

Original Paper

A Study on Cultural Memes of Silver Ornaments among the She Ethnic Group in Fujian

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Abstract

The silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian, as an important carrier of She culture, bear rich historical memories and profound cultural connotations. Based on cultural meme theory, this paper explores the design modeling, craftsmanship, and symbolic significance of She silver ornaments, revealing their crucial role in the cultural inheritance of the She nationality. The animal and plant motifs, geometric patterns, and exquisite casting and engraving techniques of She silver ornaments not only serve as manifestations of artistic expression but also function as mediums for the dissemination of cultural memes. This paper further analyzes the developmental trajectory of She silver ornaments throughout historical evolution, as well as the inheritance challenges and market pressures they face in contemporary society. Through pathways such as family inheritance, master-apprentice transmission, and cultural exchange with external groups, the cultural memes of She silver ornaments have been preserved and innovated. Finally, this paper proposes strategies such as policy support, cultural documentation, talent cultivation, and technological application to promote the protection and development of She silver ornament culture, enabling it to gain new vitality in the modern cultural industry.

Keywords

Silver Ornaments, Cultural Memes, Design Aesthetics, Crafting Techniques, Cultural Heritage, Innovative Development

1. Cultural Memes and an Overview of Silver Jewelry of the She Nationality in Eastern Fujian

1.1 Cultural Memetics: An Important Theory in Cultural Studies

Cultural memetics is a significant theory within the realm of cultural studies. The term "meme" was first introduced by British evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins in his 1976 book, "The Selfish Gene." Dawkins conceptualized memes as the fundamental units of cultural transmission, drawing an analogy to the role of genes in biological evolution. While genes are transmitted through genetic inheritance, memes are propagated through imitation among individuals, thereby facilitating the continuity and evolution of culture (Dawkins, 1981).

Since the concept of the meme was proposed, numerous scholars have conducted research on it, which has promoted the continuous development of cultural meme theory. The theory posits that culture, much like biological evolution, is an evolving process in which memes play a crucial role. Different memes compete within the cultural environment; those that are more adaptable, more attention-grabbing, and more likely to be imitated are disseminated and preserved, while those that are less adapted are gradually eliminated.

The core idea of cultural meme theory emphasizes that the spread and evolution of culture are based on the replication and transmission of memes (Lane, 2022). This theory provides a new perspective for understanding cultural phenomena, breaking the limitations of traditional cultural studies that only analyze from the macro level of society and history, and delving into the micro mechanisms of cultural transmission (Uhlir & Stella, 2012).

Its research has far-reaching significance. On the one hand, it is helpful to understand the diversity and complexity of culture more deeply and explain why different cultures show different development trajectories in similar environments. On the other hand, it provides a theoretical basis for cross-cultural communication by analyzing the spread and variation of memes between different cultures, which can better promote cultural exchange and integration and drive cultural innovation and development.

1.2 Introduction to Silver Jewelry of the She Ethnic Group in Eastern Fujian

The silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian hold a pivotal position within She culture. They serve as an important material medium of She cultural heritage and bear the long historical memory and profound emotional resonance of the She people.

From an overall perspective, the silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian possess a unique charm. Their designs are diverse and intricate, reflecting not only a delicate observation and vivid interpretation of nature but also a harmonious coexistence between the She people and their natural environment. Commonly seen are lifelike depictions of animals and plants, such as butterflies, phoenixes, and flowers (Shorb, 2009), which embody the She people's deep connection with nature. Additionally, the ornaments feature simple yet rhythmic geometric patterns that add an air of mystery and solemnity. In terms of craftsmanship, the silver jewelry is exquisitely crafted, with masterful use of techniques such as casting and engraving. Every detail showcases the artisan's exceptional skill. The surface textures are finely detailed, with smooth, natural lines that highlight the unique artistic appeal of the pieces. The primary color palette is dominated by a pure and elegant silver white, exuding a noble and refined temperament. Some pieces are further embellished with vibrant gemstones or silk threads, creating striking contrasts that infuse the ornaments with a lively and dynamic quality. These stylistic elements seamlessly blend together to form the distinctive artistic style of the silver jewelry of the She nationality in eastern Fujian, making it a dazzling gem within She cultural heritage.

