

# Application of Regional Culture in Local Characteristic Gift Packaging Design

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**Abstract:** Objective: Faced with unclear local characteristics gift packaging culture, the unreasonable policy, and unclear messaging, and filial culture in Xiaogan City, it researches on regional culture application of the principles and policies at the local features gifts packaging design. Methods: Field-based survey, collection of literature, the status of Xiaogan filial cultural characteristics and gift of local characteristics of packaging design case were analyzed to draw criticism.

## 1. Introduction

In the new understanding of regional culture and relations on the basis of special gifts, grasp the local culture into the local characteristics gift packaging design thinking guide. Analysis of the principle of regional materials and elements of local characteristics gift packaging design using the emotional positioning and visual communication. Explore the local characteristics of gift packaging design art image re-creation mode. The effect of packaging design in the traditional sense is to protect goods, be convenient for transportation and promote sales, but nowadays, “the effect of some types of packaging, especially for the gift packaging, has exceeded their pure functions, and packaging has its own cultural and aesthetic values of existence as a special identifiable symbol”. The style of gift packaging with local features should highlight the characteristic of regional culture and ought to be the advocator of regional culture and regional image, while the present featured gift packaging excessively emphasizes its superficial decorativeness, which is lack of cultural connotation with different styles, bad sense of design and weak cultural property. How to integrate the regional culture into the design of gift packaging with local features? Firstly, it needs to transfer the inherent thinking model, break away from the shadow of sales dominated, strive to meet the aesthetic needs of audiences and improve the added value of culture. Secondly, in the exploration and usage of regional materials and elements, it should seek for the emotional positioning of packaging design and create an optimal visual impact for audiences. Thirdly, creative elements should be drawn from regional cultures to create artistic images. The regional culture is the process of inheritance and development, which includes both traditional customs and the extension of modernity, both story-like elements and materialistic symbols. Xiaogan has the custom of emphasizing filial duty since ancient times, and the filial piety culture is expressed in various aspects of life, such as the traditions of worshipping ancestors on New Year's Eve, “pleasing seven sister” activity in lunar January, and “never saying old when parents are still alive”, etc. In addition, “the filial piety stories of Dong Yong, Meng Zong and Huang Xiang” are also indelible in the filial piety culture in Xiaogan. In order to integrate the filial piety culture into the gift packing with local features of Xiaogan, it first needs to recognize the types and characteristics of the gifts with local features of Xiaogan, and consider the deep integration of the special local products in Xiaogan, such as rice wine, sesame candy, paper cutting, ginkgo, and tea, etc.

## 2. Design Thinking Transformation Dominated by the Regional Culture and Featured Gifts

The artistic creation usually emphasizes the importance of inspirational thinking and often ignores the logicity of thinking. While integrating the regional culture into the packaging of featured gifts

needs to synthesize the factors from various aspects, extract information, analyze problems, expand the train of thought and provide more design possibilities, so logical thinking is particularly important at this time, which can provide a reproducible and extractable creative process for design and creation. “The package of special local product itself is the comprehensive reflection of folk-custom, folkway, art and creative thinking ability, which not only can attract audiences from the appearance, but also has certain collecting values and higher sense of art, as well as can better protect products, reflects regional features, differs from the ordinary and has a personalized regional packaging”. Combining all the above factors, the redesign of the packaging of special local products requires the divergent thinking to create more possibilities and the reverse thinking to build more uniqueness.

## **2.1 Divergent Thinking**

The divergent thinking in design is intended to create more design possibilities, synthesize the knowledge of all aspects and expand the train of thought freely.” The most important method in the divergent thinking is brainstorming, which lists all kinds of creative ideas with mind mapping, and arranges and combines ideas again according to the actual needs to delete improper ideas for optimizing process. The divergent thinking quoted in this paper is not to diffuse casually and arbitrarily, but to follow certain logical clues, taking logical thinking as the main line and divergent thinking as the subline. In order to integrate the regional culture into the design of gift packaging with local features, the divergent thinking can be used from the following clues: taking the folk-custom and folk art as the clue, taking the current fashion element as the clue, taking the design emotion of the designer as the clue, taking the characteristic of featured gifts as the clue, and taking the preference of audiences as the clue, etc.

## **2.2 Reverse Thinking**

“Reverse thinking is also called the thinking of seeking difference, which is a thinking mode to think problems from the opposite of things. Design in a diametrically opposite way often brings unforeseen effects, which explores from the reverse side to build up viewpoints and create new images.” This thinking model is critical. The current market of featured gift packaging is chaotic, and imitation and comparison are rampant. When a certain packaging style becomes popular, some designers begin to compete for imitation regardless of product features and waste resources, resulted in the monotonous packaging. At this time, reverse thinking can help designers to create from the reverse side and seek new creative ideas on the basis of abiding by the logical main line, for example, for the current packaging of featured gifts emphasizes the complexity and luxury, designers can simplify the packaging design by following the idea of “green packaging”, and highly praise the simple style from the another way of material selection.

