



# Cultural and Creative Attributes of Contemporary Creative Markets in China

Rulan Jiang<sup>1</sup>, Siyuan Yang<sup>2,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Wuhan University, English Major, School of Foreign Language and Literature, Wuhan, 430000, China

<sup>2</sup>Shanghai International Studies University, English and International Politics, Honor College, Shanghai, 200000, China

These authors contributed equally

1926142326@qq.com, \*xuan2328@163.com

**Abstract.** Creative markets, a recent phenomenon in China, represent a fusion of traditional street markets with contemporary cultural and creative elements. This paper explores the evolution of creative markets, delves into the structural factors driving the proliferation of creative markets, and elucidates the distinguishing features of creative markets, emphasizing their novelty, ingenuity, and cultural significance compared to traditional markets. Furthermore, this paper moves on to the main part: the two main characteristics of the Creative Market. From the perspective of creativity, it examines the business operation models and the logic behind it. At the cultural level, it highlights the cultural attributes from the audience, themes and the whole creative industry. Finally, it discusses the challenges faced by creative markets in China and draws inspiration from international experiences to address these issues. This paper innovatively proposes two attributes of creative markets by integrating China's national conditions with international experiences, and provides valuable insights into the development prospects of creative markets within the contemporary era.

**Keywords:** creative markets, creative attributes, cultural attributes, intangible cultural heritage, international experiences.

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 From Market to Creative Market

Dating back over 3,000 years in China, the concept of markets has long been documented, as evidenced in the *Book of Changes*, which states, "In the daytime, there are markets, attracting people from all over the world to gather goods from all over the world, trading and leaving, each obtaining what they need." Street markets refer to a combination of streets and open-market stalls along the streets, constituting a form of urban space that emerged during the Song dynasty, characterized by a mixture of residential areas and commercial outlets.

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However, the emergence of locally driven markets labeled with the prefix "creative" is a relatively recent phenomenon. One can trace the origins of creative markets to flea markets in European and American countries—venues where vendors exchange old goods and sell handmade crafts. The concept of creative markets first surfaced in the creative hub of London, UK. Its introduction into the Chinese context can be traced back to the book *Creative Markets* by Taiwanese designer Wang Yiyin in 2005. In this book, the practice of London designers selling their creative works at markets was termed "creative markets." [1] Initially, creative markets were confined to niche subcultures and often coexisted with events such as music festivals and lifestyle expos. However, in recent years, heightened desires for offline activities and social interactions, compounded by the need for economic recovery, have led to a proliferation of creative markets in various cities.

The concept of creative markets refers to markets with unique cultural atmospheres and creative business models. In contrast to traditional markets, which primarily emphasize the commercial aspect of selling goods, creative markets highlight both cultural and creative attributes. Firstly, products sold in creative markets exhibit novelty and ingenuity in their content or presentation. Secondly, creative markets embody distinct cultural connotations. While the works found in creative markets may not adhere to specific genres, they typically possess two key characteristics: originality and cultural significance. This distinguishes them from conventional market offerings and underscores their value as cultural artifacts.

## **1.2 Structural Factors Driving Creative Markets**

### **1.2.1 Government Policies on Street Economy and Cultural and Creative Industries**

Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, there was a significant disruption in economic activities, leading to adverse effects on the overall employment environment and economic conditions. However, as time progressed, there was a gradual recovery in the overall environment. The institutional landscape underwent changes post-pandemic, particularly in the approach towards street vending economy, transitioning from suppression to encouragement. With the onset of the pandemic, there was a shift in the institutional environment, with central authorities acknowledging the street vending economy. In March 2020, amidst the pandemic, the State Council issued documents related to stabilizing employment, highlighting the need to address issues related to the reasonable management of street vending economies in urban spaces. Subsequently, during the third session of the Thirteenth National People's Congress held on May 22, 2020, the government work report identified "six guarantees" and "six stabilities" as the national economic development goals for 2020. In early June, the Premier of the State Council expressed approval for the street vending economy, considering it as a vibrant aspect of urban life. Overall, the growth of creative markets was relatively stable before 2020. However, with the onset of the pandemic, the resurgence of street vending economies, and the renewed emphasis on night economies, creative markets experienced explosive growth, manifesting a proliferation of activities across various regions.

The development of the creative industries is actively promoted by the government through top-down approaches too. Taking the example of Shanghai's goal to develop its creative economy, the government emphasizes the need to strengthen industrial policy regulation, optimize industrial layout, establish several creative industry parks and urban industrial parks, and position itself as the design capital. [2] Moreover, on the international stage, efforts are accelerated to transform Shanghai into a world-class design capital and an international hub for cultural and creative industries. As a result of this support for the creative industries, creative markets have also flourished.

