

# A Study on the Inheritance and Innovation of the Traditional Strong Cloth Sole Technique in Qilu

**Yanhua Sun**

*Taishan University, College of Art, Tai'an, Shandong, China*  
*New Era University College, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*  
*E-mail: sunyanhua232@126.com*

**Abstract:** *As an important traditional craft of Qilu, the strong cloth sole carry the wisdom and emotion of the Qilu people. With the strengthening of national protection and support for traditional crafts, people have gradually begun to admire the concept of natural and healthy life, and the concept of nostalgia has slowly integrated into people's life, becoming a sentiment in the heart of modern people. Therefore, it has great significance and value to record the skills of strong cloth sole, and to pass on this traditional craft so that more people can know, use and even innovate the skills of the strong cloth sole.*

**Keywords:** *strong cloth sole, Inheritance, Innovation*

## 1. Introduction

The origin of the strong cloth sole is based on the fact that the sole is made of cotton fabric laminated into a gusset and stacked layer by layer, hence the name called "strong cloth sole". With the increasing development of mechanical production, the traditional craft of making shoes is about to disappear. As an important handicraft technique in Qilu, the strong cloth sole carries the wisdom and emotion of the Qilu people. This thesis selects the traditional Qilu hand-made shoes as the object of study, and focuses on how to inherit the traditional hand-made shoes and how to integrate the traditional craft with modern life, so as to further understand and explore the economic, cultural and social values of the traditional craft and revive its vitality.

## 2. Research purpose, significance

### 2.1 Theoretical significance

Through data collection and field research, we will conduct an in-depth study and research on the skills of the strong cloth sole, record the process of the making shoes in the form of pictures combined with text and filmed videos, so as to leave certain information and positive impact on future generations and promote the inheritance and development of this traditional handicraft.

### 2.2 Practical significance

On the basis of mastering the traditional craftsmanship of the strong cloth sole, according to the characteristics of the fabric, style, pattern and colour of the shoes, the traditional craftsmanship is integrated with modern textile, cutting, production, embroidery and other crafts, combining more current fashionable cultural elements to inject new vitality into the traditional craftsmanship products. Then create more products with independent intellectual property rights and cultural characteristics.

### 2.3 Prospects for development

Further research has been conducted from the perspective of the traditional handcrafted skills and cultural value of the strong cloth sole, and strategies have been identified to meet the aesthetic needs of the public in order to enhance the economic benefits. It can be integrated with the rich local tourism and cultural resources of Tai'an and regarded as a form of rural tourism souvenir to promote the local economy, thus promoting the development of the local tourism economy and the promotion and

inheritance of the strong cloth sole, which has long-term significance of development and economic value.

### **3. Domestic Research and Foreign Research and its Development Trends**

With the promotion of intangible cultural heritage protection and the penetration of cultural industry development, traditional handicrafts have been given the dual demands of "intangible cultural heritage" protection and industrial development. In this context, the inheritance, and industrial development of traditional handicrafts have become hot topics for academic research. It has been widely discussed from different perspectives such as art, sociology, economics, folklore and cultural anthropology.

From the collection and collation of literature, there is not much literature that takes the strong cloth sole as an example to conduct in-depth research, which strengthens the author's determination to do this project in depth and in detail. The following is a compilation of the current status of domestic research and foreign research on strong cloth sole:

#### ***3.1 Current status of domestic research***

Professor Pan Lusheng is the Director of the Shandong Arts and Crafts Institute and the Vice-Chairman of the Chinese Folk Artists' Association. A scholar with a strong sense of responsibility for traditional ethnic culture, he has been engaged in field research and academic studies on folk culture for more than 20 years, and has not only made achievements in folk art research, but has also focused on the excavation, preservation and transmission of traditional folk culture. In 1998, he proposed the "ecological protection of folk culture" and initiated the activity that is "ecological protection of traditional handicraft culture in Shandong Province". He proposed that the connotations of folk culture can only be explored in depth in the living environment of the people, and that to protect declining cultural traditions, the environment of ethnic folk culture must be protected.

#### ***3.2 Status of research abroad***

In his book *Folk Culture in a Technological World*, German scholar Hermann Bausinger, in the course of his discussion of folk culture and modern technological development, which introduces folklore studies into contemporary society and explain the issues of popular culture, folklore revival, strange customs and commercialize in daily life on three levels: space, time and society, which then related to the topic of the reproduction of traditional folk culture, pointing out at it is of great theoretical value that "when the human environment changes, traditions' form will change but do not disappear".

