

Application of Chinese Traditional Cultural Elements in Modern Fashion Design

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Abstract: *In the long history of Chinese culture, Chinese traditional clothing culture, as one of the main components, has a unique aesthetic appeal because traditional Chinese clothing is rich in variety, bright in color, and has many patterns and unique styles. Therefore, it provides many creative materials for modern fashion art and brings countless inspirations to designers. In modern Chinese clothing design, to have design characteristics and cultural value, it is necessary to grasp the international design language and simultaneously learn from traditional Chinese clothing culture's essence to express national characteristics. Based on this, this paper will discuss in detail the application of traditional Chinese clothing elements in modern Chinese fashion design.*

Keywords: *Chinese culture, Traditional elements, Fashion design, Application*

1. Introduction

The design elements in traditional Chinese clothing not only have the characteristics of time but also contain rich aesthetic changes when integrated into modern culture, thus forming the unique charm of traditional Chinese clothing. In modern fashion design, properly using Chinese traditional cultural elements to produce new designs with Chinese features and the spirit of national civilization, which meet modern aesthetic requirements, has become the biggest challenge for modern fashion designers. This paper first explores the importance of traditional Chinese cultural elements in modern clothing design. Then it analyzes how to appropriately use them in modern clothing design from color, pattern, and style.

2. The Importance of Chinese Traditional Cultural Elements in Fashion Design

2.1 Providing Inspirations

Fashion design is a form of art, and people can feel the designer's aesthetics and subjective initiative in work. Fashion design can not only meet the needs of different people for clothing but also enrich and develop people's material culture. In return, people's material culture can inspire fashion designers. For example, China's long-standing and profound culture can inspire fashion designers with rich themes. Since fashion design and its social culture environment share a close relationship, social culture and social life are the root of clothing design. Therefore, clothing design can reflect some regional cultural, and unique national characteristics to a certain extent. It can also combine regional culture, aesthetic thought, and traditional culture. When designing clothing, fashion designers generally consult a large amount of information and design their work to recreate traditional culture. In this process, many traditional clothing elements are applied to modern clothing design, providing designers with a wealth of design inspiration [1].

2.2 Laying the Foundation

Chinese traditional culture has profound connotations, containing a large amount of cultural essence and the unique national cultural genes of the Chinese nation; therefore, Chinese traditional culture can be suited to people's traditional aesthetic and cultural psychology. And it also satisfies people's desire for national culture and lays a solid foundation for modern clothing design. Designers should also actively promote art inheritance in their daily work and life, constantly expand the knowledge of traditional Chinese culture, accumulate Chinese traditional cultural elements, lay a solid foundation for

modern clothing design, and carry out continuous innovation based on traditions. And they should organically combine Chinese traditional cultural elements with modern design, adapting ancient forms for the present use and constantly innovating, giving new vitality to modern Chinese clothing design while inheriting China's excellent traditional cultural elements.

3. Characteristics of Chinese Traditional Clothing Elements

3.1 Physical Elements

3.1.1 Features of Modeling Style

There are two main forms of traditional Chinese clothing, the top-and-bottom garment separation and the joint garment form, which have been used in China for thousands of years. The main manifestations of traditional Chinese clothing are the front with buttons on the right and the kind with buttons down the front, which mainly use the plane and straight-line cutting rule. The style it represents highlights the vertical feeling and can hang freely from the collar without exaggerating the shoulders. Common methods include drooping lines, long sleeves, straight skirts, vertical decorations, etc., emphasizing the shape of lines and conveying charm through the rhythm of lines.

3.1.2 Characteristics of Fabrics and Patterns

According to the analysis of the fabric materials of traditional clothing in China, the fabrics initially used were hemp and ramie cloth. Since China was the beginner of the Silk Road and the primary origin of silk in the world, sericulture and silk weaving are the main contributions made by Chinese ancestors to developing clothing. Many traditional Chinese fabrics are made of silk, which is delicate and smooth. Therefore, cotton cloth as the main material to make clothes was a late trend in ancient China; that is, it gradually became a widely used fabric in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties.