### **1.2.2 Reasons Inherent to Creative Markets**

Firstly, the investment cost of creative markets is relatively low. Organizers of creative markets, driven by their own interests and cultural hobbies, tend to create markets with high cultural and entertainment value, which align well with the differentiated operation themes of shopping centers.[3] As a result, this will attract many vendors to set up stalls at creative markets and promote their proliferation.

Secondly, creative markets themselves are highly social offline gatherings. They generate strong community effects and hold the key to traffic, thereby contributing to consumer spending for shopping centers. Creative markets serve as experimental grounds at the forefront of the market and can act as incubators for innovative businesses, platforms for product launches, and mobile storefronts for commercial brands. Through guerrilla market feedback, they ultimately facilitate better innovation in commercial products. Thus, shopping malls are often happy with creative markets and do not stop their development.

## **2 Innovation Attributes**

Compared to traditional markets, creative markets that integrate experiential scenes not only retain their original product attributes but also exhibit inherent creative characteristics. They highlight the individuality, uniqueness, and originality of products, drawing in a significant number of consumers oriented towards creative consumption. This, in turn, expedites the growth of the innovation-driven economy.

### **2.1 Innovations in Business Operation Models**

With the increasing participation of more young vendors in the "street vendor" industry, there is a convergence of traditional street economy with the trends in short video development, influencer economies, nighttime economies, and more, resulting in a diverse array of street vending formats.

#### **2.1.1 "Nighttime Market + Bazaar": Renewed Urban Nightlife Dynamism**

According to the "The 2023 China Nighttime Economic Development Report," over 80% of users express their preference for platforms such as TikTok to gather information about nightlife. From January to May 2023, around 70 million users shared

snapshots of their personal nightlife experiences on TikTok. Notably, more than half of these posts were at locations featuring consumer activities. As shown in Figure 1, public's perception towards night economy reports optimistic. As the scale of the night economy continues to expand, nighttime markets have become a crucial assessment indicator for measuring the development of urban night economies. Among these, the innovative night markets, exemplified by the "Car Boot Fair," rely on a more romantic and cyberpunk style. They resonate with the psychological inclination of today's young people who seek freedom and trendiness, adding a vibrant touch to urban nightlife. Car Boot Fair, as the name suggests, transforms the storage space of automobiles into miniature shops, selling a variety of creative products. In comparison to traditional nighttime market stalls, Car Boot Fair stands out for its lower operational costs, increased flexibility, and a more diverse and fashionable style. This diversity diminishes homogenous competition not only makes it a financially viable option but also creates rich social opportunities for the younger crowd.

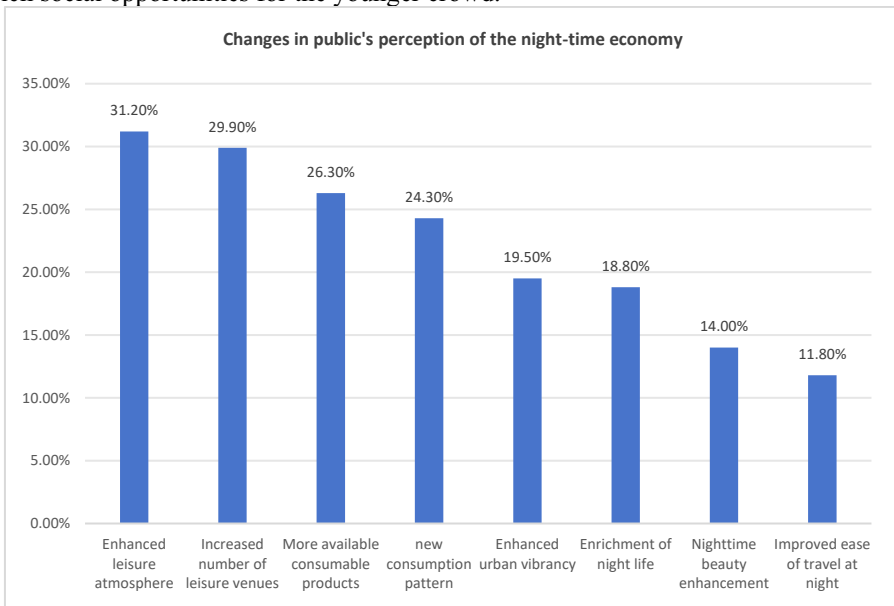


Fig. 1. Changes in public's perception of the night-time economy

Source: 2023 Report on the Development of China's Night-time Economy, China Tourism Academy.