To sum up, some domestic and foreign scholars research the theories and studies on the inheritance, protection and sustainable development of folk culture from the perspectives of art, sociology, economics, folklore and culture by scholars at home and abroad have laid the foundation for the realization of sustainable development of traditional handicrafts in the current society in terms of traditional handicraft production and cultural ecological reconstruction. The above points and research materials provide good ideas and inspiration for the study of this project.

### **4. Main ideas and key points of this thesis**

#### ***4.1 The main research idea of this thesis***

##### ***4.1.1 Fieldwork research and focus on craft conservation***

At present, regarding the conservation of traditional handicraft skills, many targeted protection methods have been proposed by the scholars. For example, the data-based conservation method, the autonomous conservation method, the supportive conservation method and the policy-based conservation method have been repeatedly verified in practice for more than ten years, and have played a positive role in the conservation of handicraft traditions. Among them, the author believes that the methods that are more applicable to the conservation of the memory of the strong cloth sole are the method of informative conservation and the method of supportive conservation. The documentary conservation method is the most basic form of conservation and is based on research, documentation, photography, audio and video recording. The purpose of documentary conservation is, on the one hand,

to preserve detailed information on traditional handicrafts, such as production tools, raw materials, processes and physical objects, and, on the other hand, to lay the foundations for later research and heritage.

#### ***4.1.2 Applying a variety of mechanisms to pass on traditional craftsmanship***

At present, the inheritance of traditional Chinese handicrafts is diverse, with family, master and apprentice, workshops, communities and schools being the main methods. Family heritage and apprentice heritage are the most stable and important forms of inheritance in the development of traditional crafts. In a folk culture environment where written records are not available, the most important way of passing on skills is by word of mouth and by heart. Thus, the transmission of skills by family, apprentice and workshop is also an important way of passing on traditional crafts. The workshop, in particular, is a place where craftspeople work and where skills are passed on. However, under the dual impact of industrial civilization and the commodity economy, with the transformation of the social structure of the countryside and the imbalance of the cultural ecology, there are more diversified ways of passing on the people's crafts, starting with the children and bringing the traditional craft and culture of the shoes into the primary and secondary school classrooms so that students can understand, become familiar with, learn, love, innovate, pass on and promote our traditional crafts.

#### ***4.1.3 Innovative style design with fashion elements***

In the process of reproducing traditional handicrafts, tradition and modernity are not in a diametrically opposed relationship, and "traditional handicrafts can only be integrated into the environment of industrialized society through a recombination with modern elements." In fact, from the development of traditional crafts in recent years, whether it is the theoretical research on the revival of traditional crafts or the practical exploration of the modern transformation of traditional crafts through the development of cultural and creative industries, they all reveal that recovering the richness of life from life is the root of the revitalization and industrialization of traditional crafts

### ***4.2 Key points of this thesis***

The following aspects of design can be applied in practice in the design of strong cloth sole.

#### ***4.2.1 Design Pattern***

The consumer group will be subdivided, divided into different age groups, according to the characteristics of the consumer group to carry out targeted pattern design. For example, for 0-6 years old children's groups for design pattern, they can use the traditional auspicious pattern and a strong sense of fashion popular pattern; for 20-35 years old younger female groups, they can use the popular animal and animation avatar pattern to attract more young consumer groups; and for 35-45 years old female consumer groups, choose the more traditional pattern. For this age group or for older age groups, the traditional patterns can be refined to cater for a wider range of consumer groups.

#### ***4.2.2 Design decorative***

Traditionally, the only design that could be found on a strong cloth sole was embroidery. However, with the rise of modern handicrafts, more and more handicraft decorations can be combined with the shoes, such as beadwork, flower-making and hand-painted decorations, which are all popular nowadays and can be used in the design of the shoes, thus increasing the fashion and modern artistry of the product.

#### ***4.2.3 Design fabric***

In the traditional, the soles and uppers are mostly made of natural materials such as cotton and hemp rope. On this basis, we can try to apply the technique of plant dyeing to the fabric design of cloth shoes, through the secondary processing of natural cotton fabric to design, the colour and texture of the fabric itself to create a rich design. Using plant dyeing is according to concept of environmental protection to ensure that our products are pure natural, green and healthy, so that attract the attention of more consumer groups.

### **References**

[1] Chen Jing. *Analysis of the color characteristics of cloth shoes with thousands of soles in Shanxi Jinnan area [J]. Intelligence. 2015 (21)*

- [2] Ye Feng. *Research on the production and innovative design of folk handmade cloth shoes [J]. China's off-campus education. Higher education. 2014.9*
- [3] Wu Gaihong. *Traditional folk hand-made multi-layer shoes manufacturing process [J]. Scientific research and production. 2016.8*