2. Historical Development of Silver Ornaments of the She Nationality in Eastern Fujian

2.1 Ancient Origins and Early Forms

The origin of silver ornaments among the She people in eastern Fujian dates back to ancient times (Chen, Wang, & Li, 2017). While the exact starting point is difficult to determine, numerous historical records and cultural studies indicate that their origins are closely tied to the migration and developmental history of the She nationality.

In the early days, the She people, as a nomadic ethnic group, did not allow their frequent migrations to hinder their pursuit and exploration of beauty. The silver ornaments from that period were relatively simple and plain, primarily serving practical and basic decorative functions. Among the early silver ornaments, simple silver bracelets and anklets were particularly common. These silver pieces featured simple designs, mostly plain with only minimal decorative patterns along the edges or joints, reflecting the more primitive aesthetic style of the time.

From the perspective of production process, although the early production process of silver ornaments of She nationality in eastern Fujian was not as exquisite and complex as that of later generations, it still contained unique wisdom. The craftsmen at that time may have adopted a relatively primitive casting method, heating and melting silver ingots before pouring them into simple molds to shape them. They would then process the surface of the silver ornaments through basic hammering and polishing techniques, giving them an initial luster and texture.

As for the use of early silver jewelry, in addition to decorating and beautifying oneself, it also possesses certain practical functions and cultural implications. In the challenging life of farming, silver bracelets and foot rings served as simple yet effective protective gear during labor, providing a degree of protection. At the same time, these silver ornaments were imbued with special cultural significance, becoming an integral part of the identity and ethnic symbol of the She people. They carry deep affection for their ancestors and the nation, enhancing the group's cohesion and sense of belonging to some extent. Consequently, they have become an important testament to the preservation and evolution of She culture (Rosenberg, 2011).

2.2 Evolution of Different Historical Epochs

During the Tang and Song Dynasties, the silver ornaments of the She nationality in Fujian's eastern region experienced significant advancements in both craftsmanship and design (Song, 2024). The Tang Dynasty, marked by political stability and economic prosperity, fostered an environment of thriving cultural exchange. These conditions provided excellent opportunities for the development of She silver jewelry (Yu, Meng, & Guo, 2018). Influenced by the advanced techniques from the Central Plains, the craftsmanship of She silver ornaments was refined. The casting techniques became more sophisticated, enabling the creation of intricate silver components. Additionally, the engraving process was gradually incorporated, allowing artisans to carve exquisite patterns such as floral motifs, birds, fish, insects, auspicious animals, and symbolic emblems onto the surface of the silver ornaments. These enhancements significantly elevated the artistic appeal and expressive potential of the silver jewelry.

From a modeling perspective, the silver ornaments of this period, while retaining their traditional style, incorporated cultural elements from the Central Plains, resulting in a more diverse and varied design. In addition to the commonly seen animal and plant shapes, some auspicious mythological figures also appeared, reflecting the cultural exchange and integration between She culture and Central Plains culture. The economic development has relatively enhanced the living standards of the She people, and their demand for silver jewelry has expanded beyond basic decoration and practical functions, now pursuing higher aesthetic enjoyment. This shift has further driven the evolution of silver jewelry towards more exquisite and luxurious designs.

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian underwent significant changes (Silberstein, 2013). Politically, feudal rule intensified, and ethnic policies exerted a certain influence on the development of the She people. Economically, the commodity economy developed, and trade between the She nationality and the outside world expanded, providing a broader market and richer raw materials for the development of silver ornaments.

In culture, the influence of Confucianism is deepening. She culture pays more attention to the inheritance of etiquette and tradition while maintaining its own characteristics. The silverware of the She nationality in this period paid more attention to details and norms in modeling and craftsmanship, reflecting a rigorous sense of order. The types of silver jewellery are also more abundant. There are specific silver jewellery for weddings, sacrifices and other important occasions, such as phoenix crowns, silver collars, etc. These silver jewellery are exquisitely made and complicated in craftsmanship. They often incorporate a large number of cultural connotations and symbolic elements, and become an important carrier of She culture inheritance and expression. At the same time, the silver ornaments in the Ming and Qing Dynasties paid more attention to symmetrical beauty and sense of hierarchy in decoration. Through ingenious design and process treatment, the silver ornaments presented a solemn and gorgeous style, reflecting the aesthetic concept and cultural pursuit of the She people at that time. The political, economic and cultural factors in different historical periods are intertwined, which jointly promote the evolution and development of silverware of She nationality in eastern Fujian.