### 2.1.2 "Shopping Center + Bazaar": Crafting Trendy Pop-up Spaces

Currently, diverse forms of bazaars have become a common strategy for shopping malls to draw in customers and enhance retail sales. With useless public spaces and atriums becoming pop-up market events, shopping centers can bring in new brands whereby the consumers of a broader and diverse category will be served. Ultimately, adoption of this approach will help to generate a higher conversion rate of consumer

shopping, which will establish a dynamic and captivating shopping ambiance inside the mall.

### **2.1.3 "Scenic Area + Bazaar": Pioneering a New Way of Attracting Visitors**

Local boutique-type markets around famous tourist locations like Hangzhou Botanical Garden Market are created by artistic designers in the close vicinity of scenic areas and parks. These festivities principally include bars' parties and concerts, and a significant driving force in the market is the consumption of these activities. On top of that, these markets are authentic to their native environment, which might include tea ceremonies, ceramic arts, Chinese traditional opera, and local folk activities. This not only attracts tourists but also supports the development of local cultural and handicraft industries. Moreover, scenic areas interact with various innovations by introducing Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) technologies which help to make bazaar more exciting and appealing.[4] These types of pioneering techniques give the tourists something 'new' to look forward to. The future of scenic bazaars becomes the market that is enabled and empowered by the latest technology.

### **2.1.4 "Vegetable Market + Bazaar": Infusing Art into Daily Life**

Unlike many other hubs for business activities, the local market is more than just a place for economic interactions. It is a mix of culture, economy and community where citizens meet to exchange various products. Innovative market concepts based on combining various urban components and locating them in the market area appear to be a key feature of the market trend.[5] Shuangta Market in Suzhou, Jiangsu, is an example of a successful transformation of a vegetable market. Located at the intersection of Pingjiang Road and Dinghui Temple, two renowned tourist spots in Suzhou, Shuangta Market attracts many visitors due to its Suzhou-style design, and its cultural elements like Biluochun tea showcase the city's heritage, making it particularly appealing to Chinese traditional culture enthusiasts. The design concept of Shuangta Market introduced the "Neighborhood Center" mode from Singapore. Originating from earlier housing plans implemented by the government to provide residents with corresponding community and commercial services, it eventually evolved into a mature community business center. In 2019, Shuangta Market revamped its layout by organizing distinct zones for fresh produce, seafood, and more, ensuring a clean and orderly market environment. They increased their diversification by opting for the new layout: flower shops, wines, and cafes that accommodate the basic functional needs of traditional consumers and offer refreshment to younger clients.

The transformation of vegetable markets is a mirror of the complex urban redevelopment that takes place in China. Many cities' historic neighborhoods, keeping their rich cultural heritage, face the problem of population moving out and economic standstill. These old vegetable markets have undergone a tremendous change which not only upgrades the image of the city and enhances the quality of life of residents, but also incorporates culture and creativity into all aspects of daily life, hence forming a unique urban look. Each city that aspires to become vibrant could use the idea of a modern

vegetable market as a platform for their regeneration into a colorful and appealing landmark that would appeal to the younger population and represent urban living.

## 2.2 Breaking Down the Business Logic Innovation Behind the "Market Craze"

From a business innovation perspective, creative markets have pioneered a fresh stage for young individuals brimming with imaginative ideas and daring to innovate independently. It serves as a novel platform where designs are transformed into commercial outcomes. Thus, creative market manifests distinctive features of commercial creative culture, innovating across various aspects such as consumption scenarios, user experiences, and operational strategies.

### 2.2.1 Building the O2O Model

The online-to-offline (O2O) interaction space is not fragmented but interconnected. The promotion and marketing of creative markets extend beyond physical locations, reaching a vast audience of market enthusiasts through social short videos and e-commerce platforms such as TikTok and Xiaohongshu (RED). These e-commerce platforms leverage precise user profiling to push specific market information to a massive audience. According to Figure 2, it is estimated that the total amount of online sales will reach 22.6 trillion yuan by 2030. The promotion methods of these platforms are primarily based on fan economics and short video marketing. Specifically, they conduct a lot of offline marketing in this way using personal recommendations and customer interactions, and hence, the latter becomes additional customers in the offline markets.



Fig. 2. Estimated scale of China's social and online sales, 2023-2030

QR codes serve as the primary tool of the medium which is both digital and tangible as well. Sometimes, the vendors post free gifts as their enticing means to drive traffic, varying in the form of online traffic and private domain traffic. This entails the shift

from an offline event's actual location to a virtual location in the online environment. Conversely, QR codes serve as an entry point from the virtual space of the internet to real-world scenarios. For instance, after introducing market content in a public account post, a QR code may be attached at the end, allowing users to "scan for ticket purchases," completing a conversion process.