In China's traditional clothing culture, patterns are also very sophisticated. Rich patterns and designs are not only for clothing embellishments and modifications, but more importantly, they contain specific meanings. Different patterns have different meanings. For example, the patterns of flying dragons and phoenixes, magpies climbing plums, and clusters of flowers convey people's love and yearning for a better life [2].

3.1.3 The Characteristics of Color

Under the impression of the traditional Chinese yin and yang and the five elements, the combination of colors is more emphasized in the Chinese traditional clothing culture. Usually, the primary colors of traditional Chinese clothing are green, bright red, black, white, and yellow. These colors are regarded as pure colors, and the colors outside the pure colors are considered secondary colors. The use of pure and secondary colors reflects the social status of landowners. Of these, the pure colors are mostly used for the upper class (such as royal relatives, nobles, wealthy business people, etc.), and the secondary colors are mainly used for ordinary people. From the perspective of the colors used in traditional clothing, whether yellow, which symbolizes the imperial power of the country or Chinese red, which symbolizes joy and happiness, they all represent a strong Chinese style. The Chinese have a conventional love for blue, such as blue calico, indigo batik, etc. The blue and the skin tone of the yellow race correspond to each other, which is easier to adjust and can also form a soft color contrast effect.

3.1.4 Characteristics of the Decoration Process

China's relatively simple clothing is created with aesthetics of "rituals," "suppression," and "body." Chinese clothing uses more decorations and dressing methods to reflect its artistic function. Decoration materials include the ancient Chinese crafts of inlaying, embedding, rolling, toggle, and embroidery.

3.2 Mental Elements

Mental elements mainly include the culture in clothing, intangible elements, and people's thoughts accumulated in the growth and development of society under certain cultural conditions, which are reflected in Chinese traditional clothing thoughts.

Influenced by Confucianism, China's ancient clothing concept attached great importance to the social and ethical representations of clothing. The Chinese always have the reserve of the Orientals, covering their bodies tightly with clothing to conform to Confucian etiquette standards. The key to the

beauty of clothing is to express people's emotions, spirits, temperament, and charm, rather than body shape. Although the body is beautiful, clothing does not necessarily need to show people's physical beauty but the spiritual meaning obtained by people using various means to design clothing [3].

4. The Application of Chinese Traditional Cultural Elements in Modern Clothing Design

4.1 Application of Traditional Colors

In China's traditional color system, yellow, black, red, green, white, etc., are the primary color standards for reference in the design of clothing and other daily necessities. Among them, red often appears in joyful Chinese festivals and is widely used in other places, such as lanterns, paper-cutting, and Chinese knots, hence the nickname Chinese red. Red has also become the representative color of China. And yellow was also a symbol of dignity in ancient China, such as the color of the dragon robes of ancient emperors. For ordinary people, white, blue, black, and green are often used daily. When designers apply these traditional colors in their designs with innovation, they should first feel, experience, and comprehend the meanings behind them. Only after that can designers flexibly and closely combine these colors to align with the trend of the times, redesign and recreate, and continuously improve the expressiveness of colors.

The implication of Chinese red is auspiciousness, peace, and safety. Chinese red also symbolizes the elimination of diseases and calamities, the success of everything, turning bad luck into good fortune, abandoning evil, promoting good, etc. Chinese people like to use red daily, so they often use it at festivals or celebrations, weddings, and other events. Red is the ideal color from the bottom of Chinese people's hearts. Red means passion, sports, and happiness, symbolizing joy and peace. Particularly, red was used as the main color for the Olympic emblem at the Beijing Olympic Games, fully displaying the symbol of China. For example, for the "Green Paper Crane" series in fashion design, the fashion designer boldly contrasts red and green in work, and the contrasting colors showed a good design effect, which many people welcomed. The combination of red flowers and green leaves is a new expression of the customs of China, and at the same time, it gives people a sense of auspiciousness and a joyful atmosphere. In applying Chinese elements, fashion designers can convey a warm and beautiful feeling to people [4]. In modern clothing design, the flexible application of Chinese color and decoration can integrate the aesthetic culture of modern clothing and show a unique charm. By integrating traditional Chinese elements in these clothing designs, people can experience the warmth and the sense of simplicity and clarity of modern fashion.