2.3 Modern and Contemporary Development and Current State of Inheritance

Since modern and contemporary times, the silverware of the She people in eastern Fujian has not only encountered unprecedented development opportunities but also faced numerous severe challenges (Zou & Sirisuk, 2023).

In terms of opportunities, societal progress and the increasing frequency of cultural exchanges have created a broader platform for showcasing the silver ornaments and craftsmanship of the She people of eastern Fujian. The thriving tourism industry has sparked a growing interest in minority cultures among tourists, and the unique cultural significance of She silverwork has garnered significant attention, leading to an increase in market demand. Additionally, the government has placed greater emphasis on the preservation and development of ethnic cultures, implementing a range of supportive policies that

provide robust protection and promotion for the heritage and advancement of She silver ornament craftsmanship.

Nevertheless, the silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian face numerous challenges. The accelerating modernization has profoundly changed people's lifestyles and aesthetic tastes, leading to a decline in the practical value of traditional silver jewelry in daily life. Additionally, the younger generation's interest in these ornaments has waned. Furthermore, the impact of modern industrial production cannot be overlooked. Machine-made imitations, produced at low cost, have flooded the market, posing significant competition to the traditionally handcrafted She silver jewelry.

Currently, the inheritance of silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian has attracted significant attention. The status quo of the inheritors reveals a clear aging trend. The older generation of inheritors possesses exquisite traditional craftsmanship, but their physical energy is increasingly limited due to aging. On the other hand, the younger generation, faced with a wider range of career choices and greater life pressures, shows less willingness to commit to the preservation of She silver ornaments, leading to a concerning gap in the inheritance chain.

In terms of inheritance methods, it primarily relies on family inheritance and master-apprentice inheritance (Song, Yang, Yang, & Shafi, 2024). In the family inheritance, the elders pass on their skills to the younger generation. This approach ensures the preservation of the original techniques, but it is limited by the size of the family and the interest of young people. The master-apprentice inheritance involves masters teaching apprentices through verbal instruction and practical demonstration. However, due to the lengthy learning period and limited economic benefits, there are not many young people willing to learn. Despite facing numerous challenges, the silverware of the She ethnic group in eastern Fujian continues to seek new opportunities for development through persistence and the joint efforts of the inheritors and the community.

3. Cultural Elements of Silver Ornaments of the She Nationality in Eastern Fujian

3.1 The Design of Silver Ornaments of the She Ethnic Group in Eastern Fujian Serves as a Vivid Cultural History Book, Embodying Rich Cultural Implications and Cultural Memes

Animal and plant modeling occupies a prominent position in the silver ornaments of the She nationality (Howard, Snodin, & Howard, 1996). Butterfly-shaped silver ornaments frequently appear, with the delicate dancing postures of butterflies intricately depicted on the silver. In She culture, butterflies symbolize freedom, beauty, and the vitality of life. They are not only beautiful creatures in nature but also represent the She people's longing and pursuit of a free life. This yearning for freedom, as a cultural meme, is passed down through generations via butterfly-shaped silver ornaments. Similarly, phoenix-shaped silver jewelry is also highly favored. In She culture, the phoenix is an auspicious and noble symbol, representing happiness and prosperity. The She people have incorporated their aspirations for a better life into the phoenix shape. Whenever they wear phoenix-shaped silver ornaments, this positive cultural meme is reinforced and disseminated.

The geometric pattern is also an important component of the silver jewelry design in the She culture of eastern Fujian. Common examples include spiral patterns, which feature simple, smooth, and cyclical lines. These spiral patterns symbolize the themes of endless life and prolonged fortune, reflecting the She people's aspirations for the continuation of life and their wishes for a long and prosperous existence. As a cultural meme, this optimistic vision of life is passed down through the continuous replication and dissemination of these patterns. Another notable design is the diamond pattern, which is characterized by its regular structure and symmetrical balance. In She culture, this pattern represents stability and harmony. The She people, throughout their long history, have valued family harmony and social stability. The diamond pattern visually embodies these cultural values, serving as a carrier for the transmission of cultural memes.

