1) and produces corresponding questionnaires for interviewees to marks the products, under the standard of the extent of representativeness. Ranging from 1 to 5, the higher score means a stronger consistence of the Shanghai in memory.

Then we calculate the expected value of the data collected, which shows that the items related to architecture score the highest and those related to language rank the lowest, while those in the classification of living earn a fluctuating result. The score of design elements ranges from high to low shows A1, A3, A2, B1, B3, B2, C2, B4, and C1 (see Table 4).

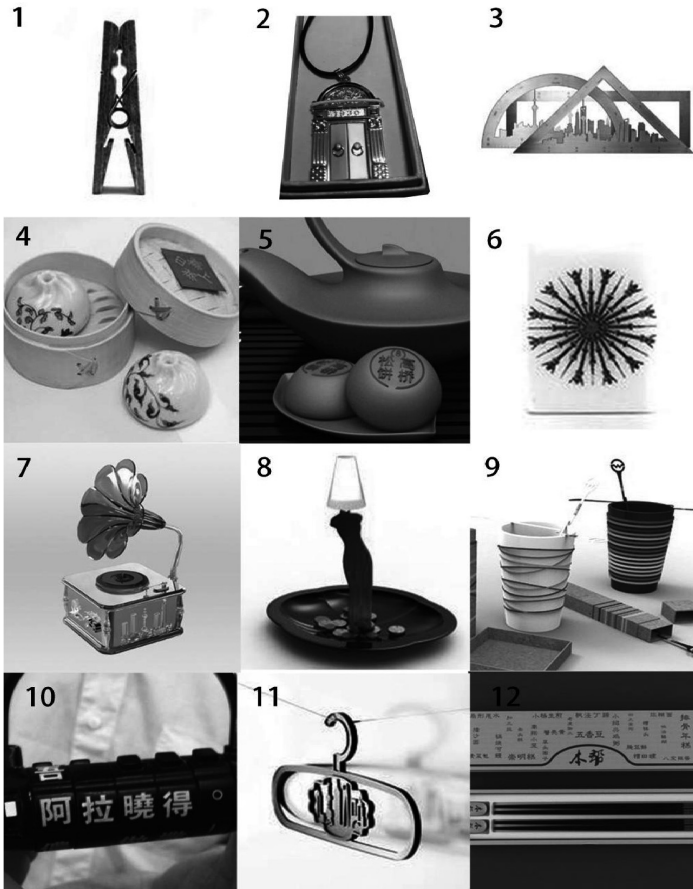


Fig. 1. Design cases of 12 representative modern souvenirs

Table 4. The correspondences between cases and design elements and the score of design cases

No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Design elements	A1	A2	A3	B1	B1	B2	B2	B3	B4	C2	B3 C1	B1 C1
Score	4.02	3.66	3.82	3.51	3.12	2.33	2.98	3.35	2.88	2.74	2.34	3.55

3 Design of “The Weight of Shanghai”

In the design contest of tourist souvenir of Shanghai city held by the Shanghai Tourism Bureau, the travel assistant product named “the weight of Shanghai” was certificated of the first round judgments, required to combine the theme of “the Memory of Shanghai”

to make further correction according to the committee. During the process of creating, they used the above mentioned research methodology and statistical conclusions, finally attaining the award.



Fig. 2. The souvenir design of “weight of Shanghai”

3.1 Selection of the Design Elements

Through the above investigation survey and statistical analysis, we found that the factors related to architecture got the highest mark, thus the products should design with more architectural elements. As for the single selection, although the modern erections got the highest mark, it shouldn't be selected as prior design factor since the design elements of high recognition are often in an excessive use in similar products, causing aesthetic fatigue. What ranks the second place is the building group and traditional architecture. Then we can also consider the delicacy in the living group with its satisfactory scores.

3.2 Design Performance

“The weight of Shanghai”, an assistant product combining the memory of Shanghai and the modern urban life, whose main functions are weighting, lightening and charging. The final edition of “the weight of Shanghai” chooses the arch shape like “Shikumen” as the general image, with decoration of traditional pattern. What's more, in the front side of the panel, it chooses the architectural complex of the Bund and makes some abstract carving above. The designer makes some architectural elements and living factors on the strap portion of the product, abstracting the symbolic erections of Shanghai to arouse the memories of people (see Fig. 2).

4 Conclusion

In terms of the traditional image of the city souvenir, this essay starts from the user experience, analyzing the significance of the application of city memory to the design of city souvenir. More creatively, based on this I put forth some design of city souvenir with the support of our city memory research and some other existent product analysis, combining the design elements from Kansei Engineering. To be more specific, that is to split the current products into several parts corresponding to the elements in the city memory respectively, then through the investigation survey and interviews to analyze the consent degree of the whole product. With these statistics analysis we have concluded the effective factors of different city memories, which are quite indispensable for the latter directional design and finally help list the design procedures for the honored cases as a more reliable approach for the city souvenir design.

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