

A Semiotic Study of the Translation of the Twining Lotus (Chanzhi Lian) Pattern in Contemporary Ceramic Brand Visual Design

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Abstract: The goal of this paper is to explore the semiotic system and cultural semantic inheritance mechanism of the traditional Chinese twining lotus (chanzhi lian) pattern, construct an ordered translation path for its application in contemporary brand visual design, and solve the problem of how to innovatively pass on traditional Chinese patterns in modern design. According to Peirce's triadic theory of signs and Morris's three-dimensional semiotic system, this paper will study the sign system of the twining lotus pattern at the levels of syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Shape grammar is also presented as an operating mode that can modify patterns through extraction of units, reconstruction of structures, substitution of proportions and modern colouring techniques, etc. From the above results, although the cultural recognition of the pattern has been maintained, it can also meet the requirements of contemporary branding in terms of visual language. An operating translation system for traditional ceramic patterns has been created in this paper to provide both the theoretical foundation and the empirical basis of the modern redrawing of similar traditional motifs.

Keywords: Twining Lotus Pattern; Semiotics; Brand Visual Design; Design Translation; Ceramic Culture

1. Introduction

The twining lotus (chanzhi lian) pattern is one of the well-known motifs in the rich tradition of decorative arts in China. The character of the twining lotus has a distinctive structure of "intertwining vines and endless flourishing", and due to its symbolic connotations of "incorruptibility and vitality", it has been used as a cultural emblem for a long time. Its wandering tendrils and cyclic-blooming flowers have a

visual grammar that is both formal and philosophical; they can convey the continuity of life, the purity of spirit and the ideals of a civilisation.

Nevertheless, the inheritance of this motif has not been used in the design of modern ceramic brands. Practitioners often face the problem of rigid visual transplantation and cultural semantic rupture because most Design changes do not have an organised decoding method for the basic sign structure of the pattern. Without knowing how the twining lotus functions as a symbol, what syntactical rules it follows, what kind of meanings it carries, and how it is used in various places, designers will likely either reduce it to simple decoration or use it inappropriately.

This paper is at the junction of semiotics and Design Studies. According to the subject of the twining lotus pattern, strict semiotic decoding and design transformation methods are used to construct a translation path for 'cultural resources' into 'design assets'. In accordance with Peirce's trichotomy of signs (icon, index and symbol) and Morris's three levels of semiotic analysis (syntactics, semantics and pragmatics), this paper will conduct a detailed study of the sign system of the twining lotus in these three ways. Shape grammar is used to establish a rule for how to change, and by this rule, new shapes can be systematically created from the basic elements of the original image.

The two purposes of this study are to find new Design Ideas for the twining lotus pattern in modern times and, at the same time, develop an all-purpose way to create other traditional patterns. At the same time, this study can promote further exploration of the semiotic approach in design innovation and provide some ideas for the development of Chinese intangible cultural heritage and the creative economy. The content of the paper includes the history of morphological changes, theory of semiotic decomposition and design strategy for

application, etc., combining theory and practice.

2. Origin and Development of the Twining Lotus Pattern

2.1 Historical Origins and Evolutionary Trajectory

The twining lotus pattern has been passed down since the Buddhist period and was brought to China along with Buddhism in the East during the Han Dynasty. As a result of the process of acculturation, it combined with the original aesthetic concepts and popular culture of the people and developed new artistic norms during the Tang and Song Dynasties. From the Yuan Dynasty, it has been widely used in ceramics, brocade fabrics, building decorations, lacquerware and so on, and has become one of the essential images of Chinese decorative culture.

In short, a twining lotus has an 'S' shape as its skeleton, and at regular intervals, there are small flowers, scrolling leaves and other curving elements that are connected to form a continuous loop. The Structure contains many symbols. The lotus element has been inspired by the classical literary tradition, and is in line with what is mentioned in "Er Ya" and "Zhou Dunyi's On Loving the Lotus" - namely, moral purity, nobility, and transcendence. The element of 'twining' has been physically unbroken and continues to spread, so it has been metaphorically used to represent the secular hope for 'eternal prosperity', 'ancestral flourishing' and 'the cyclical renewal of life'. Therefore, the twining lotus is a compound sign whose meaning arises from the intersection of Buddhist iconography, Confucian ethics and popular auspicious symbolism.

