

# Research on the brand design and cultural tourism development of Chinese minority festivals from the perspective of ritual theory

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**Abstract.** Under the background of the current national unity and the integration of culture and tourism, this paper deeply explores the development dilemma of ethnic minority festival activities, reveals the dynamic relationship between ethnic minority festival activities and social structure, and then identifies the root causes of its development dilemma, and seeks to promote its contemporary inheritance and development through brand design. Using literature analysis and theoretical analysis, this paper systematically combs the historical evolution, current situation and challenges of ethnic minority festival activities. Especially in the perspective of ritual theory, in-depth analysis of the cultural connotation and social function of national festivals, as well as its adaptation and change in contemporary social changes. The study found that due to the changes in the social structure, the fracture of cultural heritage and the intensification of external competition, the current ethnic minority festival activities are facing problems such as insufficient inheritance, low popularity and weakening of festival activities. By creating a festival brand with local characteristics and cultural connotation, it can stimulate national pride and cultural identity, promote the integration and development of national unity and cultural tourism industry, reconstruct the social foundation of ethnic festival activities, and enhance their cultural value and market influence. Therefore, we should actively explore and practice the application of brand design in ethnic minority festivals, and make positive contributions to the protection and inheritance of traditional culture of ethnic minorities.

**Keywords:** ritual theory; ethnic festivals; brand design; integration of culture and tourism; national unity.

## 1. Introduction

Under the current policy background of integrated development of culture and tourism, many cultural activities with folk characteristics in China have become an important starting point for inheriting local culture and promoting the development of culture and tourism industry. Among them, the traditional festival activities of ethnic minorities often have distinctive ritual characteristics. Through the festival activities, ethnic minorities' compatriots are gathered at a specific time and place to carry out unified ritual activities, which plays a significant role in enhancing the sense of national identity, belonging and cohesion. However, under the impact of contemporary modernization and informatization, the production and life styles of all ethnic groups in China tend to be the same, and the ethnic differences are relatively weakened. The inheritance of national characteristic culture is facing severe challenges.

At present, the participation of ethnic minorities' festival activities and cultural communication are mainly faced with four dilemmas: the lack of communication strength due to the restriction of location conditions, the lack of communication speed due to the restriction of communication awareness, the lack of communication width due to the restriction of communication mode, and the lack of talents. At the same time, when inheriting and developing ethnic minority festival activities, they often lack brand awareness, and it is difficult to condense the systematic and innovative communication power, which limits the promotion of their communication power and cohesion to a certain extent.

Based on the analysis of relevant research results, the author believes that the root cause of the current lack of communication power of ethnic minorities' festival activities, the weakening of

Festival ceremony activities and the lack of cohesion is that in the current process of informatization and urbanization, the social foundation that originally supported the prosperity and development of ethnic minorities' festival activities has undergone structural changes, that is, the decline of the discourse power of agricultural civilization, the decline of mass culture based on settlements, and the reduction of the sense of existence of traditional culture in social life.

In the face of such difficulties, it is necessary to find the soil for the continued prosperity and development of ethnic minority festival activities under the new social conditions. On the one hand, it is necessary to expand the basic situation, enhance the popularity and economic value of ethnic minority festival activities, on the other hand, it is necessary to strengthen the foundation and strengthen the yuan, and develop the attraction and cohesion of ethnic minority festival activities to the national masses in the new era. In a word, the vitality of contemporary ethnic minority festival activities mainly lies in two core points. By deeply excavating the unique connotation of ethnic minority culture and using modern design techniques, creating a festival brand with local characteristics and cultural heritage can attract more people's attention and participation, enhance the communication and influence of festival activities, and play an important role in improving the popularity and economic value of ethnic minority festival activities.

## **2. Social functions of traditional national festivals from the perspective of ritual theory**

### **2.1 Recognition and strengthening of faith**

Summing up the academic research results, we can find that from the perspective of ritual theory, traditional national festivals have distinct social functions in the identification and strengthening of beliefs, and play an important role that can not be ignored.

