

## THE APPLICATION OF «BRAND-VISUAL-GENES» IN «SMALL TOURIST TOWNS» DESIGN

### Abstract

This paper discusses the research on visual recognition of tourism town brand, analyzes the brand gene structure of tourism town with tourism industry gene, regional culture gene and natural resources gene as the core, puts forward the brain bank sorting technique which is the core of gene analysis and extraction, and establishes the research system of «gene analysis-gene extraction-visual design» based on visual recognition. Through an empirical study of tourist towns in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China, this paper combs the high correlation between brand recognition genes and town image, solves the problems of insufficient cultivation ability and low popularity of town brands, and provides certain theoretical guidance for the construction of other characteristic town brands in the future.

### Key words

Brand identities, visual genes, visual design.

### Introduction

Under the contemporary cultural background, the brand itself has a heroic image and has become an indispensable part of the modern consumer society. Brand not only refers to a commercial product, but a city, a small town, or an individual, all of them can be considered as a brand. However, to transfer the brand's own content into unique competitiveness and value relies on brands' visual identities. This is the soft power of brand, which can be promoted unconsciously.

Visual identities are to spread personal ideas to the society and consumers through visual design with the core of trademark, to gain public recognition. Taking the tourist towns under Guangzhou (a metropolis of south China) as an example, due to the lack of brand cultivation ability, the developments of many towns are not ideal, and their public awareness stays low. Accordingly, this study deeply explores the brand genes of characteristic small towns in Guangzhou, formulates brand symbols and concepts, and design brand visual recognition based on

brain-bank approach. This paper aims at providing theoretical basis and case references for some tourist towns' constructions and also broadening the research fields of brand visual recognition.

### Literature Review

Originated from Greek, «Gene» was put forward by Danish geneticist Wilhelm Ludwig Johannsen in 1909 which means «life». Studies have found that genes have two characteristics, one is that they can faithfully duplicate themselves to keep the basic operations of organism, and the other is that genes can mutate in their developing.

In modern gene theory, genome is the whole information of the occurrence, development and change of the whole organism system, which coincides with the origin and development of brand. Brand gene, namely Brand DNA, is grafted on the cell biology theory, and has been promoted in the «brand building», including the core value and brand personality of the brand. In Decoding Brand Gene Sequences, it is mentioned that 'a brand is a human be-

ing that has its own life, development, growth and even extinction of all living organisms are derived from the instinct of life and its innate life gene sequence. Early in the 2012, Chinese researcher, Liu Jun, inspired by gene theory and applied brand genes to the design of Limitless brand recognition, designed visual recognition system through brand genes, and completed diversified recognition design through variation and innovative design methods based on brand genes, which also met the requirements of multi-media and brand extension.

In 2018, Dai Fangmei, a teacher from Hubei University in China, also explored how to build the brand identity of sports-characteristic towns from the perspective of «brand gene» theory. She proposed that the core value of the brand is the essence, and the brand gene compositions of established sports towns should include: sports industry brand gene, natural resource brand gene, cultural heritage brand gene and financing mechanism brand gene.

In addition, applications of brand identities are also used in other towns. For example, «I love NY», the city logo of New York, is one of the most copied print works in the world, and «I love New York», an image logo created by Milton Glaser in 1977, is currently the city logo of New York City. Forty years ago, the crime rate in New York reached the highest in history, and some areas were completely corrupt. Therefore, he designed such a logo, and developed a visual gene with love, warmth and empathy by redefining the concept. This simple and lovely logo has become one of the most classic graphic design works in the American history, and is still filled in every corner of the city as a symbol of New York spirit.

Besides, the Queen Town of New Zealand, which is located on the crystal-clear Wakatipu Lake and surrounded by towering mountains, has a marvelously natural environment. With lakes and mountains presented in its logo, this logo is impressive, and this small town in New Zealand has become a famous tourist resort in the southern hemisphere and even around the world for professional outdoor sports experience.

Another example is Chongqing, Chi-

na, which fully combines historical culture and regional culture in brand building, develops a visual gene with Chongqing Bayu(巴渝) culture and unity, and takes «Double Festivals» as its creative theme. Two joyful people combine as a word «Qing»(青) and put forward the image symbol of «Chongqing for all».