2.2 Artistic Characteristics across Historical Periods

The twining lotus pattern carries the auspicious wish of "ceaseless life and eternal good fortune", and its fundamental aesthetic is one of "uninterrupted vines and inexhaustible flowers". It has been used in ceramic decoration since the Song Dynasty, and a consistent style has been maintained throughout the Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties; thus, it is both a technical achievement and in harmony with the cultural values of these consecutive periods. As one of the main types of traditional decorative motifs, the twining lotus holds the craft conditions and

social-cultural orientations of different times and regions, and thus has rich art-historical research value.

The Twining Lotus of the Yuan Dynasty began to diverge from the somewhat restrained style of the Song Dynasty. Under the influence of the Mongol desire for boldness and grandeur (Shang Haojian), the scale of the floral unit increased, the petals acquired a characteristic white border, the main leaf was given a strange gourd-like shape, and the tendril possessed strong, dragon-like vitality. The main structure is bilateral repetition (erbang lianxu), and although the design vocabulary for blue-and-white porcelain with rich cobalt colours is beautiful, it should not be too visually cluttered.

With changes in society at that time, the Ming Dynasty was also beginning to develop. After the flourishing period of the Yuan Dynasty, Ming art moved away from this exuberance to achieve an aesthetic of openness, nature and subtlety, which can be regarded as a new phase. The reigns of Yongle and Xuande further integrated foreign styles and progressed along the path of naturalism. The mid-Ming period, in the background of stricter social morals, saw the birth of a new kind of style, such as the large-petal and small-petal arrangement, which had less curve in the placement of flowers and tendrils. A visible stylistic division has occurred between the refined products of imperial kilns (guanyao) and the more vernacular expressions of folk kilns (minyao), and this difference can be called 'the separation of refinement and popular culture'.

The Qing Dynasty was a period of great technical and decorative development, and at this time, twining lotus flowers reached a high level of density, symmetry and rich ornament by employing various techniques. At the beginning of the Qing Dynasty, imperial aesthetic ideas took hold in the artisan schools, and the resulting works had a fine double-line contour style with superb technical skill. The late Qing period, under a spirit of societal opulence, saw the pattern combine more and more with other auspicious symbols and be realised through various combined techniques, such as incised line (kehua), slip relief (duisu) and openwork carving (loucao).

2.3 Application Carriers and Geographic Distribution

During the Yuan Dynasty, the main carrier of the

twining lotus pattern was ceramics, and among these, blue-and-white porcelain (qinghua ci) was very popular. With the development of the kilns in Jingdezhen and the construction of the official 'Fuliang Porcelain Bureau' (Fuliang Ci Ju), new achievements in the form and technique of blue-and-white porcelain have been made. Generally speaking, the twining lotus was used as an accessory decoration, placed around the edge of plates and bowls or on the shoulder and neck of vases and jars. Jingdezhen was rich in raw materials, possessed technology and was sponsored by the government; thus, it became a core area for ceramic art and production in China.

The Scope of carriers was relatively small in the Ming Dynasty. Besides ceramics, cloisonne enamelware (zhasi falang) and textiles, such as Nanjing brocade (yunji) and figured satin (zhuanghua duan), also became important means to spread patterns and were incorporated into the main elements of court ritual clothing and ceremonial items. The founding of enamel workshops under the 'Imperial Household Bureau' (Yuyong Jian) in the Xuande reign created new decorative ideas. Geographically, although the main area of production is still Jingdezhen, the "culture-raising" effect of the imperial kiln style has also spread to other areas and formed a pattern of "centrifugal cultural diffusion".