As a group ritual behavior, traditional national festivals often have unique ritual behavior, symbolic significance and performance characteristics, reflecting the collective common culture and belief. On the one hand, people communicate with gods or ancestors through prayers, sacrifices, celebrations and other activities in traditional national festivals to express respect and prayer. This kind of exchange and interaction, which places realistic hope, further consolidates and strengthens traditional cultural beliefs. On the other hand, the collective ritual behavior and community interaction in the traditional national festival activities also enhance the cohesion and centripetal force of the traditional community, which makes the belief strengthened and spread in the collective. In the process of collective participation, participants are imperceptibly infected by this culture and belief, and gradually acquire and strengthen the identity of belief in the process of infiltration, repetition and group identity.

At the same time, the cultural symbols and symbolic meanings carried by traditional national festivals often convey the collective memory and belief identity of the nation. These traditional national festivals are closely linked with the nation's history, legends and collective beliefs. These cultural symbols are spread, inherited and strengthened in the community through traditional customs and ritual behaviors, which not only deepen people's understanding and identity of the nation's culture, but also further strengthen the status and identity of collective beliefs in the nation's society.

### **2.2 community construction and maintenance**

Summing up the research results of ritual theory, the author believes that the functions of ritual can be summarized into two categories, one is to shape, the other is to enhance. The shaping function is mainly to shape the individual, social structure, order and power, while the enhancing function is mainly to strengthen the collective and faith. This also reflects that the traditional function of festival as a ritual lies in the construction and maintenance of the community.

First of all, traditional national festivals can strengthen the cohesion of the community by shaping individual roles and social structure. When individuals experience the key nodes of identity transformation, such as birth, adulthood and marriage, they realize role transformation and social status confirmation by participating in specific rituals, such as transition rituals. This not only marks the different stages of individual growth, but also shapes their social roles and responsibilities by giving individuals specific tasks and responsibilities.

Secondly, as the carrier of national culture, traditional national festivals regulate people's behavior through fixed activities, and condense the national spirit and culture in the inheritance from generation to generation. As a group cultural symbol, the traditional national festival symbolizes the existence and strength of the community. It not only shows the unique charm of the national culture, but also enhances people's sense of identity and belonging to the national culture through collective participation and experience. This kind of cultural identity and sense of belonging is an important basis for maintaining the community and helps to maintain the stability and development of the community. By enhancing collective memory and cultural identity, it maintains the cultural heritage of the community.

In addition, as a collective ritual activity, the traditional national festival activities strengthen the communication and interaction within the community, create a collective shared realistic memory, and promote the collective unity of the community. In festival activities, people form common emotional experience and memory by participating in ceremonies, celebrations and other ways. This shared reality not only enhances the emotional connection between community members, but also promotes their communication and cooperation, and enhances the cohesion and centripetal force of the community.

### **3. The law and current situation of the development of national festivals**

#### **3.1 dynamic relationship between national festivals and socio-economic development**

##### **3.1.1 matching relationship between national festival activities and economic structure in traditional times**

In China's ethnic minority society, the farming society has the largest population and the largest ethnic group, and many ethnic minority festivals are gradually formed in the traditional agricultural production. Therefore, this paper will take the traditional festivals of ethnic minorities in the farming cultural area as an example to explore the relationship between ethnic festivals and their primitive production and life style.

In the study of ritual theory, some ritual activities reflect the special attention of traditional communities to natural phenomena such as seasons that are closely related to the production and life of farming society, which also reflects the inheritance and reflection of festival activities on the production and life style of traditional society. For example, Robert F. Murphy (1988) believes that Christmas highlights the winter solstice, Easter and Passover reflect spring, and the "chronological ritual" related to seasons reflects the circular concept of traditional communities' understanding of time, and identifies this cycle through certain rituals[1]. Ishikawa Rongji (1988) pointed out that rituals include routine festival activities at a fixed time of year[2].

Chinese scholars Hu Zhong (2021) analyzed the connotation and characteristics of farming society contained in agricultural heritage, including traditional festivals in farming cultural areas[3]. Mo Guoxiang (2016), Wang Siming (2013) and Yuan Li (2016) respectively demonstrated the key role of farming belief in the inheritance and development of cultural heritage such as festivals in farming cultural areas[4][5][6]. Wang Dehui (2022) thoroughly sorted out the characteristics of farming culture of the three Hani festivals, and pointed out that as an important carrier of farming belief and farming culture, ethnic minority festivals connoted the cultural gene of farming society[7]. Jiang Hui (2021) pointed out that through combing the festivals of the Zhuang nationality, ethnic minorities' festivals embodied the cultural gene of farming society[8].Based on the characteristics of the farming civilization in the traditional festivals of the Zhuang nationality,

Shen Jie (2021) revealed the farming social foundation behind the folk song ceremony of the Zhuang people sitting in the song hall from the perspective of music research[9], Xu Xiaoming (2019) An investigation was conducted on March 3 of Zhuang Nationality in Maguan, Yunnan Province, and the farming cultural basis of the festival activities was found[10]. Tai Qiong'e (2021) analyzed the water culture in the Dai Festival and the farming social production and life picture behind it[11].