The splash-ink technique is another popular element. As for traditional pattern and color clothing design, western designers didn't just copy traditional flower cluster patterns or dragon patterns but also profoundly explored the Chinese humanistic atmosphere in the design process. For example, in 2005, a set of traditional Chinese ink paintings was reintroduced by the Chinese designers of Dior. To avoid giving people a feeling of a dull workplace, the designer of the clothing store used many light pink flower fabrics as decorations on the clothing. The styles are relatively simple, and the fabric gives people an elegant feeling. In the current fashion design series "Shuiqianmo - Meiziqing Shiyu," a significant design effect is achieved through the brush splash-ink fabric, gradually improved clothing design, reasonable integration of Chinese elements, and the perfect combination of modern fashion and Chinese elements. It mainly includes the effective combination of Chinese-style stand-up collars, long gowns, traditional Chinese modern clothing, and fashion elements, presenting freshness, elegance, simplicity, and generosity, fully showing the beauty and proud temperament of Asian women.

4.2 Application of Traditional Patterns

Patterns such as dragons, auspicious clouds, and peonies in Chinese traditional culture have brought many elements to modern clothing designers. Still, in Chinese culture, most patterns represent people's pursuit of good luck and happiness. Modern clothing designers can also express their national cultural characteristics through these classic patterns. In this process, they should also show the spirit of the times in which the designer lives. These traditional patterns can be refined when applied. For example, designers can observe them from the perspective of the essence and cultural connotation contained in the patterns and then skillfully applied to modern design works. In addition, integrating traditional shapes and patterns can maintain the characteristics of ancient patterns and incorporate the essence of modern art [5].

As an essential element of Chinese culture, blue-and-white porcelain has a unique charm. And the

elements of blue-and-white porcelain are extended and widely used on different occasions. For example, the reasonable use of blue-and-white elements in the Olympic Games demonstrates the excellent traditional Chinese culture. Designers can show people a sense of beauty by using blue and white porcelain elements and integrating them with modern clothing design concepts. Therefore, in modern clothing design, blue and white elements should be incorporated reasonably, and applying blue and white elements can improve the overall visual effect. When blue and white elements are used flexibly in modern clothing design, people can feel the charm of Chinese culture from the clothing.

4.3 Application of Traditional Clothing Styles

Confucianism prevails in Chinese traditional culture; therefore, the styles and shapes of traditional Chinese clothing are also influenced by it. In terms of clothing style, the lines covering the human body are the main points, pursuing a sense of verticality and integration, such as Tang suits (traditional Chinese jackets) and Han Chinese clothing. In modern clothing design, people can also learn from some parts of traditional Chinese clothing styles, such as the stand-up collar and buttons in Zhongshan clothing, to make the artistic style of the design more prominent and highlight the designer's artistic pursuit. For example, currently, the most popular clothing is Chinese clothing, which is analyzed to reflect the beauty of magnanimity. In designing modern clothing, Chinese clothing can also add modern elements. When it is worn on people, it represents the beauty of magnanimity and simplicity. Here is another example, in the design process of T-shirts and shirts, people can start with the stand-up collar of traditional Chinese clothing and then combine frog buttons to reflect a strong Chinese style. In addition, people can combine the characteristics of the Western clothing system, starting from the human body, and tailor it according to the body shape to make the subtle and elegant characteristics of the Asian people more prominent.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, the frequent use of China's excellent traditional national culture clothing elements in modern clothing product design not only makes China's refined traditional national culture widely spread but also promotes the innovation and development of modern clothing product design. What belongs to the nation belongs to the world, and China's excellent traditional national culture is also an infinite treasure house of art. After years of changes, any national cultural image permeates with a strong sense of history. People should value these historical changes and use modern design language to understand and reproduce them. In recent years, designers have been trying to use "traditional Chinese elements" in product design and creation, reflecting their idea of inheriting traditional national culture and trying to find a balance between tradition and modernity.

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