In the Qing Dynasty, the twining lotus achieved what can be described as 'full-domain penetration', spreading to all parts of ceramics, copper-bodied enamelware, architectural decoration, woodcarving and textile arts. In terms of geography, a 'multi-center development' model has formed; thus, many regions' craft cultures have been exchanging ideas and generating many new styles. Therefore, the twining lotus was no longer the sole beauty idea in one area; rather, it had been incorporated by the culture of widespread craft. Its long-term operation across all sorts of carriers and in different places shows that it is a very adaptable visual sign, and this characteristic serves as one of the main reasons for its good design value today.

3. Semiotic Interpretation of the Constituent Elements of the Twining Lotus Pattern

3.1 Syntactic Level: Visual Codes and Historical Construction

The twining lotus pattern is a representative carrier of Chinese traditional decorative art and has preserved an elaborate system of design ideas in the form of a visual sign language. By using the three eyes of formal composition, semantic interpretation and semiotic analysis, we can investigate how this pattern conveys and passes on the collective memory of generations and all sorts of carriers.

At the level of formal composition, the twining lotus has period-specific structural logic, but it is also organised according to a common skeletal grammar. In the ceramics of the Yuan and Ming Dynasties, a winding 'S'-curve is used as the basic shape, and three kinds of arrangements can be derived from it: the horizontal register arrangement (hengdai shi) is to place floral units side by side to create a sense of stability and order; the vertical extension arrangement (zongxiang shi) is arranged along a vertical axis and carries the metaphor of "harmonic balance of yin and yang"; and the spiral or 'rolling return' arrangement (woshi) has a circular rhythm that contains the cultural logic of "cyclical renewal". Together, these structural changes form a hierarchy in the visual field; the main flower is selected to attract attention, and the supporting foliage is given space, thus achieving the formal ideal of "spiritual vitality restrained by compositional order", which is what classical Chinese aesthetics refers to as the rule of "not too near and not too far" (bu ji bu li).

According to Peirce's system of semiotics, individually, the components of a twining lotus are considered signs, and the relationships between them belong to structural rules that can be compared with those in language grammar. A curved stem is the connection of independent units of flowers and leaves in the language; the centre of all this organisation of subordinate parts is a lotus flower; A repeated-and-varied rhythmic pattern across the whole composition can create a long-lasting visual syntax that runs along the curve of a piece of ceramic art. As for the syntactic system itself, it has a good overall consistency and can create a sense of visual richness through structural logic, so it has been chosen as the subject of systematic modification in the Design Method.

3.2 Semantic Level: Symbolic Expression of Cultural Connotations

Semantics is about the symbolic meaning of the pattern, and the 'signified' at the core of the

twining lotus sign is included. The meaning of this motif has been accumulated over time through layers of history, and now it contains many strata; therefore, it combines religious beliefs, morals, good fortune, etc., in a single, yet complex, system.

2.2.1 Religious Metaphor: the Symbolic Synthesis of Buddhism and Taoism

The meanings of the twining lotuses are also connected to Buddhism. In Buddhist thought, the lotus flower is regarded as an object of purity, which represents the ideal state of a fully realised person. As the Mahaprajnaparamita Sastra states, "The lotus rises from the mud, but its colour is still pure and beautiful." The Buddha and Bodhisattvas are conventionally shown sitting on lotus flowers, and because of this, the motif has been associated with spiritual purity in Buddhist art since its first appearance in China. At the same time, the 'incessant twining' of the tendril also contains the idea of 'the endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth', which is in line with the Buddhist concept of samsara as continuous changes in conditioned existence.

From the Ming Dynasty on, Taoist culture began to be added to the meanings of these patterns. As Chen Liping has pointed out, a type of vessel that exhibits such a combination is the twining lotus-gourd vase; that is to say, the Buddhist symbol of the lotus is combined with the Taoist symbol of fortune, prosperity and the yin-yang dyad in a new way to form an integrated semantic system. This semantic richness shows that the traditional Chinese society has been able to accommodate many religions and synthesise symbols from various schools of thought.