These unique designs are not mere decorations but rather the essence and symbols of She ethnic culture. In their role as carriers of cultural memes, they continue to spread and be inherited within the She community. The cultural implications behind each design, much like genetic markers, are deeply ingrained in the cultural memory of the She people. Through the wearing and display of silver ornaments, these cultural memes are transmitted across generations, thereby strengthening the She people's sense of cultural identity and belonging. This process serves as a crucial link in preserving and developing She culture, ensuring that She culture continues to maintain its distinctive charm and vigorous vitality throughout history.

3.2 Cultural Heritage in the Production Process

The traditional craftsmanship of She silverware in eastern Fujian Province is an art form imbued with rich cultural connotations. Among these techniques, casting and engraving are particularly crucial, and the effective transmission of cultural genes has been achieved through generations of inheritance (Richerson & Boyd, 1978).

The casting process is the fundamental step in She silver jewelry production (Loney, 2009). First, the silver material must be melted, requiring precise control of the firing conditions and temperature to ensure uniform melting of the silver. Under high-temperature conditions, the solid silver gradually transforms into a flowing liquid, as if infusing the She people's beautiful vision for silver jewelry into the metal. Once the molten silver reaches the optimal state, it is poured into an elaborately crafted mold. The mold design is crucial, as it determines the initial shape of the silver jewelry. These molds often incorporate traditional patterns and designs, serving as vital carriers of cultural heritage. After the molten silver cools and solidifies, a silver ornament begins to take shape. This process involves more than just a physical transformation of material; it embodies the She people's commitment to preserving and passing down traditional craftsmanship. Each casting session pays tribute to the skills of earlier generations, with the reverence and dedication to the craft, functioning as a cultural element, being perpetuated through the casting process.

The engraving art is what gives the silver ornaments of the She nationality their soul. The craftsman holds an engraving tool and performs intricate engravings on the surface of the already-shaped silver

ornament. With each strike of the engraving tool against the silverware, a crisp ringing sound is produced, and every impact embodies the artisan's dedication and effort. Through the use of engraving tools of various shapes and masterful techniques, a wide variety of patterns can be created on the surface of the silver jewelry, such as delicate floral textures and vivid animal expressions. The engraving process demands that the craftsman possess a high level of concentration and skillful craftsmanship. This process is not merely a demonstration of technical prowess but also a manifestation of cultural significance. Each pattern carries specific meanings closely tied to the history, beliefs, and daily life of the She people. For instance, the auspicious cloud patterns created through engraving symbolize good fortune and divine protection. This longing for a better life, expressed through the engraving process, becomes an important means of transmitting cultural elements.

In the inheritance of the production process, the older generation of craftsmen plays a crucial role. They pass down these intricate and exquisite techniques to the younger generation through hands-on instruction and personal example. Through extended periods of study and hands-on practice, young apprentices not only acquire the technical skills but also gain a profound appreciation for the cultural significance embedded in these crafts. This method of transmission not only preserves the authenticity of the craft but also ensures the stable continuation of its cultural heritage. Despite the many challenges faced by modern society, the silver jewelry-making techniques of the She people continue to evolve through their transmission, retaining their distinctive appeal and rich cultural depth. These practices stand as a vibrant testament to the preservation and advancement of She cultural traditions.

3.3 The Cultural Connotation behind Symbolic Meaning

The silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian carry rich symbolic significance, which embodies profound cultural connotations and cultural memetic value.

The worship of ancestors holds a significant place in She culture, and this sentiment is distinctly reflected in silver jewelry. The designs and forms of some silver ornaments originate from the ancient legends and historical accounts of the She people's ancestors. For instance, certain silver ornaments feature engravings of ancestral migration scenes or incorporate specific symbols associated with ancestors. These elements serve not only as a remembrance of ancestral history but also as a source of spiritual solace. By adorning themselves with such silver ornaments, the She people express their reverence and gratitude toward their ancestors, thereby strengthening the emotional bond between the community and their forebears. As a powerful cultural meme, this aspect of ancestor worship is perpetuated through the inheritance and wearing of silver jewelry, fostering a sense of identity among the She people regarding their roots and ensuring the continuity of their cultural heritage.

