

# Research on the Application of Ningxia Regional Cultural Elements in the Design of Tourist Souvenir Jewelry

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## Abstract

Ningxia has a long history and culture, and has rich cultural resources, which provide rich design materials for the design of tourist souvenir jewelry; this paper takes the study of Ningxia regional cultural elements in tourist souvenir jewelry design as the starting point, and extracts the cultural elements with Ningxia regional characteristics. This paper analyzes the use of Ningxia regional cultural elements in tourist souvenir jewelry and summarizes the far-reaching influence and importance of using Ningxia regional cultural elements in tourist souvenir jewelry design.

## Keywords

Ningxia; Regional Culture; Tourist Souvenir; Jewelry Design.

## 1. Definition of Regional Culture

### 1.1. About the Definition of Regional Culture

Regional culture refers to the local cultural traditions that have been accumulated and precipitated for a long time in a certain geographic area, containing local human characteristics, and have been inherited and carried forward by generations of people, and is the expression of a new social civilization formed after the accumulation of the natural and geographical environment, humanistic architecture, religious beliefs, traditional rituals and customs, and living habits of a specific area. Regional culture is integrated with the natural environment, humanistic environment and economic environment in a certain geographical area, and thus has cultural history, locality and uniqueness.

### 1.2. Understanding of Ningxia Regional Culture

The Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region is one of the five autonomous regions in China. It is located in the upper reaches of the Yellow River in northwestern China, bordering Shaanxi Province to the east, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region to the west and north, and Gansu Province to the south. The total area is more than 66,000 square kilometers. The topography of Ningxia is high in the south and low in the north, with an average elevation of about two thousand meters. Ningxia is one of the birthplaces of Chinese civilization, and has a long history and culture, where Chinese ancestors lived and developed through the dynasties. In the long history of Ningxia and the collision and integration of multi-ethnic cultures, the regional elements of Ningxia are more unique and diversified compared with other regions.

### 1.3. Extraction of Ningxia Regional Cultural Elements

To apply the regional cultural elements with Ningxia characteristics to jewelry design, we must first extract these representative cultural elements from the extensive Ningxia regional culture. Since the content of Ningxia regional culture is deep and extensive, this paper selectively extracts some typical Ningxia regional cultural elements.

### 1.3.1. Helan Stone Elements

Helan stone, also known as auspicious stone, is the first of the five treasures of Ningxia. Helan stone is famous all over the world and is known as the blue treasure of Ningxia. Helan stone is produced on the cliffs of Helan Mountain in Ningxia at about 2,600 meters, and it is a gem formed by nature after hundreds of millions of years of trials and tribulations. Helan stone was formed 1.3 billion years ago due to the change of the earth's crust and sediment deposition, and it is a hydrated rock. Helan stone has a uniform structure, fine texture, rigid and soft. The color is elegant and lustrous, with green embedded in purple and purple in green, and the two colors of purple and green are naturally interlaced, with jade bands, cloud patterns, eyebrows, stone eyes and other shapes, which are wonderful and colorful. It is a rare material for carving. The patterns of Helan inkstone carved with it are in a variety of forms, which are deeply loved by people at home and abroad as crafts. The patterns that resemble clouds, moon, water and mountains are elegant and made by skilled craftsmen, so that each ornament is unique in the world.(As shown in Figure 1)



**Fig 1.** Helan stone

### 1.3.2. Elements of Rock Art in Helan Mountains

The rock paintings in Helan Mountain are mostly made by chiseling and grinding, and the totems are thin, smooth and shallow, or deeply chiseled and shallowly carved, with varied shapes, rich in content, relaxed and orderly, with distinctive shapes and able to create a tense and intense atmosphere, very dramatic and rhythmic. It has a wide range of subjects, contents and expressions, and is imaginative, giving people a feeling of truthfulness, friendliness, solemnity and innocence. The rock paintings of Helan Mountain record the life scenes of ancient human beings from 3,000 to 10,000 years ago, such as grazing, hunting, sacrifice, war and dance, as well as various animal patterns and abstract symbols such as cattle, tigers, sheep, horses and leopards, revealing the cultural connotation of nature worship, fertility worship, totem worship and ancestor worship of primitive clan tribes, which is a cultural treasure trove for studying the history of human culture, religion and primitive art in China. treasure trove for the study of Chinese human culture history, religion history, and primitive art history. (As shown in Figure 2)



