

# The Wonderful Art Hidden in the Boudoir—Analysis of the Paper-cut Art of Qiang Embroidery

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**Abstract:** As the representative of Qiang folk art, Qiang embroidery pattern paper-cut has a long history and is an important part of Qiang culture. The Qiang embroidery pattern paper-cut is mainly used in the fields of clothing and accessories. It has strong decorative effect and wear-resistant practicality. It has artistic features such as rich patterns and themes, diverse shapes and designs, and strange composition techniques, which demonstrate the artistic charm of paper-cutting and have important reference value for the study of Qiang folk paper-cutting art.

**Keywords:** Qiang people; embroidery pattern paper-cut; artistic features; Qiang culture

## 1. Introduction

As a material for decoration and beautification, Qiang paper-cut has a long history and a long history. Like other ethnic paper-cuts, paper-cuts for room decoration and folk festivals are mainly used to beautify the room and ward off evil spirits. The paper-cut used for embroidery patterns mainly provides patterns for embroidery. Paper-cut as an embroidery base has strong decorative and indirect practicality. In the Qiang District, there are still special garden-cutters who will clip the cut patterns into the pages of books, and sell the cut flowers for the embroiderers to buy use. For example: there are shoe upper flowers, insole flowers, streamer flowers, purse flowers, drum belly flowers, corner flowers, edge flowers, waist flowers, collar flowers, cuff flowers, etc. for clothing decoration, which are widely used in people's clothing and accessories from head to toe. In the decoration of daily necessities. The ancient Qiang women embroidered neither proofing nor scribing, but directly embroidered by their own imagination, or embroidered on the basis of paper-cut patterns. Since the appearance of the pen pattern, the embroidery method of embroidery has changed a lot. Folk artists have been trained since childhood without reference in the process of painting and cutting. They can use pens or scissors to fly on all kinds of embroidery bases [1]. Relatively speaking, the paper-cut pattern is superior to the drawing pattern because the pattern is more precise. The embroidery pattern paper-cut of the Qiang people is to first fold the paper repeatedly, and then use a thread to nail the folded paper to completely fix it to prevent the paper from being out of shape. Paste the pattern on the part to be embroidered and start embroidering. This kind of pattern has the advantages of accurate reproduction and easy circulation, and is deeply loved by embroidery artists. Today, this skill is quietly disappearing with the social changes in the Qiang area, but its unique artistic features and rich cultural heritage are still indispensable to the Qiang culture. This paper takes Qiang embroidery pattern paper-cut as an example to discuss its artistic characteristics, with the intention of calling for the protection of this local art.

## 2. The application of Qiang embroidery pattern paper-cut

Although the embroidered paper-cut of the Qiang people is a small skill in the folk art of the Qiang people, it has the inherent decorative beauty of the folk paper-cut art. It is as decorative as the embroidery of the Qiang people. As an embroidery base, where the embroidery is, the paper-cut is wrapped, and most of them are used in the decoration of clothing and accessories.

### 2.1 Decoration on clothing

The Qiang embroidery base pattern paper-cut is used in clothing to reflect the way of embroidery. It is decorated in conspicuous and vulnerable places. It has strong decorative effect and wear-resistant practicality. Such as the front and back of the garment, cuffs, placket, neckline, hem, hem, skirt and

trousers, etc., are mostly concentrated in the collar, shoulders, placket, cuffs and slits. According to different factors such as age, gender, and wearing occasions, the cutout patterns are different. Flower-cut patterns all over the floor are often seen on women's clothing of wealthy families, and there are also flower-cut patterns on traditional apron.

## **2.2 The decoration on the jewelry**

The Qiang people like to embroider on all kinds of clothing items and ornaments, and almost all ornaments have become the expression objects of pattern art. Compared with clothing, most of the clothing items are embroidered with various patterns related to their functions. At this time, the paper-cut pattern also showed the decorative and beautifying effect together with the embroidery pattern. In the Qiang District, common clothing items include various hats, headbands, embroidered shoes, sachets, men's bulging belly, cloud shoulders, sleeve sleeves, ribbons (ribbons), insoles, waistbands, sewing bags and so on.