The yearning for a better life is also an important symbolic significance of the silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian (Chen, 2019). The auspicious patterns, such as peony and Ruyi, which are widely used in the silver jewelry, are entrusted with the She people's expectations of happiness, prosperity, and peace. The silver ornaments in peony shapes symbolize wealth and beauty, implying a life of abundance and vibrancy. The silver ornaments in the shape of Ruyi represent auspiciousness,

expressing the hope for a smoother and less turbulent life journey. These beautiful meanings are integrated into the silver design, becoming the spiritual guidance for the She people's lives. Whenever they wear these silver ornaments, their inner longing for a better life is reinforced. This positive cultural influence spreads among the ethnic group, inspiring generation after generation of She people to pursue a happy life.

In addition, the silver ornaments of the She ethnic group in eastern Fujian also symbolize ethnic identity and unity. The unique designs and styles of the silverware serve as distinctive symbols that set the She people apart from other ethnic groups, becoming a symbol of their ethnic identity. During important festivals and events, the She people dress up and adorn themselves with silver ornaments, demonstrating a strong sense of national pride and a deep sense of belonging. This expression of ethnic identity through silver ornaments strengthens the internal cohesion among the She people, uniting them closely together. As a cultural element, this spirit of unity is reinforced through the display and inheritance of silver ornaments, thereby promoting the preservation and development of She culture. This allows the She ethnic group to maintain its unique cultural characteristics throughout history.

4. The Spread of Silver Jewelry Cultural Memes in the She Nationality of Eastern Fujian

4.1 Internal Knowledge Transmission and Dissemination Mechanism

Within the She community, the silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian are mainly carried on and passed down through two methods: family inheritance and master-apprentice inheritance. Each method has its unique characteristics and effects.

Family-based inheritance is one of the key methods for preserving the silver ornament craftsmanship of the She people in eastern Fujian. Within She families, the skills of silver jewelry making are typically passed down from older generations to younger ones, commonly following a gender-based pattern where mothers teach their daughters and fathers teach their sons. This inheritance method is characterized by strong familial bonds, with the trust and close relationships among family members providing an ideal foundation for skill transmission. Elders, leveraging their extensive experience and masterful techniques, impart every step and skill involved in silver ornament production to the next generation through hands-on instruction. Younger generations gradually acquire these skills through prolonged exposure and practical application. The distinct advantages of family-based inheritance lie in its stability and continuity, ensuring that these techniques are consistently transmitted within the family across generations while preserving their authenticity and traditional character.

At the same time, family inheritance carries profound family emotions and cultural memories. Each piece of silver jewelry embodies the history and traditions of a family. Through this inheritance, the craftsmanship of She silver ornaments has been preserved within families, reinforcing family members' sense of identity and belonging to their national culture. As a result, families have become an important stronghold for the cultural heritage of the She nationality.

Master-apprentice inheritance is also a key method for the inheritance of the silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian. In She society, some skilled silver craftsmen take on apprentices. With a passion for and dedication to traditional craftsmanship, these apprentices formally become disciples under their masters. Masters systematically impart theoretical foundations and practical skills in silver jewelry making, tailoring their instruction to the apprentice's aptitude and progress. This instruction ranges from the basics of tool usage and material properties to complex techniques and design principles. The master-apprentice system transcends the limitations of family-based inheritance, offering opportunities for more individuals interested in silver jewelry production and helping to expand the pool of inheritors.

This inheritance method emphasizes the accumulation of practice and experience. Through participating in actual production projects while following their masters' guidance, apprentices continually enhance their craftsmanship. Meanwhile, the mentor-apprentice interactions foster innovation and development of the craft. Apprentices may introduce fresh perspectives and ideas, which, when integrated with the masters' traditional techniques, contribute to fostering ongoing advancements in the silver jewelry-making craftsmanship of the She people in eastern Fujian.

Whether it is family inheritance or master-apprentice inheritance, it has played an important role in the internal communication of She silver jewelry in eastern Fujian. They not only inherit the craftsmanship of silver ornaments, but also pass on the cultural connotation, aesthetic concept and national spirit of the She nationality through the carrier of silver ornaments from generation to generation, which enhances the cultural cohesion and national identity of the She people and ensures the continuation and development of the silver ornament culture of the She nationality in eastern Fujian.