**Fig 2.** Helan Mountain Rock Art

### 1.3.3. Ningxia Beach Sheep Elements

The beach sheep, a precious specialty of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, is one of the best sheep breeds in China[1]and one of the "five treasures" of Ningxia, as well as one of the excellent local germplasm resources in China. The sheep has a medium body frame and a sturdy body. The ram's horns extend outward in a spiral shape, while the ewes generally have no horns or small horns. The hair is snow white, the head and limbs appear dark brown, the tail is wide and the lower half is narrow. The meat of beach sheep is delicate, fatty, rich in fat, tasty and rich in nutrition, and is one of the best meats for nourishing the body. Beach sheep skin is a precious product for people at home and abroad to keep warm, and has been famous for making light fur. Beach wool is soft, fine, and evenly coarse, making it suitable for making all kinds of beautiful blankets and wool, etc. Every year, it is shipped to various places at home and abroad to keep people warm. (As shown in Figure 3)



Fig 3. Ningxia beach sheep

### 1.3.4. Decorative Pattern Elements of Xixia Ceramics

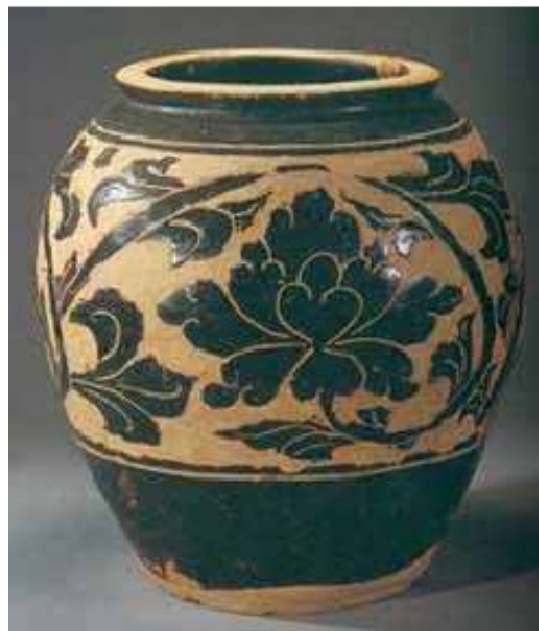


Fig 4. Xixia Ceramic Decorative Patterns

In the initial stage of human civilization, decorative patterns were quickly understood and recognized by the public in the form of totems, which are also the fundamental source of our painting civilization, and they can be used to some extent as symbols of tribal clans, reflecting the reverence for nature through the arrangement of multiple geometric figures [2]. Among the

colorful Xixia artifacts, ceramic objects are very characteristic of national and local features. Compared with the Song, Liao and Jin dynasties, the style of Xixia ceramics is similar, and the technology is basically the same. Decorative patterns mainly include plants and flowers, animals, figures, geometric ornaments, decorated mostly with peony patterns, picking, carving rugged and bold. More varieties of porcelain, there are household items, stationery, recreational items, indoor furnishing sculpture, weapons, construction materials, etc. Ceramic decorative patterns of the Western Xia period is an important period of ceramic decorative patterns in China, and has an important historical status in the development of ceramic decorative art, which has the role of carrying forward and starting from the past [3]. (As shown in Figure 4)