### **2.2.2 Enhanced Consumer Experience**

The immersion of "everyday life aesthetization" into the consumer culture now serves as a distinguishing field element in urban living. Vendors and curators turn ordinary articles into beautifully crafted sculptures or intricate designs in the market creating a colorful and cultural enthusiastic ambiance. The philosophy behind this approach is that visual designs and arts are applied in the everyday lives of residents, incorporating elements that remind people of time well spent or interactions with others. With this framework, the artistic markets reshape the market mechanism, squeezing into one style diverse people, goods and spaces. Examples include thematic markets like "Vintage" or "Cityeat," where elements such as market themes, materials, locations, copywriting, and color schemes contribute to the stylized creation of actual scenes. The concept of creative markets, in which case like-minded people come together in this space with an aim of not only selling products but also creating a place for aesthetic and cultural appreciation comes to mind. They represent a form of cultural consumption favored by young people, providing opportunities for social engagement and self-expression. [6]

### **2.2.3 Promoting New Ideals through Brand Value**

For budding brands, particularly those originating online, creative markets serve as natural brand incubators by providing the most direct means to connect with consumers. In recent years, creative markets like Neighbor's Neighbors Flash Store by Common Rare and Bund Dessert Carnival by Shanghai BFC have witnessed the emergence of numerous startups such as suposopo, handhandhand, Paper voice, among others. And the primary goal of these markets is to maximally showcase brand value. To gain wider acceptance among consumers, a brand's cultural values must be embedded in daily and flexible practices, and markets offer a conducive environment for this. Brands should understand and meet the consumption needs of the Z-generation, infusing more creativity into products and user experiences to establish distinct brand differentiators. This is essential for gaining genuine consumer recognition and organically expanding brand influence into broader societal spheres, creating brand-led affinity communities.[7]

An exemplary brand, Paper voice, founded in 2017, is a quirky lifestyle brand that prioritizes innovation and fun while integrating a commitment to sustainable living. From the eco-friendly cardboard clock to laboratory style plant products labeled "Natural Gifts" and a continuously updated range of creative products like fragrances, eco-friendly shopping bags, and apparel the brand directly reflects the idea of ecology. By visualizing the concept of sustainability in all little items that are consumed in everyday life, the youth is brought to the horizon of acceptance of an eco-friendly lifestyle under the umbrella of "sustainable fashion."

### 3 Cultural Attributes

#### 3.1 The Cultural Attributes of Creative Markets' Audience

In an era where, as Feuerbach's assertion, "But for the present age, which prefers the sign to the thing signified, the copy to the original, representation to reality, appearance to essence . . ." [8] we find ourselves constantly immersed in the spectacle of substituted existence. The creative market conveniently epitomizes one of the increasingly prevalent manifestations of the spectacle society in this new age. Here, as consumers within the realm of creative markets production, individuals consume not only the commodities themselves but also the meanings encapsulated within them, the symbols they represent, and, more importantly, the culture behind them.

##### 3.1.1 Youth Subculture and Community Culture Created by Consumer Groups

The so-called youth subculture refers to a cultural practice of young people's creative self-expression based on interest group relationships and common values. Distinguished from rational, utilitarian, and performance-driven societies, these groups typically harbor shared beliefs and value identifications. Their gains encompass a spectrum of symbolic meanings including cultural values, lifestyle attitudes, and aesthetic experiences, thereby undergoing a process of experiential labor and creation, perhaps even a reevaluation of the self. Ultimately, this culminates in the aggregation of an emergent subcultural social group, achieving collective belonging and recognition.

If the authors go further from youth subculture, we discover that community culture is embedded in it. The products sold in creative markets predominantly originate in individual creators, artists, and proprietors of trendy brands, offering a sense of exclusivity and limited availability distinct from mass-market or well-known brands. This seems particularly appealing to urban youth who are increasingly isolated, as they navigate these markets in search of kindred spirits among these unique offerings, sharing common aesthetic tastes and lifestyle preferences. Rarely do vendors come to the bazaar solely for sales; in contrast to other retail formats, the market functions more as a place for socializing, fostering a relaxed atmosphere. At times, vendors sit on the ground with their goods casually displayed, while some citizens drive from several kilometers away simply to "catch up with old friends and discover new things." Sellers can encounter knowledgeable individuals, buyers can experience the fun of bargaining, and they can come into direct contact with people who have first-hand information about the provenance of second-hand old things, the prevailing culture of the time, as well as understanding the design philosophies and craftsmanship of artisans. The exchange between buyers and sellers fosters a sense of familiarity and warmth that large malls and online shopping cannot replicate. Behind the bustling activity of the market lies a deep appreciation for human interaction. The emergence of creative markets reflects the desire of modern urban dwellers, amidst the "concrete jungle," for communication and the intimate atmosphere that direct human contact engenders. In a sense, the rise of markets in urban settings compensates for the lack of warmth and closeness often felt in the concrete environment.