4.2 External Communication Channels

In the context of globalization, the silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian have actively reached out to the world through various means, achieving a broader cultural exchange and integration. Tourism has become a significant platform for the external dissemination of She silver ornaments in eastern Fujian. With the increasing demand for characteristic tourism, eastern Fujian has attracted a large number of tourists with its unique She culture. In some tourist attractions inhabited by the She people, visitors can personally tour silver jewelry production workshops and observe artisans demonstrating their exquisite craftsmanship on-site, from silver smelting to intricate engraving, every step leaving tourists in awe. For instance, some She villages in Ningde have established silver jewelry experience projects for visitors. Tourists not only have the opportunity to purchase their desired silver jewelry but can also personally participate in the crafting of simple silver ornaments.

This immersive experience enables visitors to deeply explore the She silver culture and spread its unique charm to a broader audience. During this process, the multicultural perspectives brought by tourists from various regions interact with the She silver jewelry culture, encouraging the She silver jewelry to innovate in both design and functionality to better meet market demands.

Cultural exhibitions have established a high-end platform for the silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian to showcase their value. Cultural events of various types, both domestically and internationally, are frequently organized. As a unique cultural treasure of the She nationality, the silver jewelry from eastern Fujian is often invited to participate in these exhibitions. During the exhibitions, the exquisite silver ornaments are presented alongside detailed cultural interpretations, providing a comprehensive display of their historical origins, craftsmanship, and cultural significance. For instance, at an international cultural exposition, the exhibition area dedicated to the silver jewelry of the She nationality in eastern Fujian captivated numerous visitors with its distinctive designs and dazzling silver pieces. Attendees from diverse cultural backgrounds praised the intricate beauty of these ornaments and developed a keen interest in She culture. Through cultural exchange with other participants, the silver jewelry of the She nationality has adopted new design concepts and presentation methods, thereby enhancing its artistic value and cultural influence.

The prevalence of the internet has opened up new and vast opportunities for the spread of silver jewelry crafted by the She people of eastern Fujian. Through e-commerce platforms, She silver jewelry can now reach consumers not only across the country but also worldwide. Many She silver jewelry businesses have established online stores, utilizing multimedia such as images and videos to showcase the intricate details and unique features of their pieces, thereby attracting a substantial number of orders. Additionally, social media and short video platforms have emerged as powerful channels for promoting She silver jewelry culture. Some artisans livestream their crafting processes, engaging in real-time interactions with viewers and introducing the allure of this traditional craftsmanship to a broader audience. For instance, a video showcasing the making of She silver jewelry, posted by a craftsman on a short video platform, garnered hundreds of thousands of likes and caught the attention of numerous netizens, leading to the rapid dissemination of She silver jewelry culture from eastern Fujian. During this process of online promotion, feedback and suggestions from netizens of diverse cultural backgrounds have inspired greater diversity in She silver jewelry designs, facilitating a deeper integration with modern culture.

Through various channels such as tourism, cultural exhibitions, and digital platforms, the silverware of the She people of Eastern Fujian has not only enabled the world to appreciate its unique charm but has also continued to evolve and innovate in cultural exchange and integration efforts, thereby radiating new vitality and vibrancy.

4.3 Transformation and Innovation in Communication

In the process of external dissemination, the silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian have inevitably exhibited phenomena of variation. At the same time, they have also been actively innovated to adapt to the development of the times. These changes reflect the evolution of cultural memes.

During the transmission process, the variation phenomenon is more pronounced (Cavalli-Sforza & Feldman, 1981). On the one hand, there have been changes in design. To cater to the aesthetic needs of different audiences, some She silver ornaments simplify some complex patterns and shapes while

retaining traditional elements. For instance, the traditional silver crown with a phoenix design, which originally had intricate craftsmanship and numerous decorations, became more concise and streamlined after spreading to regions that pursue a simple style. Some decorative details were reduced, yet the charm of the phoenix remained intact. On the other hand, functional uses have also evolved. Traditional silver ornaments of the She nationality are mostly worn during important festivals or ceremonies, carrying strong cultural symbolic significance. However, during the transmission process, some silver ornaments were redesigned as everyday accessories, such as delicate silver earrings and bracelets. Their cultural symbolic significance has relatively weakened, while their decorative and practical qualities have been enhanced.