## **2. Application of Ningxia Regional Cultural Elements in the Design of Tourist Souvenir Jewelry**

### **2.1. Principles of Applying Ningxia Regional Cultural Elements in the Design of Tourist Souvenir Jewelry**

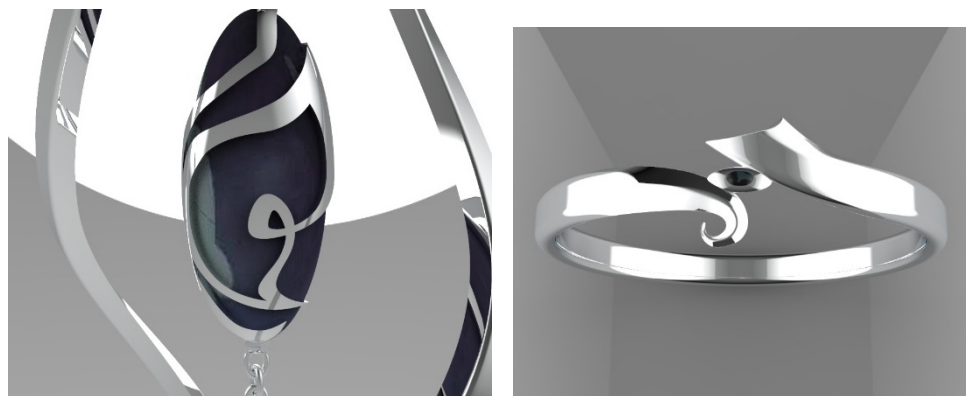
China's vast territory is rich in various cultural resources, and the regional culture of Ningxia is different from other regional cultures in China, which makes the jewelry design with the regional cultural characteristics of Ningxia can form a unique design style. Local cultural elements and cultural connotation occupy an important position in the hearts of local people, and for those who are wandering outside, it is the attachment and memory of their hometown. Therefore, reflecting the design of elements with Ningxia regional culture in jewelry design will be the embodiment of emotional support for many Ningxia people. At the same time, jewelry design also needs different regional cultural elements to distinguish from the ordinary jewelry design style. Designers should accurately extract the representative elements of Ningxia regional culture, cognitively understand the connotation of Ningxia regional culture, combine the modern jewelry design style, concept, materials and the needs of people's life, and innovate a new jewelry design style with Ningxia regional culture.

In this design integration process, designers should pay attention to the following principles: First, the principle of human text. Insist on meeting people's two needs, not only to meet people's needs for modern jewelry functions, but also to spiritually meet people's needs for regional cultural emotions; second is the principle of moderation. The designer should be moderate when extracting and using the regional cultural elements of Ningxia, not too much too much. The use of regional cultural elements is based on a certain style of integration, in order to avoid overwhelming the main, so the use of elements should be moderate; third is the principle of wholeness. Designers selected regional cultural elements and jewelry style should be integrated to form a visual integrity.

### **2.2. The Use of Helan Stone Elements in the Design of Tourist Souvenir Jewelry**

Helan Stone is named after the Helan Mountains where it is produced. It is a purple-gray-green silt slate, which is found in the Huangqikou Formation of the Qingbaikou Series of the Neogene, with a dense structure, fine texture, rigid and flexible, elegant and lustrous color, and strong carvability, and is a good raw material for making inkstones and carvings and other arts and crafts[4]. As a kind of artwork showing the regional characteristics of Ningxia, Helan stone carving has gradually become a kind of popular ornamental and collectible artwork, and it is also a good choice to use Helan stone elements in the design of tourist souvenir jewelry items, such as bracelets, pendants, rings, and earrings, which are also called love stone or auspicious stone. Helan stone is also called love stone or auspicious stone, and using Helan stone as an element of jewelry design also means people have a good life, sincere love, happiness and good luck.(As shown in Figure 5)

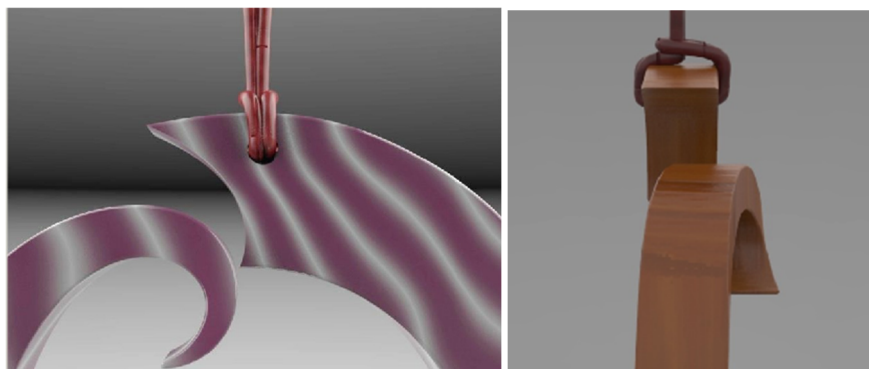




**Fig 5.** Use of helanStone elements on earrings and rings

### 2.3. The Use of Ningxia Beach Sheep Elements in the Design of Tourist Souvenir Jewelry

The beach sheep is also the animal that has been accompanying the Xixians for more than two hundred years of history. The sheep were an important source of economic income and food for the Xixia people, and they also had an important theological status, as they were used for divination before each expedition to predict the outcome. The ram's horn is also in the shape of the moon, which is intertwined with the sun in the middle, and the sun and the moon shine together, which has an auspicious meaning. The shape of the ram's horn of Ningxia beach sheep can be adopted in the outer contour design of pendants, bracelets and rings, and according to different jewelry types, after clever processing, the jewelry design is given the element of Ningxia beach sheep. (As shown in Figure 6)