2.2.2 Auspicious Meaning: the Symbolic Condensation of Collective Aspiration

The cultural environment of the Ming Dynasty was based on the idea that 'every picture should have a meaning, and that meaning must be auspicious' (tu bi you yi, yi bi jixiang), so the twining lotus became a prestigious carrier of good omens. Through phonetic punning, the word for lotus (lian) is homophonous with the word for 'continuous' or 'connected' (lian), and in conjunction with other auspicious symbols, it also has the meaning of 'abundance, peace and longevity' of an agricultural society, which was then rendered into a visual symbol system. A formula such as "continuous abundance year after year" (liannian youyu) demonstrates that the homophonic characteristic of the sign can

directly link people's wishes for a better life with visual symbols, and thus this pattern has become a portable carrier of collective aspirations.

3.3 Pragmatic Level: the Contextual Adaptability of the Twining Lotus Sign

3.3.1 Traditional Context: Material Embodiment of Hierarchy and Faith

In its early days, the practical reasons for using the twining lotus pattern in life and organisations were different. At the level of the imperial court, Ming official-kiln ceramics had a twined lotus with the inscription "huangquan yongxu" (the eternal perpetuation of imperial authority), and in Qing presentation porcelains, white-ground blue-and-white lotus patterns were used as material symbols of dynastic hierarchy; both the status of the giver and the recipient were determined by these lotuses. At the popular level, ceramics and embroideries with twining lotus patterns were used in weddings and memorial services to express good wishes for a happy life. As shown in Liu Zongming's study of embroidery in Chengcheng County, the twining lotus in that textile tradition also carried the meaning of "clan affiliation" and served as an image to represent family identity for the agricultural society based on kinship.

3.3.2 Contemporary Context: Cultural Communication and Everyday Aesthetic

In recent years, in light of changes in contemporary society, the practical register of the twining lotus pattern has also been spread out of the ritual sphere into daily life. Cultural communication and the enrichment of everyday aesthetics have become its main functions. This practical migration can be seen in the area of public art, as well as in the modern visual system of brands and daily life of consumers.

In the field of premium ceramic brands, the design path has moved away from direct inheritance of historical patterns and started to apply creativity; thus, it has begun to be used to convey cultural advantages and justify high prices. For example, the brand 'Wan Qian Tang' (Ten Thousand Things Hall) has carried out semantic fusion innovation in some lines of ceramic products that are organised according to the concept of 'literati living' (wenren shenghuo), and through subtle visual dialogue between traditional patterns and contemporary life aesthetics, the pattern is able to convey an exquisite cultural identity without losing the clarity of modern form.

In the field of cross-sector cultural creativity and fashion, many collaborations have been held with all sorts of products and brands to attract young consumers under the theme of twining lotus patterns. As shown by the research team led by Liu Zongming, the semantic register of the pattern can be changed from "clan ethics" to "cultural identity" in a positive way, and thus become an effective "guochao" (national trend and cultural pride) visual symbol that appeals to the symbolic aspiration of the younger generation of consumers to make consumption choices in line with Chinese cultural heritage and national confidence.

4. Translation Practice of the Twining Lotus Pattern in Contemporary Ceramic Brand Visual Design

4.1 Strategic Framework for the Modern Translation of the Twining Lotus Pattern

To change the Twining Lotus Pattern from a "traditional decorative motif" into a "brand's visual language" in modern Design is to construct an orderly translation plan. The three main parts of the framework are presented in Table 1 below. The three dimensions are combined and work together at the same time to support each other; they do not need to be in a certain order.

Table 1. Three-Dimensional Translation Strategy Framework for the Twining Lotus Pattern.

Dimension	Core Task	Methodological Approach	Design Objective
Cultural Content Extraction	Identify and distill the core semantic values of the pattern	Semiotic semantic analysis; cultural connotation mapping	Anchor translated design to verifiable cultural heritage
Formal Deconstruction and Reconstruction	Decompose structural grammar and regenerate visual forms	Shape grammar; unit extraction; proportional substitution; compositional transformation	Generate visually contemporary forms retaining structural heritage identity
Brand Scenario Embedding	Align translated pattern with brand identity and user context	Brand strategy analysis; consumer scenario research; pragmatic re-signification	Ensure functional fit across brand touchpoints and user emotional resonance

Extract cultural information to add semantics that can guarantee the translated Design still has a connection to the original culture. Formal deconstruction and reconstruction can provide new types that are popular and very competitive today. Brand scenario embedding helps ensure that the translated motif has a purpose for use in particular marketing and communication. The above reasons work together to form a translation workflow that can convert the source text (traditional signs) into the target text (brand visual elements) via an informed semiotic shift; at the same time, it should be based on principles and responsive to changes in circumstances.