*Figure1. New york City Logo / Queen Town Logo / Chongqing city Logo*

Brand visual genes mainly contain variable design forms through the common features of visual elements to maintain unity. Although the development of logo is still the basic point, the logo itself is only a symbol. What we need to do is to make it not only a pattern image, but also have greater coverage and space. The target audience must keep cognition of the image recognition and gain meaning in the hearts of the target audience to shape the brand and gain brand strength.

In addition to the research and application of «brand genes», there are many visual research theories related to the brand of tourist towns. Yanhua Zhang, a teacher from Shandong union medical college hospital in China, mentioned the research on regional tourism culture in the paper «research on the visual interaction design of tourism destination brands based on regional features». She thinks that regional tourism culture is mainly composed of natural geographical features, historical and cultural features and national cultural features, and puts forward that it is of great significance to adhere to the design of tourism culture based on regional characteristics when designing the brand image of tourism destination, which also provides theoretical help for my research.

Chinese Caochen Xue et al. published a paper entitled «design and research on visual

image of rural tourism brand in pinggu district of Beijing under the background of rural renewal IAT» Ion combines the background of rural revitalization policy and the characteristics of rural tourism brand image, constructs the brand image model of rural tourism, takes Pinggu as the

research object, deeply studies and analyzes its present situation, firmly grasps Pinggu's largest peach industry with agricultural characteristics, gives full play to the role of culture, and designs a complete set of visual identification manuals.

Thinkings on Brand Visual Identity of Small Tourist Towns

In this paper, based on the research of brand visual recognition genes, taking the tourist towns in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China as an example, through on-the-spot investigation of the tourist towns and consulting related literature, from the perspective of brand visual recognition in tourist towns, the basic system of «gene analysis-gene extraction-visual design» is studied, and the research ideas are determined on this basis, as shown in the following figure:

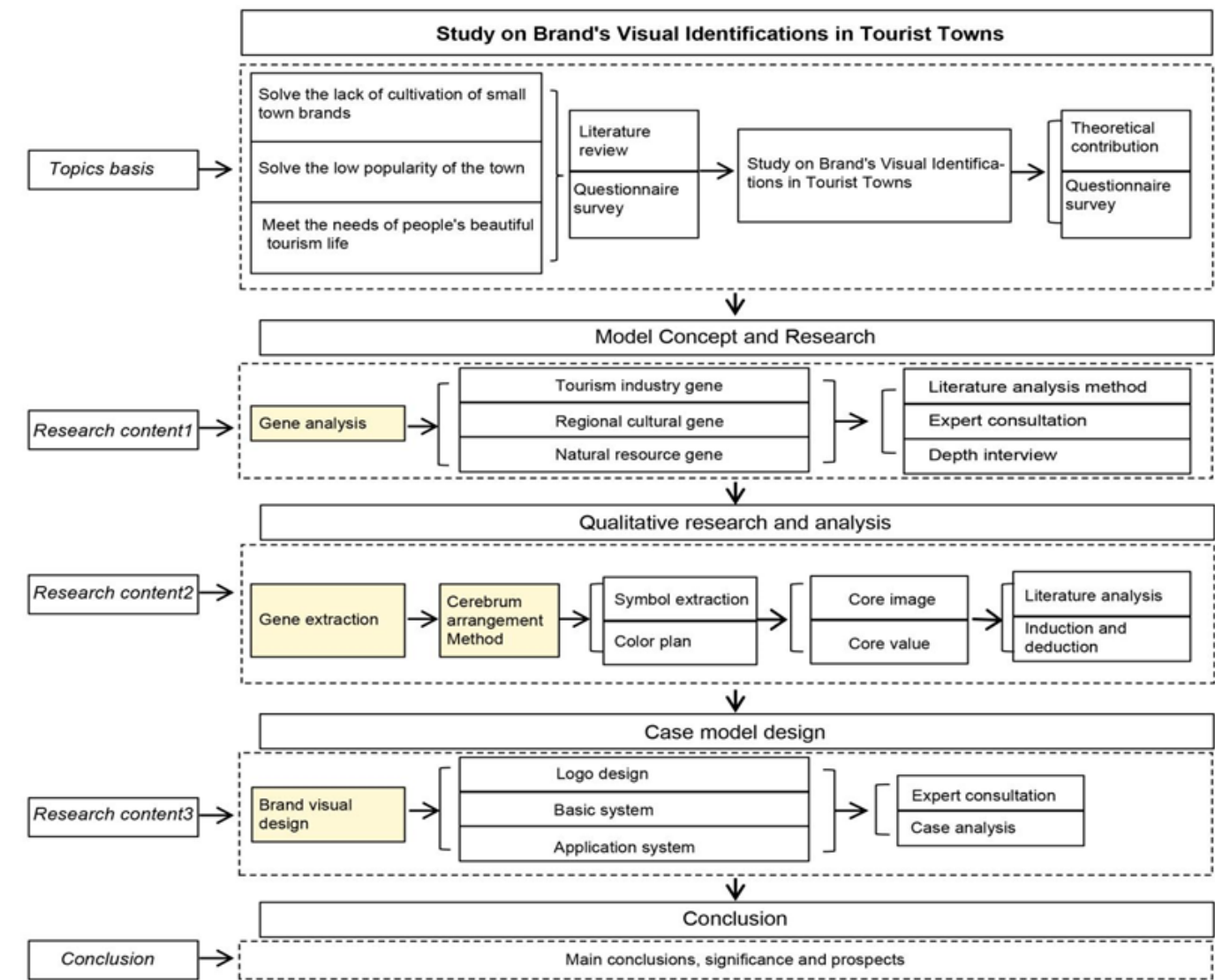


Table1. Research Ideas of Brand Visual Recognition in Tourist Towns

From the technical roadmap above, we can find that the gene analysis is carried out on the basis of taking the tourism industry genes, regional culture genes and natural resources genes as the core for literature research, expert consultation, interview records, etc. Then the brain bank approach is used to extract the

core values and symbols and convert them into visually visible symbols and colors. Afterwards, the visual design of the case model is carried out, and the overall research is completed from the logo design, basic system and application system, and the high correlation between the brand identification that inherits its unique cul-

ture and the image of the town is discussed.

### Case study of brand visual recognition in tourist towns

The author takes Conghua characteristic tourist town located in Guangzhou as a case study. There are 19 characteristic towns in Conghua, which are famous characteristic town groups. Xitang Fairy Town is surrounded by mountains and rivers, with beautiful ecological environment. It is characterized by pastoral scenery, farming culture and fairy tale creativity, and promotes and develops excellent local culture such as paddy field culture, weaving art, traditional diet and straw culture, making it a first-class town in Guangdong Province. Based on the genetic analysis of tourism industry, regional culture and natural resources, we used cerebrum arrangement method to extract genes and make it run through the whole study.

The word «Arranging Approach» comes from the book «KASHIWA SATO'S Ultimate Method for Reaching the Essentials», which is an efficient working methodology put forward by contemporary Japanese designer Sato Ko-

shi.

That is, the research system on classification, induction and summarization, as well as the subconsciousness and design thinking mode of perceptual cognition of things, whose purpose lies in combing and distinguishing, thinking and integrating the information of research objects. In 2019, Wang Tingting, a Chinese scholar, applied it into the teaching of the dining space course of environmental art design, and explored the teaching mode to meet the needs of contemporary environmental art design talents from three aspects: space arrangement, information arrangement and thinking arrangement for solving the phenomenon of separation between theoretical teaching and students' practice, help to construct a new curriculum mode and enhance students' innovative ability.

On the basis of studying a large number of literatures, the author tried to combine visual recognition genes with arrangement Method, and obtained the cerebrum arrangement method for gene core symbols. The collation is divided into seven steps, as shown in the figure below.