**Fig 6.** Applying the ram's horn shape to the pendant

### 2.4. Application of Rock Painting Elements of Helan Mountain in the Design of Tourist Souvenir Jewelry

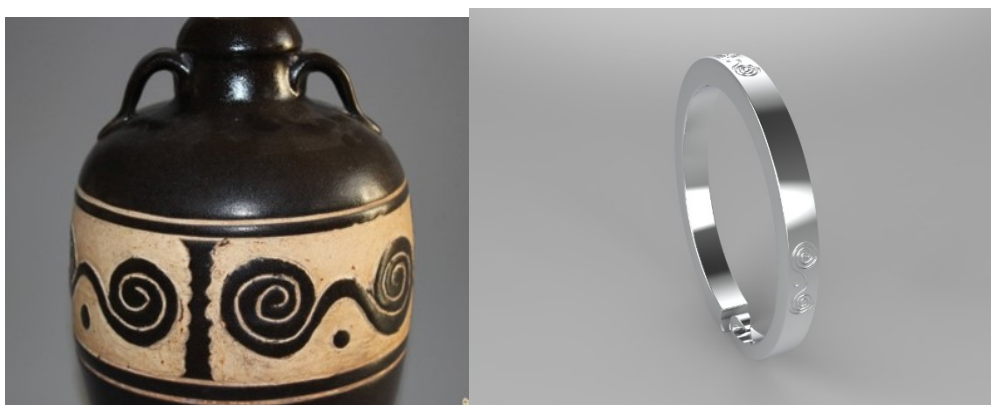
The sun god, derived from the rock art of Helan Mountain. (As shown in Figure 7) The worship of the sun is originally a worldwide cultural phenomenon. There are admirers of sun worship in almost every corner where the sun shines. The ancient ancestors revered the sun and observed it, realizing that everything was created by the sun. They believed that the universe and the earth had the sun first and then people, birds and animals, and all living things. The most noble and perfect symbol of power and benevolence known to the ancient ancestors in the material world is the sun as the Almighty. In the design of the pendant, the sun god element of Helan Mountain rock painting is used as decoration, and there are auspicious clouds under the sun god, which used to refer to the clouds symbolizing auspiciousness, and the colorful clouds driven by the gods in the legend, with auspicious meaning.



**Fig 7.** Helan Mountain Rock Painting - Sun God

## 2.5. Application of Xixia Ceramic Pattern Elements in the Design of Tourist Souvenir Jewelry

The Xixia ceramics are a marvel in the history of Chinese arts and crafts, showing the history, culture, humanities and folk customs of the Xixia period, and are of great research value. The decorative patterns of Xixia ceramics mainly include plant patterns, animal patterns and patterns of Xixia characteristics; plant patterns include peony patterns, lotus patterns and chrysanthemum patterns. Animal patterns include deer, fish, and figures; patterns with Xixia characteristics include dot patterns, scrolling cloud patterns, geometric patterns, and money patterns. Different patterns have different symbolic meanings. The peony pattern, as the most classic decorative motif in Xixia engraved ceramics, has been given the beautiful symbolic meaning of wealth and good fortune; the lotus flower as a decorative pattern symbolizes the noble personality of the literati; the chrysanthemum pattern has the meaning of many sons and many blessings. The deer pattern has the symbol of good luck; fish has always had the meaning of harvest and wealth, and fish pattern has an important position in the Xixia ceramic pattern. The character pattern infant expresses the pursuit of a beautiful real life, the pattern of Xixia characteristics, dot pattern is the most characteristic, geometric pattern is also a common decorative pattern. In the design of travel jewelry, dot pattern and geometric pattern can be used as decoration, which can not only reflect Ningxia characteristics, but also give new meaning to the jewelry and have more commemorative significance. (As shown in Figure 8)



**Fig 8.** Extracting the geometric pattern of Xixia ceramics in the design of the bracelet

## 2.6. The Application of Malan Flower Elements in the Design of Tourist Souvenir Jewelry

The Malan flower is the regional flower of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, with abstractly shaped petals that curl naturally. (As shown in Figure 9) In the design of the earrings, the middle is a butterfly ornamented shape. The butterfly is a symbol of fidelity to love, and in the history of Dangxiang and even Xixia, women had a high social status, and in the feudal society, they had the right to fall in love freely, as well as the determination to die even for love. A Helan stone wrapped inside symbolizes the crystallization of love.