4.2 Expression of Cultural Connotations in Contemporary Ceramic Brand Visual Design

Semantic dimension of semiotic analysis is an important step in the process of pattern decoding; it directly determines whether and how well cultural connotations can be transmitted and expressed in modern Design. As a representative form of culture with deep connotations, the twining lotus pattern also has many symbols in religion, morality and good fortune. The main problem of the current design change is how to transmit and creatively reinterpret its meaning in

the communicative system of ceramic brand design, preserve what is culturally rich, and achieve both form and concept that appeal to modern people.

The Cultural Significance of the Twining Lotus is the main value for modern design. The two main groups of ideas are 'moral purity and noble character' (qinglian gaojie) and 'vital continuity and continuous renewal' (shengsheng buxi); they have not faded into history but continue to inspire contemporary Chinese people's consciousness of civilization. One effective way is what can be called 'semantic distillation': it is to extract the most culturally prominent and easily understood meaning from the complex semantic field of the pattern and express it in a simplified, modern visual language. A brand can position itself on the values of purity, elegance and good quality; for instance, by leveraging the long-held cultural association of the lotus with moral purity and spiritual transcendence, designers can use modern forms but still carry such profound connotations.

The other way is "semantic extension", which is to expand the meaning of the pattern into a new area of language that fits modern brand concepts. A brand aiming for young people and people

with a sense of national pride can use the twining lotus as a symbol of the collective cultural identity and national heritage of the Chinese people to give new life to it while preserving its original meaning. Both ways need to have a good grasp of the current semantic field of the pattern before changing it. Semiotics is a systematic study of the meaning-making process of signs, that is to say, what the signs signify, how their meanings are organized, and which formal characteristics bear certain semantic associations.

4.3 Translation of the Twining Lotus Pattern into Contemporary Ceramic Brand Visual Design

Pragmatics is the part of semiotics that studies the function of signs in concrete contexts of use, and it can provide a system to address the main problem of pattern translation: to extend pragmatic register shifts from the traditional contexts of ritual vessels and court objects to modern circumstances such as brand identity and daily life. With the changing times, designers need to master the historical culture and language of these patterns, and also understand the life and emotional changes of modern consumers in a new way to bring back the vitality of the patterns in contemporary life.

Deconstruction, abstraction and recombination are modern design methods that can be used to perform the above practical transformations. These ways must be used with full awareness of the dialectical relationship between form and function; that is to say, while maintaining the constitutive rules and cultural core of the traditional pattern, they should also be able to make adaptive adjustments and pragmatic re-signification according to different product lines, brand tonal registers and use scenarios. The purpose is not to destroy culture but to carry it forward; that is, new values should also be created.

4.3.1 Formal Simplification and Abstraction

Simplification and abstraction of the formal elements are one of the necessary and frequently used methods for translating twining lotus patterns today. At the same time, in doing so, a large number of specific pictures and words of traditional patterns - such as many small petals, curly branches and dense leaves - are also simplified and condensed into a small number. The essential geometric elements are divided into points, lines and planes; although they

maintain the structure of the original, they are not historically specific.

Zao Qing is a typical case of the new ceramic brand. The designer removed most of the flowers and leaves from the twining lotus and only kept the simplest geometric forms. As a result, it has been created to exhibit the modern constructive clarity of simplicity; at the same time, it still possesses an elegant and graceful charm in accordance with traditional references. The combination of lively visuals and understated beauty is highly in line with the requirements of young people for everyday ceramic products in contemporary society; these young consumers desire both the inheritance of culture and a new-era style.

Formalisation as a translation strategy works based on the semiotic idea that signs can have different degrees of iconicity. A highly iconic sign is similar to the look of the thing it refers to; a schematised sign only keeps the structure or relations of the thing it refers to. By expanding the twining lotus symbol in this direction and further standardizing it, it can continue to be used for cultural reference purposes and increase the variety of products and methods of message transmission.