### 3.1.2 Sentimental Culture

The vintage market, characterized by the circulation of old objects, profoundly impacts the meaning attributed to possessions and individuals' interactions with them. This influence is delineated by four components: object histories, curatorial practices, future imaginations, and transference [9]. During the process of transference, consumers regard the revival of past cultures as a new medium for expressing inner emotions. Time-honored attire, music, and poetry serve as windows into our past. Moreover, the scarcity of vintage products influences consumers' perceptions of them and their propensity to purchase such items [10]. The older the vintage, the more it exudes a sense of pastness, rendering it increasingly precious.

Taking Changsha Super Wenheyong as an example, the cultural creativity of Super Wenheyong does not aim to recreate a specific commercial street from Changsha's recent past but rather compiles various commercial street scenes and signage scattered throughout the city, presenting them collectively within a shopping center. Stepping into Changsha Wenheyong feels like turning back the clock several decades, returning to crowded spaces, chaotic streets, dim lights, and streets filled with nostalgia and dilapidated walls. It rapidly bridges the gap between visitors and the past. Through resonance with past cultural history, the psychological effects of transference, and the emotional resonance with cherished objects of the past, the cuisine found in Changsha Wenhuiyi is imbued with a certain sentimentality and charm. Similarly, in vintage markets, one may encounter a row of tin toy trains from childhood or brush past a pair of jazz-era shoes, each item carrying its own story, an experience unattainable in mundane department stores. For many seasoned "flea market enthusiasts," the exchanges facilitated in these markets involve not only material goods but also the stories behind them.

## 3.2 The Cultural Attributes of Creative Markets' themes

### 3.2.1 Weaving Trendy IP into Themes

In terms of content, creative markets showcase distinct cultural themes, among which IP-themed markets are at the forefront or represent of in fashion and cultural movements. The trendy IPs by their pop culture icons as well as marketing meanings are capable of producing a committed following, which develops cult communities contributing this way to the good reputation of the related items in the market. Young consumers exhibit a strong inclination to purchase merchandise associated with their favorite characters, character figurines, and electronically connected products linked to IPs. They also actively seek interaction and engagement within communities sharing similar interests.

The dynamic collaboration between Trendy Intellectual Properties (IPs) and Creative Markets has unearthed and nurtured a multifaceted cultural landscape. This process revitalizes, rejuvenates, and reshapes an ordinary street, infusing it with vibrancy and vitality, culminating in a spectacular fusion of culture, art, digital IPs, and commerce—a cultural and artistic scenario. There is a continual need to enhance and upgrade IPs to capture an increasing share of discerning consumers. The future development of immersive tourism and entertainment products should employ more comprehensive IP shaping strategies to enhance consumer retention, diversify consumption structures,

and elevate revenue-generating capacity of similar products. On one hand, the public readily accepts the aesthetic appeal of IP characters while simultaneously placing greater emphasis on the cultural connotations embedded within these IPs. On the other hand, addressing the current issue of overly reliant revenue structures on ticket sales, which poses a developmental bottleneck, necessitates the design and sale of culturally appealing IP-derived products. This approach not only broadens consumer channels but also elevates the quality of consumption.

### **3.2.2 Utilization of Traditional Chinese Culture in Creative Markets**

There are also one broad category centered around Chinese traditional culture, historical anecdotes, and notable figures, which could emphasize the distinctive Chinese cultural elements, thus fostering a cultural essence within the marketplaces.

#### *3.2.2.1 Traditional Cultural Markets*

Many markets incorporate elements of Chinese traditional culture, such as those themed around traditional culture. For instance, the Song Dynasty market inspired by the popular Chinese drama "Dream of Splendor" immerses consumers in a sensory experience of Song Dynasty street scenes through Song-style settings, Hanfu parades, and other activities, enabling a nostalgic immersion into the ambiance of Song Dynasty street festivals. From the ambiance of Song Dynasty markets and the aesthetics of daily life to historical culture, the Song Dynasty-themed market transforms intangible melodies into tangible expressions, unfurling a dynamic, elegant, and lively depiction of Song Dynasty life. Temporarily escaping reality, visitors step into this scene, savoring traditional Song Dynasty brewed wine and engaging in traditional games. A series of observable, tangible, experiential, and consumable elements of traditional culture slow down the pace of these young people's lives, adding joy to their experiences.