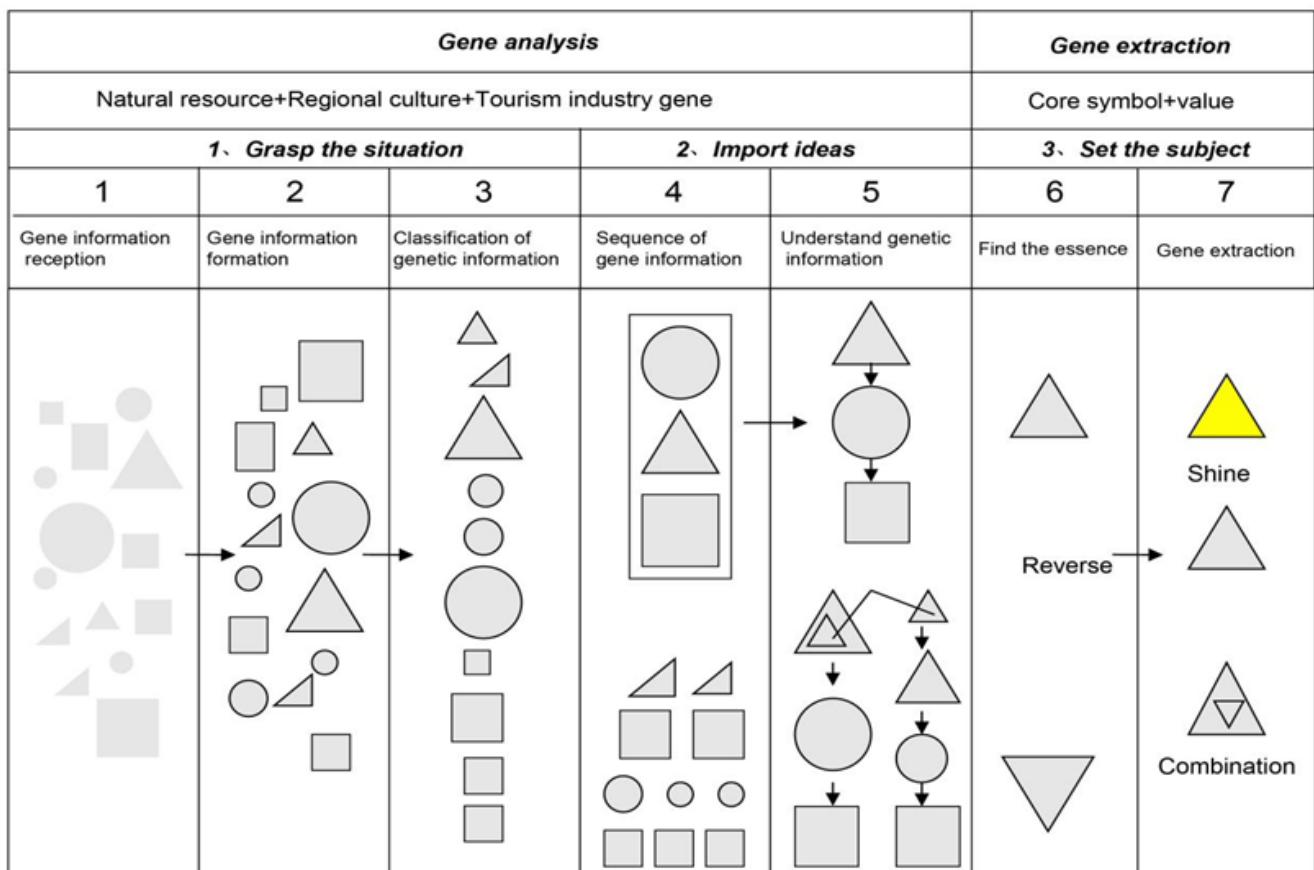


Table2. Brain Bank Sorting in visual gene research



The approach of Brain Bank Sorting is divided into three major phases which include seven small steps totally. In the stage of gene information classification and arrangement, information is visualized and listed for consultation by means of in-depth interviews, expert information, questionnaire survey, field investigation, and village history museum data study. On this basis, visual consultation is formed, and priority is set, the relationship is clarified to find

out the essence, and then gene exploration and refinement are carried out.