Through the above research on the connotation of farming civilization of ethnic minorities' festivals in farming cultural areas, it can be deduced that the festival activities of ethnic minorities in nomadic and marine cultural areas are also closely related to their traditional production and life style. The festival activities of ethnic minorities are gradually formed under the nourishment of the traditional production and life style of their own nation, which have a clear dependence on and highly adapt to it.

### 3.1.2 dynamic interaction between national festivals and socio-economic development

There is a dynamic relationship between national festivals and socio-economic development, which affects the development and changes of national festivals at different stages of social development.

As a part of the superstructure, national festivals are developed on the basis of the productivity and production relations of a specific nation. In the farming cultural area, because the farming economy is the foundation and pillar of the social economy, many farming ethnic festivals are gradually formed in the process of farming production, reflecting the cultural genes and production and life characteristics of farming society.

It is not difficult to understand that the economic base determines the superstructure. With the development of social economy and structural changes, national festivals will evolve accordingly. On the one hand, with the improvement of productivity and the change of production relations, national festivals may integrate new social production elements and contents to adapt to the new social environment and needs. Reflected in the current social environment, in the process of integrated development of culture and tourism, some national festival activities have increasingly improved the entertainment and interaction, and added more characteristic commodities. These new tourism, business and other elements, while attracting more tourists and investors and promoting local economic development, are undoubtedly a major manifestation of the adaptation of national festivals to changes in social and economic structure.

On the other hand, in the new era, the rapid development of social economy has also created more resources and better conditions for national festivals, so that they can be better inherited and developed. The development of economy also provides more financial support and material guarantee for the holding of national festivals, enabling it to provide a better activity environment and tourism experience, cooperate with modern commercial marketing and publicity means, and obtain a greater amount of publicity, ultimately making national festivals more attractive and promoting its inheritance and development in the new era.

In short, the interaction between national festivals and social and economic development in the new era is reflected in their promotion and promotion to each other. On the one hand, national festival activities promote the development of tourism, catering, cultural products and other related peripheral industries by means of cultural and tourism integration, and promote the growth and prosperity of the regional economy. At the same time, the development of social economy also provides better conditions and guarantees for the inheritance and development of national culture, so that it can be better continued and carried forward.

### **3.2 the transformation of the function of national festival ceremonies under the background of national unity**

#### **3.2.1 promote ethnic exchanges and unity**

The development of festival culture and tourism industry can drive the people of other nationalities to approach their own life and culture, and generate interest and memory of their own national characteristics through on-the-spot experience, which plays a very important role in promoting national exchanges and integration and building a strong Chinese national community. Taking the Spring Festival, the largest festival in contemporary China, as an example, to see the "Spring Festival Gala", and even the increasingly prominent discussion of the "Spring Festival Gala", which is repeated every year in the first month of the lunar calendar. Such activities, on the one hand, weaken the boundaries between the various ethnic groups in China, and on the other hand, are a special ceremony to distinguish the Chinese nation from other nations as a unified whole and strengthen the identity and belonging of the Chinese nation. Such ceremonies make the 56 ethnic groups that constitute the Chinese nation strengthen what Fei Xiaotong called "national identity can be regarded as the overall cultural identity in the sense of the Chinese nation, and then the national identity of each single nation" under the framework of unified consciousness. Through the development of festival culture and tourism, ethnic minority culture can be better integrated into the Chinese cultural family, and the community foundation of ethnic minority festivals can be reconstructed into the Chinese national community. On the one hand, it expands the audience of festival activities, and on the other hand, it meets the development needs of contemporary society.