#### *3.2.2.2 Intangible Cultural Heritage Markets*

In addition to traditional Chinese culture, the revitalization of intangible cultural heritage is also a highlight of cultural and creative markets. At the inaugural intangible cultural heritage market during Shenzhen's Cultural Heritage Month, citizens can taste beloved Shenzhen traditional meals such as herbal tea, desserts, and Cantonese preserved meats, with the production processes showcased at the market, reflecting the traditional craftsmanship of intangible cultural heritage projects. Through these markets, citizens can witness more dynamic intangible cultural heritage skills and taste classic delicacies passed down for centuries.

Except for intangible cultural heritage cuisine, intangible cultural heritage craftsmanship is also showcased at these markets. For example, the ancient red copper crafting technique, with its intricate, rugged, delicate, and elegant copper craftsmanship, has attracted the attention of many citizens. Master craftsman Qu Zhen, renowned for his exquisite ancient red copper crafting technique, has created numerous sculptures using this traditional method, with his Eight Auspicious Jewelry series selected for a special exhibition at the Forbidden City and his Four-Petal Flower series craftsmanship selected for the Potala Palace Creative Museum.[11] In 2022, the ancient red copper crafting technique was included as a district-level intangible cultural heritage representative

project in Shenzhen. Similarly, straw painting, where golden straw is meticulously crafted using scraping, scalding, pulling, cutting, carving, and other techniques, showcases a beautiful series of paintings, exuding a natural, elegant, and noble beauty.

Additionally, sugar painting, paper cutting, kites, clay figurines, and candied fruit skewers are also featured. The commercialization of intangible cultural heritage adds more cultural flavor; citizens can purchase visually appealing, entertaining intangible cultural heritage products while also "bringing cultural relics home" in the form of cultural and creative products, conveying the historical and artistic value of cultural relics, truly bringing cultural relics to life. Many market venues also feature dedicated areas for sharing knowledge about intangible cultural heritage, allowing community residents to not only enjoy a pleasant cultural and spiritual feast but also deepen their understanding of traditional culture, sowing the seeds of more "cultural imprints" and embedding "intangible cultural heritage business cards" in the minds of community residents.

In the myriad of creative markets, traditional culture and intangible cultural heritage serve as vital cultural resources for creative design. Through these examples, it is evident that cultural significance remains the immutable "soul" of these markets.

### *3.2.3 Incorporation of Foreign Cultural Elements in Chinese Creative Markets*

The development of creative markets in China has drawn inspiration from various foreign elements. In terms of content, creative markets have incorporated many elements related to foreign traditional festivals, such as Christmas, Halloween, and Easter. These are symbolized through events, exhibitions, and markets, in which they feature creative items that associate with the festive themes, thus in addition to ensuring the festive atmosphere and the consumer experience. Additionally, creative markets have fostered the incorporation of many foreign cultural facets to China. For instance, coffee has emerged as a fashionable lifestyle in China, leading to the emergence of coffee-themed markets. Similarly, anime-themed entertainment centers have been spread rapidly by the comprehensive influence of Japanese anime culture.[12] Moreover, many creative markets have introduced elements of Western cuisine culture, incorporating exotic delicacies such as Italian pizza, French wine, and Mexican margaritas, organizing food festivals, tasting events, or providing booths offering international cuisine, enriching the food selection of the markets. Furthermore, the infusion of Western popular culture elements such as pop music, fashion trends, movies, and TV shows has profoundly influenced Chinese creative markets.

Through weaving foreign cultural elements into the creative marketplaces, not only the diversity of items and services can be increased, however, more customer groups also can get attracted while boosting the accessibility and popularity of the markets. Moreover, it can promote cultural exchanges and cooperation between China's creative industry and countries worldwide, driving the internationalization of China's creative industry.