## **3. The artistic characteristics of Qiang embroidery pattern paper-cut**

The Qiang embroidery base pattern paper-cut has artistic characteristics such as broad motifs, simple and exaggerated shapes, free combination of elements, flexibility, bold imagination, and exquisite composition. The works often have strong decorative and profound meanings, which are the emotional life of the Qiang people directly manifest.

### **3.1 Rich patterns and themes**

The themes of Qiang embroidery pattern paper-cut are rich and varied, and the themes vary according to different uses, mainly animals and plants in nature. In addition, it also contains images of myths and legends, ancient totems, nature worship, etc., and contains a lot of mysterious religious and cultural information and primitive artistic features. Among them, plant and flower patterns are the most commonly used. The choice of paper-cut pattern theme mainly relies on words and deeds and the artist's refinement of objects. The images of most themes are lifelike, and some images are naive and simple or abstract and simplified.

#### **1) Plants and animals in nature**

The themes of Qiang embroidery pattern paper-cut mostly come from animals and plants in nature, such as flowers, birds, insects, fish, birds and animals, clouds, mountains, trees and grass, fruits and vegetables, vines and grasses. It is widely used in headbands, plackets, cuffs, aprons, shoes, insoles, hats, etc. in clothing. Such as: saffron (rhododendron), peach, sea pepper, hanging flowers, chrysanthemum, begonia, peony, gourd, etc., as well as peony and chrysanthemum (Jianju, round chrysanthemum, Zhuanzhuan) in plants chrysanthemum), crocus, and gourd are the most versatile, reflecting the admiration for nature. There is a steady stream of creative themes, and the works are extremely varied. Most of the insects and animals that can be seen in paper-cutting are real in nature, and a few are fictitious. They even believe that their personalities have many similarities to animal qualities. Such as: sheep, bats, fish, magpies, lions, cats, dogs, butterflies (moths), tigers, poultry, golden pheasants, etc. will all be depicted in it. In addition to the aesthetic expression, the combination of themes also has the purpose of exorcising evil spirits and praying for blessings, which reflects the ideal and spiritual pursuit of the Qiang people.

#### **2) Beliefs, legends, totems, symbols**

Most of the embroidery pattern paper-cuts embody worship and belief. The Qiang people worship clouds to the extreme. The cloud pattern is the result of this worship, and it is also the most used pattern theme in embroidery pattern paper-cutting. Even when cutting paper, the natural and unnatural shapes will be cut out like clouds at will. For example, when cutting a leaf, the edge of the leaf is always processed into a curled or cloud-like figure, which is the unique modeling feature of Qiang paper-cutting. Among them, there are many sources of cloud patterns, and of course it is related to the legend of cloud shoes. The paper-cut with the embroidered pattern of Yunyun shoes, in addition to the matching pattern with flowers as the main, is the matching with clouds as the center. The sheep pattern is an important mother in Qiang embroidery patterns, and the sheep horn pattern is embroidered on clothing, shoes, etc. to reflect the Qiang people's worship to the sheep totem. Some abstracted and symbolized geometric patterns include: sun, moon, stars, mountain (dog teeth, sawtooth), stepped

pattern, cross pattern, triangle pattern, diamond pattern, sun pattern, water ripple, chain buckle, etc. Patterns are used in embroidered trims.

### 3) Themes influenced by foreign cultures

Like the existence of this nation, the paper-cuts of the Qiang people come from diverse sources. Influenced by Tibetan Buddhism, Han Buddhism, Taoism and other religious elements, their embroidery base paper-cuts also more or less reflect the intersection of national cultures. The Jiarong Tibetan area of Danzangou in Lixian County and the Qiang District of Songpan Zhenjiang are obviously influenced by Tibetan Buddhism. A large number of Tibetan Buddhist elements are incorporated into the embroidery paper-cuts in these places, such as conch, lotus, and dragon, Phoenix, Huiwen, Wanzi, Shouzi, Xizi and so on. The fusion of multiple cultures has formed a multi-element mixture of Qiang embroidery paper-cuts, which is unique.