4.3.2 Structural Reconstruction and Derivation

In addition to the formal simplification, the reconstruction and derivation of the structural grammar at the base of the pattern are also a complementary and essential part of translation. By means of syntactical analysis, it can be observed that the traditional twining lotus has a continuous 'S'-curve skeleton and shows a continuous, repeating visual pattern. Structural Reconstruction is to disturb this old system and then reconstruct it by means of modification, such as reflection, interweaving, breaking up, dividing, etc.

The above operations are not merely for show. They have different kinds of spatial and rhythmic attributes; that is to say, some are dynamic in nature, asymmetric in form, and have a sense of frozen movement that is in contrast to the smooth flow of traditional forms. The resulting structures have a strong visual effect and graphic boldness, making them very suitable as the main graphic elements of a brand identity system that can be used for brand icons, packaging patterns, spatial design, etc.

The construction of a new work can be realised by means of formal Methods for Shape Grammar. A set of production rules can be set

up to regulate the conversion of primitive pattern unit elements, so the shape grammar can generate a whole family of closely related but aesthetically different derivatives to form a "design gene pool" that preserves the visual harmony of a pattern's brand identity in all weather conditions and provides rich formal diversity for designers' creation. As Su Ning has shown in the context of product form design, shape grammar provides a principle to address the problem of balancing new forms and the inheritance of the structure.

4.3.3 Color Innovation and Reconfiguration

In the visual sign system of the twining lotus pattern, colour is also an essential component of the whole sign, on par with form and structure. With the development of history, various patterns have been added; at the same time, a system of colours has emerged based on the characteristic cobalt blue of blue-and-white porcelain and has been gradually expanded by the pastel polychrome (fencai) and enamel colour (falang cai) culture in the late Qing Dynasty. The colour system has rich cultural connotations and is full of emotions, so when translating this today, we should pay more attention to it.

The dual structure of the traditional 'blue-and-white' (qingbai) colour system, that is to say the sharp contrast between the bright blue of the painted decoration and the pure white of the porcelain ground, is not only a technical result of the ceramic process but also an aesthetic norm that has been passed down through culture. The two colours are in a binary structure and are consistent with the idea of the twining lotus; that is to say, contrasting bright and pure colours can represent the contrast between virtue and the foundation of purity in philosophy and be associated with the moral uprightness and spiritual enlightenment symbolized by nature. The system of colours is in other words not only for decoration but also carries extra meaning for the signs.

Nowadays, there are two main ways to translate brand colours. The first is the intensification and refinement of traditional colour values: Although cobalt blue is still the main colour, its saturation and lightness will be adjusted to create a more visually striking effect for young people who are used to the pictures they see on the Internet and TVs. The second way is to expand and reconstruct the colour system in line with current colour psychology and the positioning strategy

of the brand; that is, designers can create a low-saturation, elegant grey-tone palette to convey restraint, quality and cultural depth, or develop a high-saturation, vibrant colour system to show energy, modernity and youth. In the design of subsequent ceramic brand visuals, traditional colour values are usually used as the main system to maintain the distinctive recognition of the twining lotus, and secondary and accent colours are adjusted according to the tone of the brand and the type of target consumer.

4.4 Integration and Application of the Twining Lotus Pattern in Ceramic Brand Visual Systems

Now, some new-style ceramic brands are applying the twining lotus pattern in many ways and no longer use it only as an ornament for one piece of pottery; instead, an entire system of integrated brand visuals has been created. According to the analysis of a typical brand case, by means of systematic semiotic-informed Design, the old pattern can be transformed into an attractive logo that has the power to evoke emotions and spread in society widely.