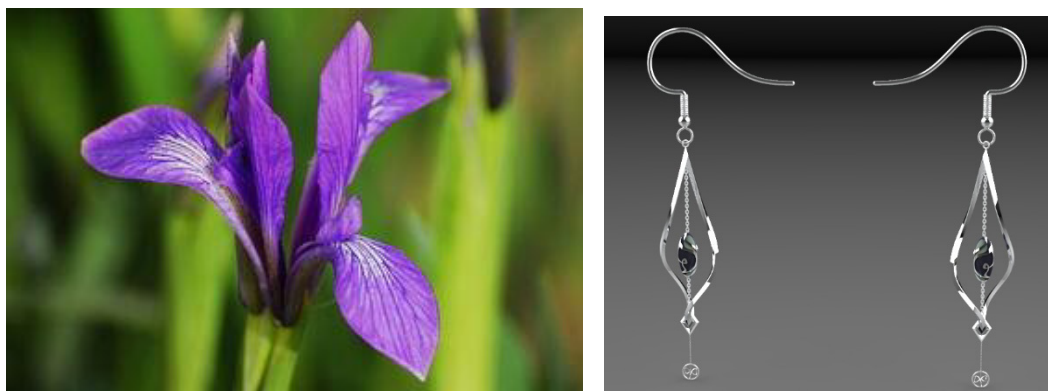


Fig 9. The use of Malan flower elements in the design of earrings

## 3. The Significance of Ningxia Regional Cultural Elements for the Design of Tourist Souvenir Jewelry

### 3.1. Influence of Ningxia Regional Cultural Elements on the Design of Tourist Souvenir Jewelry

The style of jewelry design reflects the economic conditions, living conditions and aesthetic concepts of people's life in the current period. Besides, different national cultures and traditional cultures will have influence on jewelry design style, and regional culture contains part of national culture and traditional culture. Ningxia regional culture is rich in resources and features, which is an important factor that can reflect different characteristics of tourism jewelry design culture. The designers' understanding and mastery of Ningxia regional culture can promote Ningxia regional culture and design jewelry items with more characteristics of Ningxia regional culture, so as to achieve the purpose of promoting Ningxia and promoting the development of tourism.

### 3.2. The Significance of Ningxia Regional Cultural Elements for the Design of Tourist Souvenir Jewelry

The regional cultural elements are a high distillation of the typical features, customs and traditions of that regional culture. Streamlining and refining the regional cultural elements of Ningxia can help us understand the connotation of Ningxia regional culture more deeply, strengthen cultural export, and have far-reaching theoretical and practical significance for the construction of Ningxia's cultural soft power and the realization of comprehensive and sustainable economic, social and cultural development.

The application of Ningxia regional cultural elements in tourist souvenir jewelry design has important significance: first, the application of Ningxia regional cultural elements in tourist souvenir jewelry design can reflect its own local cultural charm; second, the application of Ningxia regional cultural elements in tourist souvenir jewelry design is essentially the inheritance, continuation and development of Ningxia regional culture; third, through the

application of Ningxia regional cultural elements in tourist souvenir jewelry design, the application of Ningxia regional cultural elements in tourist souvenir jewelry design can reflect its own local cultural charm. Thirdly, through the application of Ningxia regional culture elements in the design of tourism commemorative jewelry, the local regional culture of China is continuously integrated with different modern jewelry design styles, which promotes the further development of innovative jewelry design styles in China and pushes the diversified regional culture of China to the world. The full application of Ningxia regional cultural elements in the design of tourist commemorative jewelry is the inheritance, promotion and further development of Ningxia's cultural soft power.

#### 4. Summary

"The essence of design is to do culture", design can't refuse culture, on the basis of in-depth understanding of Ningxia regional culture and skillful extraction of its typical cultural characteristics elements, the appropriate integration of Ningxia regional cultural elements with the design style of tourist souvenir jewelry innovation design, help to innovate a new style of tourist souvenir jewelry design with Ningxia regional culture, making jewelry design rich in Ningxia regional cultural characteristics and connotation.

Regional culture is a part of our culture, and Ningxia regional culture is also a part of the vast Chinese culture. It is one of the responsibilities of our product designers to carry forward the Chinese culture and to let future generations and the world know the innovative Chinese cultural jewelry. The tourist souvenir jewelry with the characteristics of Ningxia regional culture can make the innovative use of Ningxia characteristic culture in the design of tourist souvenir jewelry, but also can well inherit and promote the Ningxia regional culture, so that more people know the beauty of Ningxia.

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