

СЕКЦІЯ 1
SECTION 1



КУЛЬТУРА, МИСТЕЦТВО ТА КУЛЬТУРОЛОГІЯ
CULTURE, ART AND CULTURAL STUDIES

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**COLOR ANALYSIS OF SHAANXI SHADOW PUPPETRY
AND DESIGN OF TOURISM SOUVENIRS**

Abstract: This paper conducts an in-depth study of the rich colors of Shaanxi shadow puppetry in China and explores its application in the design of tourism souvenirs. By analyzing the symbolic meanings, color combinations, and cultural connotations of the colors of Shaanxi shadow puppetry, this paper aims to provide inspiration for creating unique and culturally rich tourism souvenirs. Through literature review, field research, and case studies, this study explores how to integrate the essence of the colors of shadow puppetry into the design of souvenirs to enhance their cultural value and market competitiveness.

1. Introduction. Shaanxi shadow puppetry is a traditional art form in China with a long history. The colors used in Shaanxi shadow puppetry are not only visually appealing but also contain profound symbolic meanings. Against the backdrop of the booming tourism industry, there is an increasing need to develop tourism souvenirs that can effectively represent local culture (Yang et al., 2023). By analyzing the colors of Shaanxi shadow puppetry and applying them to the design of souvenirs, products that are both aesthetically pleasing and culturally representative can be created.






2. Color Analysis of Shaanxi Shadow Puppetry

2.1 Symbolic Meanings of Colors

The Five Elements and Five Colors System is adopted in Shaanxi shadow puppetry. The five colors of red, yellow, green, white, and black respectively correspond to fire, earth, wood, metal, and water among the Five Elements. The five colors also symbolize the characters of different people in the world (Xu, 2022). Red

represents loyalty and bravery, yellow represents divinity and nobility, green represents vitality and nature, white represents treachery, and black represents uprightness and solemnity. In the shaping of shadow puppets, the five primary colors of red, yellow, green, white, and black are often skillfully blended with each other to produce a variety of intermediate colors with different hues (Table 1). These intermediate colors, when matched together, not only enrich the visual effect of the picture but also facilitate the coordination of the relationships between colors. At the same time, when coloring shadow puppets, the law of alternate color rendering is followed, with the carved knife marks as the boundary, allowing the colors to be juxtaposed with each other, forming a colorful artistic effect. For example, in the creation of shadow puppet characters, different colors are used to reflect the characteristics of characters with different personalities and identities. The faces of heroic characters are often painted red to show bravery and justice; while for characters with firm and upright personalities, their facial features are depicted in black to convey dignity and credibility.

Table 1. The Five Elements and Five Colors System of Shaanxi Shadow Puppetry

Category	Color	Color Name	Symbolism
Core primary		Vermilion Red	Loyalty, celebration
		Ink Black	Authority, contouring
Narrative auxiliary		Yellow	Divinity, nobility
		Green	Vitality, nature
		White	Disloyalty

2.2 Color Combinations

Shaanxi shadow puppetry often uses bold and contrasting color combinations. For example, the combination of red and green creates a striking and eye-catching visual effect. This combination is not only aesthetically pleasing but also reflects the harmony between different elements in Chinese philosophy. Another common combination is black and white, which simplifies the visual presentation and emphasizes the shapes and forms of the shadow puppetry.

3. Application in the Design of Tourism Souvenirs

3.1 Design Principles

When designing tourism souvenirs based on the colors of Shaanxi shadow puppetry, the following principles should be followed. First, the principle of cultural authenticity should be adhered to. The colors used in the souvenirs should

accurately reflect the cultural connotations of shadow puppetry. Second, the principle of marketability should be considered. The design of the souvenirs should attract tourists while taking into account their aesthetic and practical needs(Zheng, 2024).

3.2 Case Studies

A successful example of application is the design of keychains inspired by shadow puppetry. These keychains are made of materials such as wood or plastic, and their colors are carefully selected to imitate the colors of shadow puppetry. The use of red, black, and green on the keychains not only makes them visually appealing but also endows them with cultural charm. Tourists can carry these keychains as souvenirs of their visit to Shaanxi, and these colors can remind them of the unique art form of shadow puppetry(Figure1).



Figure1. The keychains case design with color dominance and interactive elements (Source: Honghe Gao & Zedong Lin, 2025)

Another case is the design of mobile phone cases. The mobile phone cases display images of shadow puppetry with their original colors. The bright and vivid colors on the mobile phone cases can attract the attention of tourists, and the movable shadow puppetry characters on the mobile phone cases can further enhance the interactivity and cultural dissemination function of the souvenirs.

4. Challenges and Opportunities

One of the main challenges in the design of cultural and creative products based on shadow puppetry is to strike a balance between maintaining cultural authenticity and meeting modern aesthetic and practical needs. Sometimes, modern design trends may conflict with the use of traditional colors. For example, some tourists may prefer more minimalist designs, while the traditional colors of shadow puppetry are usually bold and bright. Another challenge is the production cost. Using high-quality materials and ensuring accurate color reproduction will increase the cost of the souvenirs, which may affect their market competitiveness.

The growing global interest in traditional Chinese culture provides excellent opportunities for the development of tourism souvenirs themed on shadow puppetry(Sun et al., 2024). With the development of international trade, it is easier to promote and sell these souvenirs to a wider international audience. In addition, the emergence of new technologies such as 3D printing enables more accurate color reproduction and innovative design possibilities.

5. Conclusion

The colors of Shaanxi shadow puppetry provide a rich source of inspiration for the design of tourism souvenirs. By understanding their symbolic meanings and color combinations and following the principles of cultural authenticity and marketability, unique and valuable tourism souvenirs can be created. Although there are challenges in this process, the opportunities brought by the growing interest in traditional culture and technological progress are promising. Future research can focus on exploring more innovative methods of integrating the colors of shadow puppetry into the design of souvenirs and expanding the market for these culturally rich products.

References

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