#### **3.2.2 continue the cultural identity of the nation in the process of national unity**

The source of information carried by national festivals comes from the natural environment of the nation on the one hand, and from the social environment of the nation, including social production, religious beliefs, cultural customs and so on, on the other hand. Such characteristics make national festivals naturally social, collective and ceremonial. From the perspective of cultural memory and identity theory of cultural anthropology, national festival is an activity that can strengthen and promote the interaction among nations, inherit and develop national memory and culture. The existence of the social collective needs to be maintained. Gathering in the same field is an important means to enhance the relationship between people from the perspective of behavior. Festivals and other ritual activities will gather the minority people in a specific field to carry out the same behavior, giving individuals common emotions and memories. For example, in Muslim worship, although people are in different places every day, they carry out the same worship ceremony under the same Convention. It is the common pursuit of all Muslims to attend the worship in Mecca. The ceremony thus shapes a cultural field across time and space through the same behavior, reminding the Muslim collective of its ownership day after day, and constantly strengthening the existence of Muslims as a united social collective. In the current rapid development of urbanization, industrialization and informatization, the convergence of production and life styles of all ethnic groups in China, and the relative weakening of ethnic differences, ethnic minority festivals with distinctive features of ritual activities play a special role in connecting national feelings and enhancing national cohesion, and are an important cultural tradition deeply integrated with national feelings and local feelings. This is the realistic projection of the foundation of the traditional ethnic minority festival community in the contemporary era, and it is also the basic plate on which it depends in the contemporary era.

## **4. Integration of culture and tourism to build the era foundation of ethnic festivals**

### **4.1 build the economic foundation of ethnic minority festivals in the new era**

The festival culture of ethnic minorities is not only a special regional asset, but also a cultural tourism asset. Relying on the festival activities of ethnic minorities to develop the cultural tourism industry is an important means and strong driving force for Rural Revitalization in the new era. In contemporary times, festival activities are often important business cards of local culture and tourism. Regional culture such as ethnic minorities' festivals is an important symbol of differentiation between tourism destination regions and other regions, and is the DNA supporting the regional tourism culture. It can be seen that under the current market environment, minority festivals are an important attraction to attract audiences to visit and travel in minority areas and experience folk customs, which is of great value to promote local economic and social development. The development of festival tourism can drive the development of regional economy, which creates the realistic economic value of minority festivals. On the one hand, it improves the development space of minority audiences, especially young audiences, through traditional festivals. On the other hand, it can gradually return minority festivals to the important position of local society, which also reconstructs the economic basis of minority festivals.

### **4.2 promote national exchanges and national unity**

The integration of culture and tourism provides a platform for mutual understanding and exchange between different nationalities. By participating in the tourism activities of deep integration of ethnic cultures, other ethnic tourists can experience the cultures, customs and traditions of different ethnic groups, creating opportunities for communication and interaction between different ethnic groups. This kind of exchange is different from the exchange based on material exchange in the traditional economic era. It contains more exchanges and interactions at the spiritual and cultural levels, which helps to deepen the understanding among nations, understand and appreciate the charm of other national cultures, break the barriers and prejudices between nations, and promote deeper exchanges among nations.

In the exchange and interaction, promote the mutual learning, symbiosis and innovative development of different national cultures. In the process of tourism development, the national culture with local characteristics has left a deep impression on the tourists of other nationalities with its unique charm, and the tourists of other nationalities have also brought their own cultural traditions to the local area to realize the comparison, understanding and mutual learning of each other's national culture in the exchange. At the same time, tourism activities also provide impetus for the innovation of national culture. In order to better attract tourists, ethnic regions must innovate their own national culture. On the one hand, it is to improve the comprehensibility of national culture through the absorption and re creation of modern elements. On the other hand, it is to innovate the specific forms of cultural expression on the basis of inheriting the cultural connotation of national characteristics according to the preferences of tourists. This process of inheritance and innovation not only promotes the prosperity and development of the national culture, but also enhances the sense of identity and belonging of all ethnic groups to the common cultural tradition. In addition, the integration of culture and tourism also promotes the development of tourism, drives the economic growth of ethnic areas, creates more employment opportunities, and enables people of all ethnic groups to live and work together in peace and contentment, so as to enhance the cohesion and centripetal force of ethnic areas and promote the unity and common development of all ethnic groups.