In terms of form, Chinese creative markets have also borrowed successful experiences and practices from foreign markets. In the modern lifestyle, traditional crafts, ethnic cultures, and intangible cultural heritage encounter the issue of value overshadowing, a challenge faced by countries worldwide. How to ensure their sustained existence in our daily lives and achieve their orderly utilization is an important aspect of the

development of folk art in the post-intangible cultural heritage era. Taking the impact of the Santa Fe Market in the United States on the development of Chinese creative markets as an example, it starts with respecting tradition and promoting national culture, rationally utilizing regional resources and modernizing design. Plus, by constructing digital platform, Santa Fe actively creates a network platform for the display and sale of folk art, further enhancing the city's cultural influence and attracting global audience. Through brand building, cultural IP, and other potential avenues, a new situation with high added value can be formed, increasing the enthusiasm of practitioners in the creative market and promoting the modern inheritance of cultural arts. Through creative markets, Santa Fe has achieved the development and modern inheritance of culture. While establishing a positive cultural influence, it has also contributed to the development of local towns and rural areas, providing valuable reference for the construction and development of modern creative industries and creative towns.

In addition to Santa Fe's experience in utilizing local cultural features through digital promotion, there are many forms of experience for foreign countries to learn from. Many foreign creative bazaars focus on social and interactive experiences, attracting consumer participation through workshops, activities and other forms to increase the attractiveness and interest of the bazaar. In addition, many foreign creative markets focus on sustainable development and environmental protection, promoting the use of environmentally friendly materials, supporting local craftsmen and other practices, which are welcomed by consumers. China's creative bazaars are also gradually promoting the concept of environmental protection, encouraging local designers to use environmentally friendly materials and crafts, and at the same time strengthening the publicity and promotion of environmentally friendly products. Foreign creative bazaars are usually diverse and inclusive, showcasing creative works from different cultural backgrounds and regions, and attracting a wide range of audiences. China's creative bazaars are also committed to building a more inclusive platform, so that more people have the opportunity to display and share their creativity. However, at the same time, it is also necessary to combine local cultural characteristics and consumer demand to create creative markets with Chinese characteristics and international influence.

### **3.3 The Cultural Attributes of the Creative Industry**

Creative markets, as a subset of the cultural and creative industry, are intricately linked to the creative spaces within urban environments. Professor Clark from the University of Chicago introduced the "scene theory," suggesting that the driving force of future urban development will converge within various "cultural scenes," wherein values are embedded in communities, architecture, demographics, and collective activities, and manifested through the functionalities, types, and layouts of amenities.[13] By fostering the creation and consumption of these scenes, cities acquire a new momentum for development grounded in cultural growth, further propelling the evolution and transformation of industrial urban centers. Thus, it can be argued that the establishment of "creative scenes" or "creative spaces" is pivotal in attracting more creative individuals, permeating cultural values, and stimulating urban development.

Presently, many industrial cities in China, leveraging their unique cultural resources, are undergoing transformations, with the creative industry serving as a key driver of this new phase of development. Creative markets, by accentuating their humanistic values, attracting creative individuals, and cultivating creative spaces, play a significant role in propelling urban development. For instance, Jingdezhen in China exemplifies a gathering of cultural and creative communities. The creative market in Jingdezhen has cultivated a unique cultural atmosphere, attracting numerous artists and commercial entities and establishing a commercial system that supports culture with commerce and nourishes artistic production with commerce. This not only drives local GDP growth but also exhibits distinctive characteristics of spontaneity, sociability, and creativity. The Pottery Workshop in particular has evolved from its origins as a "street stall business" to becoming a cultural landmark of Jingdezhen. Such cultural attributes in creative markets serve as bridges between the market and cultural creativity, becoming crucial components of the creative product industry chain.

There are many other examples of cultural attributes acting in creative markets driving industrial consumption growth. For instance, Woodstock of Eating Market themed around "National Trendy Books," attracted tens of thousands of people within three days, revitalizing surrounding venues such as art galleries, cafes, and bookstores amid Beijing's old alleys and under renovation buildings. Similarly, in the same year, the cultural and tourism market "Hangzhou Wonderful Night" in Hangzhou attracted approximately 120,000 visitors over three days, generating consumption of over 30 million yuan, marking a phenomenal exhibition. As some experts have pointed out, although markets may seem small in scale and may not serve as the "main arteries" of urban economies, they fill the "capillaries" of large cities, contributing significantly to their vibrancy and vitality.

## **4 Challenges and International Experiences Encountered in China**

China's creative markets, as a fusion of culture, regional features, and innovation, hold vast development prospects. By employing various classifications and models, they can showcase local culture and characteristics. However, it is crucial to pay attention to both the future development trends and existing shortcomings to genuinely contribute to the development of cultural tourism industries. Currently, China's creative markets face certain issues concerning cultural and innovative attributes. Drawing inspiration from mature international market models could offer new insights for practitioners in the market.

### **4.1 The Existing Issues with Creative Markets**

#### **4.1.1 The Superficial Exploration of Cultural Aspects**

In terms of cultural attributes, some markets are overly commercialized, with a mixed quality of exhibitors and lower cultural value. All forms of commercial entities undergo certain cyclical patterns, and staying unchanged can lead to aesthetic fatigue.