To adapt to the development of the times, the silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian are actively innovating. In terms of materials, they have broken through the limitations of traditional single silver materials and begun to experiment with combinations of other materials. For instance, pairing silver with pearls and crystals not only preserves the quaint charm of silver jewelry but also adds a touch of modern fashion and luxury. In terms of design concepts, modern design elements have been incorporated. Some silver ornaments, inspired by modern minimalist styles, reinterpret traditional patterns through simple lines and geometric shapes, making them more aligned with contemporary aesthetics. Additionally, the crafting techniques have been innovated, leveraging modern technological advancements to enhance production efficiency and precision. For example, the use of 3D printing technology to create molds for certain silver ornaments enables the achievement of more intricate and precise designs.

Underlying these variations and innovations is the evolution of cultural memes. In the process of spreading cultural memes, in order to better adapt to new environments and attract more imitators, they actively adjust and change. The variations in form and function are intended to enable the silver jewelry of the She people to find a niche among individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds and aesthetic perspectives. Innovation, on the other hand, represents the self-renewal of cultural memes amidst the tides of the times. By integrating modern elements and technological advancements, the cultural memes of She silver jewelry can maintain their vitality and appeal in the new era, thereby achieving cultural inheritance and development. This allows the silver jewelry of the She people in eastern Fujian to shine with renewed brilliance in contemporary society.

5. The Influence of Silver Ornaments Cultural Memes of the She Nationality in Eastern Fujian

5.1 The Shaping Effect on She Cultural Development

"The silver jewelry cultural elements of the She nationality in eastern Fujian significantly shape the culture of the She nationality. They play an irreplaceable role in enhancing cultural identity, strengthening ethnic cohesion, and promoting the inheritance and development of culture."

In terms of cultural identity, the silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian serve as a direct and intuitive reflection of the unique characteristics of She culture. The distinctive designs, exquisite

craftsmanship, and rich symbolic meanings of these ornaments collectively establish a cultural identity that distinguishes the She people from other ethnic groups. When members of the She nationality wear these silver ornaments, they experience a profound sense of identity and belonging. Whether in the context of daily life or during significant festivals and celebrations, these ornaments continually remind them of their unique position within the She community, thereby reinforcing their understanding of and affection for their national culture. This sense of cultural identity forms the foundation for the preservation and development of She culture, ensuring its distinctiveness and continuity throughout history.

The enhancement of national cohesion is also an important contribution of the cultural meme of She silver jewelry in eastern Fujian. In the traditional activities of the She people, silver ornaments have become a significant bond that unites the community. For instance, during grand ancestor worship ceremonies or festive weddings, She men and women, dressed in their finest attire, gather together adorned with exquisite silver jewelry. These ornaments carry shared cultural memories and values, fostering a deep sense of emotional connection and a collective national identity among the people. This emotional resonance and unity enable the She people to effectively withstand external influences and challenges. When facing difficulties, they stand together in solidarity, collectively preserving and passing down their rich cultural heritage.

In the process of inheritance and development of She culture, the silver ornaments of the She people in eastern Fujian have played a vital role. As a tangible carrier of culture, they present the history, legends, beliefs, and other cultural elements of the She people in a direct and accessible form. Through the intergenerational transmission of silver jewelry, the younger generation can gain a more vivid understanding and appreciation of their ancestors' wisdom and emotions, thereby inspiring a sense of responsibility and mission to inherit and promote their own national culture. At the same time, during the process of transmission, the cultural elements of silver ornamentation have continuously absorbed new influences, achieving innovative development. This has injected fresh vitality into She culture, ensuring that it remains vibrant and continues to thrive in contemporary society, while maintaining its unique charm.

5.2 Distinctive Value in Regional Culture

The silver jewelry cultural element of the She nationality in eastern Fujian is like a bright pearl, adding unique charm to the regional culture of eastern Fujian and making an indelible contribution.

In terms of enriching the regional culture of eastern Fujian, the silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian have become an important part of regional cultural diversity with their unique artistic style and profound cultural connotation. Their unique design, such as animal and plant motifs infused with natural elements and rhythmic geometric patterns, provides a rich source of inspiration for artistic creation in eastern Fujian. The silver jewelry-making process is a treasure within the regional culture. The exquisite techniques of casting and engraving demonstrate the exceptional level of traditional craftsmanship in eastern Fujian and enrich the legacy of cultural heritage in the region. These distinctive

silver cultural elements, when integrated into the regional culture of eastern Fujian, add greater diversity and depth to it, attracting numerous tourists and cultural researchers to explore and discover, thereby enhancing the cultural reputation and influence of eastern Fujian.