### 3.2 Various shapes and designs

The shapes of the folk art of the Qiang people show the features of simplicity, naivety, frankness and vividness, and the shapes of paper-cuts as embroidery patterns mainly include realistic shapes and abstract shapes. The Qiang people made these natural "scapes" and "things" with "spiritual" that are closely related to life and have a certain "influence" on them, and made them regularized, abstracted and artistic by simulating, refining and generalizing them. Form a pattern that implies auspiciousness [2].

The realistic modeling is expressed by the combination of lines and blocks of the pattern, and the typical characteristics of the object are cut and carved. It is vivid and interesting, but it is not an imitation of natural objects in a simple sense, but a bold exaggeration and deformation. The method of choosing and choosing retains the typical characteristics of the original image, which has a strong decorative effect and also reflects the wisdom of the Qiang people's plastic arts. For example, the peony flower that is often cut in paper-cutting has a complex image of the original peony, but the artists have reduced the expression of the complex level of the peony, and retained its decorative beauty with simplified petals. The shearing method of the sheep pattern is also the same. The eyes, ears, mouth and nose of the sheep's head are removed, and only the curly horns and the head features of the inverted triangle are taken. The carving of clouds is the most typical modeling feature in Qiang paper-cut. On the plateau, the clouds floating halfway up the mountain are ever-changing. The Qiang people think that the curled posture is the most beautiful, and the various curled circling patterns, while retaining the typical characteristics of the object, are extremely decorative.

Abstract shapes are mainly geometric figures and symbolic symbols, and these concise figures are the high-level generalization of things by the Qiang people. They are good at simplifying the intricate ideals of life into representative symbols, such as: water ripples, chevrons, steps, crosses, diamonds, chain buttons, etc. appear in the form of two continuous patterns, which are very rhythmic and decorative. Beautiful schema. The frame embroidery apron in Diexi Taiping Township uses a lot of abstract patterns for decoration. The waist is a rectangle, which is composed of geometric patterns with relatively regular shapes. The patterns are divided into six layers. The central pattern is composed of triangles with different angles to form a square. The butterfly pattern is decorated with a week of butterfly patterns, and the butterfly pattern is decorated with a week of gourd patterns. The top and bottom of the gourd pattern is decorated with fir and cypress patterns. Finally, it is edged with checkered water ripples and sun patterns. Quaint original character [3].

The Qiang embroidery pattern paper-cut not only pays attention to the realistic expression and highly generalized abstract expression of the typical and touching characteristics of the object, but also pays attention to the imagination of the modeling object, which is also an important manifestation of the creativity of the Qiang people. For example, there are many ways to cut the butterfly image, which are eclectic. Some pay attention to the flying posture of butterflies; some add patterns on the wings of butterflies to make them more decorative; some are concise, and only take their shape features for silhouette processing...

The Qiang embroidery pattern paper-cut is also good at creating momentum based on shape. The paper-cut pattern on Yunyun shoes can best convey the characteristics of Qiang embroidery pattern paper-cut. Men's Yunyun shoes are mainly composed of clouds, sheep patterns or the alternate patterns of the two, while women's embroidered shoes and pointed shoes are mainly composed of plants, geometric patterns and moiré patterns. The high-altitude natural environment and the production and lifestyle that adapt to local conditions provide rich materials for the Qiang people's decoration, so it is a

historical necessity that sheep and clouds become the main forms of the Qiang's decorative patterns [4]. The typical cloud pattern is the abstraction of clouds, the worship of sheep, or the imitation of the image of snakes that imply reproduction and reproduction. The description and interpretation of Bo Hao Miao's living environment [5].

In short, the Qiang embroidery pattern paper-cut is rich and interesting, concise and vivid, and it is not a copy in a simple sense. It is highly imaginative and decorative. It is the reproduction of the image database stored in the brain by the Qiang people through careful observation and analysis of their own environment. Some are even taught orally, created through their own experience under the infection of the older generation, and gradually enriched and developed. This is also the reason why they are so handy in cutting and drawing patterns, and it is also the charm of Qiang embroidery pattern paper-cutting.