It is worth noting that the integration of culture and tourism also plays an exemplary and leading role in promoting national unity. By creating tourism destinations and routes with national characteristics, the tourism industry with deep integration of national culture has gained unique tourism attraction, which has generated greater development momentum and better promoted the

upgrading of local economic development system. The demonstration effect of this successful case can stimulate other ethnic regions to actively participate in the integration of culture and tourism, and ultimately help to form a good atmosphere of national unity and development in the whole society.

## **5. Application of brand design in cultural and tourism integration of ethnic festivals**

Brand communication is a dynamic process of disseminating brand information. This process includes the production of brand content, as well as the design and operation of brand operation mode. Finally, the overall value-added of the brand is realized by enhancing the popularity and influence, and strengthening the symbolic meaning of brand culture. The content involved is extremely rich. From the perspective of modern communication theory, ethnic minorities' festivals can be used as the main body of brand communication, as a kind of material used in the process of brand communication, and as a media to disseminate brand information, which provides space for brand design and communication around ethnic minorities' festivals and promote the development of local culture and tourism.

### **5.1 inheritance and innovation of cultural connotation of festival activities**

When designing the brand of ethnic minority festival activities, it is necessary to deeply explore the cultural connotation of ethnic minority festival activities, including national history, legends, religious beliefs, customs and artistic forms, and extract representative and unique cultural elements. In practice, we can use colors, patterns and symbols with distinctive national characteristics to create a recognizable brand image; It can also integrate national legends or historical stories into brand stories, so that consumers can feel the cultural charm of festival activities while understanding the brand. In this way, brand design has not only become the carrier of inheriting the cultural connotation of festival activities, but also an important channel to promote and disseminate national culture.

On the basis of inheriting the cultural characteristics of national festivals, brand design can carry out modern interpretation and reconstruction, and then promote the innovative development of the cultural connotation of national festivals. On the one hand, brand design can use modern design concepts and techniques for reference to re create and re design traditional cultural elements to make them more in line with modern aesthetics and market demand. On the other hand, brand design can also be combined with modern technology to inject new vitality into festival activities.

In the current process of brand building for historical and cultural resources, including festivals, historical and cultural resources are often used as the fundamental starting point and natural creative theme of design, so that historical and cultural resources, including festivals, become the "integration" of brand design; The innovative secondary processing of the content can make the brand content more in line with the development trend and communication needs of modern culture, and formulate communication strategies that meet the current development needs according to the characteristics of the audience's catalyst habits and consumption choices in the new era, so as to take these two points as the "two wings" of the brand design and ensure the scientific and healthy development of the brand design of festival activities. In the design and dissemination of festival brands, the use of new technologies is mainly reflected in: the use of new technologies such as digital technology to digitally preserve the cultural content of traditional festival culture, and the use of digital twin technology to activate the traditional festival culture in the audience's life in the context of new media; Use new technology to enrich the expression form of the traditional cultural core contained in the festival activities in the innovative design, and convey the traditional cultural spirit and moral cognition that have been precipitated over the years to today's audience in a diversified and interesting way. With the application of new technologies, we can realize the

detection and analysis of the response of different audiences, understand the cultural transmission and audience attraction of the current design, and gradually analyze the development direction of subsequent design, which can realize the closed-loop brand ecological chain of the coordinated and sustainable development of cultural value and industrial value.

## **5.2 universal interpretation of festival culture in the cross-cultural context**

In the context of national unity and integration of culture and tourism, ethnic festivals need to improve the ability of cross-cultural communication, and enhance the communication and appeal of culture with a universal interpretation. As an important window for the display of festival culture, brand design needs to establish a bridge between audiences with different cultural backgrounds to accurately express the unique charm of festival culture.

Brand design should extract the universal value of festival culture, that is, those elements that can cross cultural boundaries and cause widespread resonance, so that the festival culture of ethnic minorities can be more easily understood and accepted in the cross-cultural context. In addition, brand design needs to use standardized visual language to eliminate cultural barriers, so that audiences with different cultural backgrounds can quickly and accurately understand the information conveyed by the brand. In the cross-cultural context, brand design also needs to pay attention to cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness, respect and understand the differences of different cultures, and avoid the use of cultural symbols and elements that may cause misunderstanding.