Applying it to Xitang fairy tale town, based on the analysis, it is concluded that the pattern is mainly wheat ears, round, the font is slender sans serif, and the color is mainly vibrant golden yellow, with green and brown, as shown in the following figure:

Analysis of Xitang Fairy Tale Town						
Gene analysis					Gene extraction	
Natural resource+Regional culture+Tourism industry gene					Core symbol+value	
1、Grasp the situation			2、Import ideas		3、Set the subject	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Gene information reception	Gene information formation	Classification of genetic information	Sequence of gene information	Understand genetic information	Find the essence	Gene extraction
Beautiful environment  With hills and waters  It is characterized by pastoral scenery, farming culture and fairy tale creativity  Develop rice field culture、Weaving art	Xitang  Paddy field  Weave  Fairy tale  art  Towns	Cultural Tourism town  Ears of wheat, gold, pastoral style  Handmade art, strip block, crisscross, plant  Children, innocence, loveliness and animation  Cultural-minded  Tourism and characteristics	<div>Ear of wheat Interlock Lovable Tourism town</div>  gold, pastoral style, Handmade art, strip block, Children, Cultural-minded ...	Slim, lovely, golden tourist town?  Staggered ears of wheat?  Lovely cartoon image of children?	The pattern is mainly wheat ears, round, with slim linerless font and vibrant golden yellow color, matched with green and brown.	Woven golden ears of wheat

Table3.Brain Bank Sorting for Xitang Fairy Tale Town

Taking this as an example, we can apply it to other towns. For example, Pingxiu Town in the southern Guangzhou takes natural resources as the core, and can extract genes with characteristics of Pingxiu and Xishi; Xitang fairy tale town takes tourism industry as the core, and can extract rice fields and vitality as char-

acteristic genes; Hot spring wealth town takes regional culture combined with tourism industry as the core, and can utilize thermal spring and finance as characteristic genes, and finally obtain the core value of brand and unique brand symbol.

## Methodology

The research on brand identification system of tourist towns is an interdisciplinary subject, which involves design, tourism and communication. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt a variety of research methods, such as literature research, reading academic works on brand identification design of tourist towns and scenic spots, dissertations and academic journals on related topics, mining relevant knowledge and information about research objects, and determining the research direction and focus. The field investigation method and interview record are used to conduct field investigation and research. The brand visual system is regarded as an important parallel branch of urban construction by double line crossing method, which constitutes an important part of urban construction together with hardware facilities, cultural creations, dissemination and promotion, etc. At the same time, a large number of latest technologies and methods of brand vision research are introduced to create a visual identification system based on town construction, which fully takes into account the characteristics of the two and achieves effective integration. Finally, the research objects are demonstrated by various methods such as induction and classification, analysis and synthesis, and comparison.

## Conclusion

In this paper, brand visual genes are studied to build a brand. The system of brand visual identity is developed, a complete set of gene research system is established, and a new field of brand recognition genes research is broadened. Based on this, this study not only provides theoretical guidance for cultural brand construction in tourist towns, puts forward new ideas for its research, effectively supplements the flaw of brand recognition system, but also refines brand core values and symbols, converts them into visual logos and colors, and embodies «characteristics» for visitors. The visual identification genes related to tourist towns are integrated into the brand design, and then extended to the design of posters, packaging and guide systems. It not only meets the basic functions and cultural carrier functions, but also produces an emotional exchange with tourists, meets people's psychological needs, and can be transformed into the advantages of cities and towns to drive more consumers, promote a virtuous circle of ecology and economy, accelerate the appreciation of urban natural capital, and realize the leap-forward development of small towns' tourism.

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# "СИТИ АЯНГА" БАГ

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"СИТИ" Их сургуулийн сагсан бөмбөгийн "Сити Аянга" баг анх 2013-2014 оны хичээлийн жилд байгуулагдсан бөгөөд Монголын оюутны сагсан бөмбөгийн спортын нүүр царай болсон шилдэг багуудын нэг юм. Үзүүлсэн амжилтуудаас дурдвал:

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2/Үндэсний оюутны лигийн аварга. Монгол оюутны сагсан бөмбөгийн спортын түүхэнд анх удаа 3 жил дараалан түрүүлсэн баг болсон. Шилдэг тоглогч "Сити Аянга" багийн тамирчин, оюутан Г.Болд

## **2019-2020 он:**

1/Үндэсний оюутны лигийн хүрэл медаль

2/"Сити Аянга" багийн ахлагч Т.Цогбадрах Монгол Улсын Ерөнхийлөгчийн нэрэмжит тэтгэлэг хүртсэн.



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