## **3. The Principle of Emotional Positioning and Visual Communication in the Selection of Regional Materials and Elements**

The design of gift packaging with local features is not just to pile up regional elements, but to be targeted, select different styles of packaging design for different gifts, grasp the emotional relationship, use emotional symbols, guide consumers’ consumption behaviors, and convey the emotional information able to motivate the “filial piety” to consumers, so that consumers can get unforgettable emotional experience in the process of visual impact and product using. “The packaging of featured gifts is not only a sales behavior, but the emotional experience in the visual communication of packaging, which has the regional cultural connotation, and is a collection of utility, aesthetic appreciation and emotion.” With the introduction of new concepts such as “barrier-free packaging” and “green packaging”, the needs of people for packaging have begun to sublimate from simple material needs to spiritual needs. How to adapt to the ever-changing needs of packaging? It needs to pay attention to the principle of culturing, attraction, appropriateness, and interaction.

### **3.1 Principle of Culturing**

Regional culture is the integration of material wealth and spiritual wealth created in the development of regional history, and culture is the soul of packaging design. In this paper, it mainly explores the application problem of integrating filial piety culture into packaging design, so the reflection of filial piety culture in design is the primary foundation of establishing this problem. For regional culture, Henry Steiner explained that, “most people are unaware of their own culture – just as they are unaware of air, growth and gravity. We live in the culture, which affects our thinking and behavior in a “natural” way, just as plain as water acting on fishes” . Our design activities are inseparable from regional cultural factors, and design itself has become an important cultural phenomenon. The packaging design of featured gifts has increasingly become the process of culture communication and creation, and the medium of strengthening and sharing regional cultural values.

### **3.2 Principle of Attraction**

Packing is the first step for the consumers to contact and understand the product information, is the leading factor to arouse the purchasing behavior. How to take the lead in making the product stand out and attract the attention of consumers, the first impression of packaging is crucial, so the principle of attraction in the packaging design of featured gifts is particularly important. Firstly, the characteristic of gift must be distinct, such as the decoration is clear and the implied meaning is distinct. Secondly, it should have a striking visual image, such as concise and bright colors, distinct light and shade contrast and jumping images. Thirdly, it should be targeted, such as different designs of theme packaging on different festivals, cartoonization of children’s products, fashionization of young people’s production, and classicalization of middle-aged and elderly people’s products. Fourthly, it should be featured, such as adopting the local packaging materials and traditional bundling technique, which attracts consumers visually at first, then further guide its conventional symbol, so as to understand the story and culture behind the packaging of featured gifts.

### **3.3 Principle of Appropriateness**

Packaging is not to decorate and beautify excessively and deliberately, but to complement form and content. Some gift packages at present are excessively packaged, which not only waste a great amount of resources, but also promote unhealthy ways and customs, as well as misguide people’s consuming behavior. Some product packages tightly grasp people’s consuming mind of comparison to launch luxurious packages, guide peoples’ wrong consuming behavior of “keeping the pearl and returning the casket”, and dispel the function of the product itself. Gift is for emotional communication, material exchange and culture communication, and packaging is to beautify and enhance the emotion, culture and communication, rather than guide them to comparison and showing off. Filial piety culture itself is integrated by thrifty customs, so integrating filial piety culture into the packaging design of local gifts should abide by the concept of “green packaging” and moderate packaging.

### **3.4 Principle of Interaction**

Gift is not to simply consider the use value of products, but to meet the psychological needs and metal needs of both gift giver and gift receiver, and the packaging of gift is the link between the two. Chinese people value gifts and stress implied meanings, so packages must have clear and beautiful implied meanings to enhance mutual affinity and create interaction between gift giver and gift receiver. Then, when gift receivers open the package and take out gifts, they should participate in the package to the greatest extent to experience the pleasure by themselves, therefore, some special package opening methods can be adopted to let people experience this sense of participation. Taking filial piety culture as the theme, gift givers can also participate in the unfinished part left in the package, such as a blessing to be written, or a group photo needed to be inserted, etc. With the development of material culture, people increasingly need to integrate the emotional satisfaction in gifts. Material value has been gradually weakened, while spiritual value has been increasingly valued by people; therefore, the principle of interaction in the packaging of featured gifts should be paid

close attention to.