The Twining Lotus Pattern will be used in the brand's entire visual identity system to establish the tone of voice. Shang Xia is a lifestyle brand with the concept of "above and below", and the project is also one that inherits Chinese tradition in its name but is innovative; thus, it is an example of systematic semiotic translation. In terms of its system of visual identity, the brand has significantly simplified the 'S'-curve skeletal structure of the twining lotus and made it a fluid, modern line that is used consistently in all parts of the brand identity and packaging design. At the same time, this Design also retains the traditional concept of "endless vitality" (miannian bu jue) for twining lotuses and, through the language of minimalist visuals, presents the brand's own modern proposition of "inheriting the past and opening the future" (chengshang qixia); thus, it is a considerable combination of pattern semantics and brand concept.

To construct an entire system of brand visuals that encompasses the pattern, including its logo design, product surface decoration, packaging, retail space arrangement, etc., one must be able to develop a "semiotic system design"; that is to say, the pattern is not merely used as an ornament but needs to function as a carrier of signs that can create cohesive visual meaning

across various points of contact with the brand at all levels of application. Therefore, a clear set of regulations should be established to regulate the formal transformation of the pattern at different scales and in various applications; at the same time, the brand sign system needs to preserve its original features and cultural connotations and also be versatile enough for all-weather, all-terrain use by the brand.

In terms of brand communication strategy, a systematic application of translated traditional patterns, such as the twining lotus, can give ceramic brands an excellent way to differentiate themselves in the competition and be more attractive because it has rich cultural background. The pattern has a long history, a wide range of meanings, and is easy to transform in many ways across different places for many reasons, so it is an all-purpose design language. When used in a coherent brand strategy that keeps the original meaning but allows for form updates, the twining lotus can also function as a distinguishing mark for the brand, carry the essence of traditional Chinese culture, connect tradition with modernity, and meet the demand for culturally sensitive luxury and lifestyle products in today's market.

5. Conclusion

Semiotics theory has been employed in this paper to investigate the translation paths of the twining lotus pattern in the background of modern ceramic brand visual design. Based on the three categories of signs in Peirce's triad and the three levels of semiotics by Morris, a systematic study of the sign system of the pattern at syntactic, semantic and pragmatic levels has been conducted to build a theoretical method for the contemporary transformation of traditional Chinese decorative motifs.

Some research has explored how to understand the structure of signs and the spread of culture in the region of twined lotuses. Syntactically, a rule was found for the composition of the pattern system: it was an 'S'-curve skeleton, floral and foliar elements had a hierarchy, and there was a method for changing structure in an organised way. Semantic analysis has extracted the various layers of meaning that have been accumulated over centuries of cultural inheritance and explored religious metaphors, moral symbolism and good omens. Pragmatic analysis has been employed to trace the function-changes of patterns in different periods and places, from the

original use of the imperial palace to today's lifestyle brands.

Based on the above, this paper has put forward a shape grammar as the operating mechanism for the formal dimension of pattern translation and developed a three-dimensional framework of translation strategies that includes cultural content extraction, formal deconstruction and reconstruction, and brand scenario embedding; thus, it has provided designers with an organised toolbox for the modern adaptation of traditional motifs such as twining lotuses. According to the actual application of the brand, specifically study how to use formal simplification and abstraction, structural reconstruction and derivation, colour innovation and reconfiguration in detail.

In short, the above are the main conclusions of this study: Semiotics has provided strong direction for the translation process; Shape grammar has been used to enhance the operational specificity and reproducibility of the formal transformation; Pragmatics has been applied to ensure that the translated Design meets the demands of brands and consumers; and the three-dimensional translation paradigm developed here serves as a reference for the current transformation of other similar traditional patterns, not only the twining lotus.

The first theoretical advance in this study is the combination of semiotics and Design Practice; thus, a whole-system translation path will be constructed at multiple levels based on the theoretical foundation and be applicable in practice. In doing so, it will contribute to the general discussion of the modernisation of traditional handicrafts and innovative development of intangible cultural heritage. Through the construction of a design operating model based on strict semiotic analysis, this paper aims to help carry out continuous construction of Chinese cultural distinctiveness in the face of intensifying competition from all sides around the world in brand communication and cultural production. The translation paradigm put forward here offers a working model for designers, cultural organisations and creative enterprises that are involved in the inheritance and innovation of new works based on the rich decorative heritage of China.

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