### ***3.3 The composition method is strange***

Qiang women are ingenious, as if they have a plan in their hearts. During my inspection in Mao County, the author found that paper-cut artists used to use the tip of scissors to draw on the paper before cutting the pattern. It also reflects that they are very conscious of composition. The embroidery base pattern paper-cut is expressed by combining plants and flowers with other patterns, showing a flat composition of scattered perspective. The patterns are conformal and full, the whole is balanced and rich in detail changes, it can be said that the connection is orderly, and the ten thousand cuts are continuous, forming a fully connected composition with the characteristics of the Qiang nationality. The interspersed and matched elements in the picture are completely illogical "growing out", and this is exactly the origin of the more primitive aesthetics of the Qiang paper-cut artists. For example: "Peach Heart Flower" pattern, peaches grow in chrysanthemums, but the flowers and leaves are not chrysanthemum leaves. This illogical composition does not seem so reasonable, but it is to meet the spiritual and cultural needs of people to pursue auspicious meanings. In a deeper sense, it reflects the spontaneous composition consciousness of folk artists, and it also makes the embroidery picture more attractive. Completeness and fullness of composition.

In addition, from the perspective of the application of decorative parts of paper-cut patterns, it can be divided into individual patterns, suitable patterns, symmetrical patterns and combined patterns. Among them, individual patterns are the overall or partial outline features of things extracted by Qiang folk artists, and the cutting and drawing are reflected in the form of silhouettes. The objects are mostly plants, flowers and abstract geometric patterns. And these individual patterns are the basic unit for combined creation. Such as: a single plant, animal, flower, symbol and other patterns are formed by repeated and orderly arrangement of clothing trim. Suitable patterns can also be said to be conformal patterns, mainly including children's hat flowers, shoes and shoes, neckline flowers, sachet flowers, etc. The patterns cut out often match the cut pieces produced. Symmetrical patterns are arranged patterns formed by combining individual patterns, resulting in two-sided continuous, four-sided continuous and conformal patterns, which are consistent with the requirements of decorative parts. Such as: the pattern of clothing borders, headgear and streamers formed by repeated and continuous composition of geometric patterns, flowers, melons and fruits. The purse flower on the upper part of the waistband, the half-breasted waistline pattern, and the headband pattern are in units of individual patterns, which are repeatedly arranged according to the cross skeleton to form a continuous square. The combined pattern is composed of a variety of patterns by applying the formal rules of change and unity, rhythm and rhythm, symmetry and balance, and the forms of composition are flexible and diverse [6]. In the Qiang embroidery paper-cut, there is a pattern locally called "Golden Bug", which is the most typical combination pattern in the Qiang embroidery paper-cut. In the pattern, the variants of clouds, horns and flowers together form the shape of a worm, and the curved shape is mainly used for children's hats, cloud shoes or embroidery bottoms with straps. Sleeve patterns are mainly composed of symmetrical compositions. The patterns are based on the central axis. The graphics on the left and right sides are exactly the same, and the patterns are solemn and neat. The characteristics of balanced composition are more typical in the waist pattern paper-cut, the pattern layout is flexible and changeable, such as symmetry and balance, the structure is full, and the density is consistent. The pattern is decorated in three parts, namely the upper part, the middle part and the lower part of the apron. The patterns mainly include full flowers, round flowers, horn flowers, etc. The upper part of the waist and chest is generally full of flowers. The corner flowers are mostly used together with the round flowers. The corners of the lower part of the waist are mostly triangular. The corner flowers and the round flowers complement each other and complement each other, so that the decoration of the entire waist is well-proportioned.

#### 4. Conclusion

The embroidery pattern paper-cut provides a blueprint for embroidery and increases the three-dimensionality and fullness of the embroidery, and at the same time achieves the artistic charm of Qiang embroidery. It is not only an important "female red" skill of Qiang women, but also the most direct and vivid cultural carrier of Qiang culture, carrying the beliefs, folk customs and aesthetic expressions of the ancient Qiang people. Embroidery patterns, paper-cut patterns are colorful in style, subject matter and content, and have far-reaching meanings. They are an important part of Qiang embroidery and costume art, as well as a wonderful work in Qiang culture, with distinct regional and national characteristics. Therefore, to analyze its artistic characteristics has important reference value for the study of Qiang folk paper-cut art.

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