Additionally, over reliance on scenes to attract customers poses higher demands on scene updates and iterations. After many main street areas are completed, there is no longer the motivation to change and innovate, failing to keep customers in a state of perpetual freshness. The inability to explore deeper cultural aspects beyond surface scenes results in customers choosing to forget and abandon the market after losing the initial sense of novelty.

#### **4.1.2 Homogenization of Market Content**

In terms of innovative attributes, the homogenization and instability of the content of creative markets have become important factors hindering the development of market business value. Currently, the development of many districts is based on the observation and replication of popular market scenes, resulting in overall similarities. From positioning to commercial operation, there is a lack of conveying concepts or overall planning. This leads to the insufficient impact of theme scenes alone in igniting the market, resulting in a mediocre response and an inability to attract the target customers effectively, rendering night markets with only a nominal reputation.

#### **4.2 The Inspiration of International Creative Markets for China**

The scene of a creative market in a particular area is closely related to the residents and cultural composition of the surrounding community. Only by using the market as a connecting point to link the cultural features of the district with the characteristics of the residents can long-term vitality be maintained. Using Camden Town in London as an example, known as the birthplace of punk rock, the Camden Town district itself holds the prestigious title of a pilgrimage site for punk rock enthusiasts. The multiple sub-markets in Camden Town each possesses unique product features and operating hours. Beyond the differences in market goods they sell, they embody the "punk" spirit, creating a distinctive landmark for Camden Town's travel experience.

Adapting to local conditions, adding personalized elements and creating differentiated features of the bazaar is the key to reducing the tendency of homogenization of creative markets.[14] Thailand's markets exhibit a distinctive regional character, allowing them to stand out among the many homogenized markets worldwide. Influenced by a diverse array of food and tourism culture, local markets tend to lean towards larger formats with a focus on tourist attractions. For instance, Chatuchak, located on the outskirts of Bangkok, provides almost every product category imaginable, ranging from local handicrafts to daily necessities, clothing, and delicious food. Besides being one of the region's greatest markets, it is undeniably an essential place for the presentation of second-hand clothing from Southeast Asia as well as a unique specialty market which is themed Thai food outside.[15]

## **5 Conclusion**

Creative markets, as an imported concept, have been localized and developed in China with "creativity" at their core, presenting distinctive creativity and culture attributes. In

an era increasingly focused on urban image and branding, the creative market is becoming a benchmark for measuring a city. With the relaxation of the government antagonistic policy orientation towards artistic markets, these markets not only manage to incorporate the culture as the core of the developing logic, but they also evidently complement it with creative brand new business logic. The market which has a platform by use of nation culture of the Chinese people can be in position to amalgamate cultures from various part of the world, creatively transforming its essence with the help of traditional forms and giving a scene which is rich in scenery using the sophisticated technology. From the perspective of commercial consumption, the creative market opens up a stage for innovative individuals to transform design into commercial outcomes, manifesting its commercial nature. It also possesses distinctive cultural characteristics. Participants in the creative market are not limited to designers but also extend to the general public. The creative market pioneers a new interactive way; artists and designers' works are no longer merely displayed on cold exhibition stands but are brought to bustling markets, enabling designers to further communicate with consumers who appreciate their works. The creative market has become a showcase base for a city's new culture.

It is certain that in the future, Chinese entrepreneurial markets are expected to show enormous development scale and potential. With the continuous growth of the Chinese economy and the implementation of innovation-driven development strategies, entrepreneurs will find more opportunities in this dynamic market. However, at the same time, it should be noted that domestically, the creative market, as a forward-looking cultural industry, is still in its early stages and lacks market-oriented operations. Although more and more people are beginning to pay attention to the creative market, there is still a large portion of the population who are unfamiliar with what a "creative market" is, indicating insufficient popularity. Moreover, the creative market has no clear time and location, making it relatively difficult to manage. Additionally, the creative market also faces issues of intellectual property rights infringement. In the creative market, although the items sold by stallholders are diverse, there are many similarities, and plagiarism is particularly severe. The author hopes that in the future, a series of policies can be formulated to rectify the creative market, establish a sound legal system, enhance entrepreneurs' legal awareness and risk prevention consciousness, and promote the healthy and sustainable development of entrepreneurial markets. Furthermore, it is necessary to draw lessons from international experiences in market development, while the method of development needs to change to be custom-made to respond to market trends and at the same time any existing regional characteristics be incorporated into the model to meet the different needs of business groups.

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