#### **4. Recreation of Artistic Image in the Integration of Folk Art and Filial Piety Culture**

“Each city has formed its unique soul qualities due to different geographic positions, climate conditions and natural environment, as well as different social, historical and cultural backgrounds, which makes urban culture has different personality characteristics. Urban folktales represent the humanistic spirit of the city, and urban folk art represents the customs of the city, that is, each place nurtures its own inhabitants, and each resource forms its own features.” Xiaogan City is named after filial piety, and the filial piety culture is the foundation of its urban culture; in addition, Xiaogan City also has other intangible cultural heritages, such as carved paper cuttings, Yunmeng shadow puppets, Dawu brocades, Chu opera, and Makou ceramics, etc. Urban culture and folk art are mutually exclusive. In order to integrate the filial piety culture into the packaging design of featured gifts, it needs to be integrated with folk art to create a unique artistic image of Xiaogan.

##### **4.1 Graphic Design**

The key to the success of visual image for packaging design is graphic design, for the graph has abundant expressiveness, and is also a visual image language for the direct expression of regional culture, especially filial piety culture. “Excellent packaging design must not only have strong visual factors, but also give people good psychological associations.” Graph is also the most direct image language to effectively enhance the visual communication between the target and audiences, which arouses audiences’ resonance.

Taking filial piety culture as an example, Xiaogan carved paper cuttings, Yunmeng shadow puppets and character images of filial piety legends in Chinese traditional operas are applied to the graphic design of packaging, as well as the reprocessing and recreation and classic Xiaogan paper-cut images such as “Dong Yong and the Seventh Fairy” and “Painting of Profound Fidelity”, etc. The filial piety culture stories are visualized, popularized, vivified through the expressions of metaphors, symbols and associations, such as the Chinese character “Xiao” is used to create cartoon paper-cut characters, and the images of “Meng Zong and Huang Xiang’s filial piety” stories are vivified and popularized. Graphic design should make full use of traditional customs, story images and other expressions, and of course, the images of filial piety stories occurred in Xiaogan or other areas at present also can be used to create and design. It should not be limited to the materials of regional stories, but should be combined with the regional colors and folk arts.

##### **4.2 Material Application**

The selection of packaging materials determines the whole texture and style of packaging, so the selection of packing materials for featured gifts should pay attention to simplification, hominization and economization, particularly must pay attention to the use of local materials, which can not only save costs, but also highlight regional features. The integration of regional culture and regional materials is more conducive to publicizing the regional image and promoting regional products. For example, Xiaogan rice wine can be filled with Makou ceramics, and the decorative bundling in detail can adopt small pieces of Dawu brocades, etc. Under the current situation of adopting wood, iron and other valuable materials in packaging, the package of featured gifts should abandon this blind follow suit. The folk arts in Xiaogan City has the custom of adopting papers, so the paper packaging should be the first choice of packaging design themed by filial piety culture. In addition, it must pay attention to the recyclability and reuse of packaging materials, such as Makou ceramic is not only a kind of filling materials, but also a kind of crafts. Therefore, not only local packaging materials are applied, but also a variety of local special products in Xiaogan are sold and promoted.

##### **4.3 Color**

“Color is appealing, which gives people the strongest visual impact, and is the most likely to arouse people’s emotional changes.” In the packaging design of featured gifts, it needs to grasp the

use of colors flexibly, and integrate regional colors, but it is not limited to this, such as the red color in carved paper cuttings, red and yellow colors in Yunmeng shadow puppets and blue, red, white and yellow colors in Dawu brocades are integrated into the color. Color contrast is the most effective catalyzer for packaging design, so the packaging design of featured gifts should emphasize the light and shade contrast of colors, such as half black and half white, as well as the jumping of colors, such as matching the black color with red, yellow and golden silver colors, etc. Color application is not limited to regionality, which can select different colors according to the season and packaging theme, and can also follow the fashion trend of focusing on filial piety and integrating the flavor of the times.

## 5. Summary

The application of regional culture in the packaging design of featured gifts has increased the cultural connotation of packaging design of featured gifts and promoted the regional image. “The combination of culture and design is conducive to promote the added value of the product, and is more conducive to arouse the consumers’ sense of identity while satisfying the functional requirements of the product, so as to form the brand personality of the product.” The packaging design of featured gifts needs to change the inherent thinking model, pursue the logical thinking, focus on the regional culture, enrich the packaging style, get rid of similarities and chase the uniqueness. All designs can’t get rid of abiding by principles, and the design should be regular and orderly, so the packaging design of featured gifts should be created on the principles of culturing, attraction, appropriateness and interaction in using regional materials and elements. Keeping up with the trend of the times, exploring folk arts and integrating regional colors and materials make the regional culture become a new “favorite” in the packaging design of local featured gifts, which injects a new power into packaging design. Just as Victor Papanek said that, “the greatest function of the design we have made is not the commercial value we created, and not a kind of competition in decoration and style, but an appropriate element in the whole social change”.

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