Festival activities contain large-scale multiple information systems, and the visual system design of festival activities is to condense the multiple information systems contained in festival activities into visual symbols with representativeness and recognition. That is, through modern design means, to create a graphic symbol system with logo as the core, a spatial image system with scene and environment design as the core, an image promotion system with packaging design of characteristic cultural and creative products and tourism products as the core, and an image display system with festival performance as the core.

Four basic methods should be paid attention to when designing and building the visual system of festival activities. First of all, the visual system for festival activities actually needs to explore folk symbols and refine the visual symbol system. Folk symbols are a kind of symbolic visual symbols created by the people of a region in the production and life practice of chanaqi. Folk symbols such as dangtuteng are presented in many festival activities. Taking these folk symbols as the core to carry out visual design is the first step to realize the scientific creation of the visual system of Festival activities, and the analysis and application of the color system preferred by the people of the region is the key factor in the visual symbol design of festival activities. Secondly, we should develop props and objects to enrich the cultural promotion system. In festival activities, local or national representative ritual tools and other physical props are often used, such as the bamboo Sheng used in the "Yeyue" of the Dong nationality. These physical props carry profound historical and cultural connotations. Taking them as the prototype for the design of visual symbols, on the one hand, it can highlight the uniqueness of the visual system of festival activities, on the other hand, it can well reflect the cultural connotation of festival activities and further enhance the cultural value. Thirdly, we should scientifically plan the activity places and optimize the spatial image system. The venue for festival activities is often a window reflecting the local architectural style and life scene. On the basis of maintaining the local style of the site environment, the shape, color, materials, graphic symbols and other aspects of the site devices are designed to present a unique festival scene, which can not be ignored in the construction of the festival visual system. Finally, we should standardize the ritual procedure and improve the dynamic image system. Festival activities and related folk performances and other festival contents are the dynamic image system of the image of festival activities. In the design of festival activities, we can standardize the Festival ceremony link, highlight the festival theme and the core of local culture, so that the dynamic display part of the visual system of festival activities can better reflect the cultural image of festival activities.

### **5.3 enrichment and improvement of festival culture and tourism industry chain**

Brand design can attract more tourists to participate in festival activities by improving the modern communication power of festival activities, and then drive the development of related industries such as tourism, catering, accommodation, transportation, etc., so as to form a complete festival culture and tourism industry chain and inject new vitality into festival culture and tourism. At the same time, through the extraction and re creation of national elements, brand design can provide design inspiration and style guidance for handicrafts and souvenirs with national characteristics, or experiential tourism projects integrated into national culture, meet the diversified needs of tourists, and bring more commercial value to the festival culture and tourism industry chain.

Under the situation of rapid social development, there is a certain gap between the traditional festival culture bred by the traditional agricultural society and the actual cultural needs of the audience. In order to inherit and carry forward the traditional festival in this era, we need to better meet the cultural needs of the contemporary audience. When tourists participate in festivals with local characteristics, they often like to purchase some featured products with local characteristics and showing folk customs, so that after leaving, they can still have a pleasant mood in the process of tourism and get a long aftertaste, which provides a solid market foundation for the development of cultural and creative products for festivals. Through the innovative development of traditional festival activities through cultural and creative design and other means, we can provide more diversified cultural products for the audience to meet the cultural needs of the audience under the new situation. In the aesthetic exploration of local festival activities, we should extract their effective element symbols from the local traditional aesthetic habits, traditional Arts and traditional crafts, and try to make them more fashionable, more creative and more in line with the aesthetic needs of modern culture through innovative means. Through modern design means, the presentation of traditional aesthetic elements in cultural and creative products is more in line with the concise, simplified and clear direction of contemporary cultural and creative design, so as to ensure the aesthetic value of cultural and creative products in festival activities.

## **6. Conclusion**

To sum up, brand design has a significant role in promoting the inheritance and development of ethnic minority festival activities. Brand design helps to enhance the communication and attraction of festival activities by deeply excavating the cultural connotation of minority festival activities and refining representative and unique cultural elements. The brand design uses modern design concepts and techniques for reference, re creates and re designs the traditional cultural elements, and makes the festival activities of ethnic minorities glow with new vitality. The application of new technologies such as digital technology makes the cultural content of traditional festival culture digitally preserved and activated in the audience's life in the context of new media. In short, brand design not only helps to enhance the popularity and influence of festival activities, but also promotes the in-depth excavation and innovative development of its cultural connotation.

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