The silver jewelry cultural genes of the She nationality in Eastern Fujian have interacted and blended with the cultural elements of surrounding ethnic groups. On the one hand, throughout its development, She silver jewelry culture has absorbed beneficial elements from neighboring ethnic cultures. For instance, historically, through exchanges with the Han and other ethnic groups, the She people adopted certain patterns and craftsmanship from Central Plains culture. This integration has resulted in more diverse designs and increasingly sophisticated craftsmanship. Such cultural exchange has not only enriched the cultural connotations of She silver jewelry but also fostered cultural exchange and integration among different ethnic groups.

On the other hand, the silver jewelry culture of the She nationality in eastern Fujian has also had a positive impact on the surrounding ethnic cultures. Its unique cultural symbols and artistic style have provided neighboring ethnic groups with fresh aesthetic perspectives and creative inspiration. The cultural connotations embedded in She silver ornaments, such as the reverence for nature and the aspiration for a better life, have influenced the cultural concepts of surrounding ethnic groups to a certain extent. During cultural exchange activities, the display and dissemination of She silver jewelry have deepened the understanding of She culture among neighboring ethnic groups, fostering mutual understanding and respect. This has promoted the harmonious coexistence and shared development of various ethnic cultures in the region. Such mutual cultural exchanges have shaped a diverse yet unified cultural landscape in eastern Fujian, driving regional cultural prosperity and development. Through these exchanges, the culture of eastern Fujian continues to radiate new vitality and vigor.

5.3 Insights into the Modern Cultural Industry

"The silver jewelry cultural memes of the She nationality in eastern Fujian offer valuable lessons and rich inspirations for the modern cultural industry, providing significant insights for its development."

From the perspective of brand building, the silver jewelry of the She nationality in eastern Fujian, with its unique cultural connotations and artistic style, has established a distinct cultural identity. The modern cultural industry can draw lessons from this, delve deeper into the cultural stories and spiritual essence behind the products, and create a brand image with strong recognizability. For instance, the Palace Museum's cultural and creative products successfully integrate the profound historical culture of the Forbidden City with modern creative design. This collaboration has resulted in a series of unique cultural and creative products, effectively shaping a cultural brand with widespread influence and achieving a mutually beneficial outcome between cultural and economic value.

In terms of product innovation, the silver jewelry of the She nationality in eastern Fujian has achieved a seamless integration of tradition and modernity by incorporating modern elements into traditional craftsmanship. Different areas of the cultural industry can draw inspiration from this approach, innovating boldly while preserving the essence of traditional culture. For instance, some regional

traditional ceramic industries have successfully introduced modern design concepts and new materials, resulting in ceramic pieces that preserve traditional charm while appealing to modern aesthetics. This strategy has effectively expanded their market reach.

Additionally, the silver ornaments of the She people in eastern Fujian have reached the world through multiple channels of communication, demonstrating that the cultural industry should skillfully utilize diversified communication channels. In today's digital age, platforms such as the Internet and social media have created vast opportunities for the dissemination of cultural products. For instance, a certain animation IP has achieved comprehensive promotion by releasing animated works online, engaging in interactive activities, organizing themed exhibitions offline, and launching derivative products, thereby attracting a large number of fans and driving the development of related industries.

At the same time, the silver ornaments of the She nationality in eastern Fujian place great emphasis on heritage and talent development, providing a foundation for the sustainable growth of the cultural industry. The cultural industry should prioritize the cultivation of successors, establish a robust heritage system, and encourage more young people to join the cultural sector. Through various methods such as higher education and apprenticeship programs, the goal is to nurture professionals who not only understand traditional culture but also possess the ability to innovate.

The cultural elements of She people's silver ornament culture in eastern Fujian provide rich insights for the development of modern cultural industries in aspects such as brand building, product innovation, promotion and dissemination, and talent cultivation. These elements assist the cultural industry in achieving sustainable development through both heritage and innovation.

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