

Study on the Inheritance and Cultural Creation of Manchu Qipao Culture

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Abstract—Manchu qipao originated from the exclusive clothing of women in the Eight Flag Youth of Manchu ethnic group. After the entry of Qing army into the pass, it was widely known by people, evolved into a modified qipao because of the influence by European and American women's dresses in the early republic of China and became the representative of Oriental women's clothing. After studying the Manchu qipao, on the one hand, its shape, function, color and pattern have nomadic people's living habits, production needs and aesthetic characteristics; on the other hand, because of entering the central plains and the deep influence and integration of the Han culture, the qipao culture of Manchu also contains the brand of the Han culture, which makes it become the carrier of the clothing culture of modern China. In recent years, the inheritance and development of Manchu qipao culture has made some progress and achievements, but it is still insignificant compared with the development status of "Shanghai qipao culture". Therefore, by analyzing the resource composition and characteristics of the Manchu qipao culture, this paper considers the development status of the Manchu qipao culture, and carries out cultural and creative development in a "cross-domain" way, which can provide innovative thinking strategies and planning for the inheritance and development of the Manchu qipao culture in the future stage.

Keywords—Manchu qipao culture; Chinese qipao; Manchu costume; cultural creation; cultural heritage

I. INTRODUCTION

Manchu qipao refers to the exclusive clothing of women in the Eight Flag Youth of Manchu ethnic group: women in the Eight Flag Youth of Manchu ethnic group before the Qing army entered the pass, and women in the palace and noble women outside the court after the Qing army entered the pass. The development of qipao is closely related to the development and change of the Manchu nationality. Thanks to Shushen people in pre-Qin period, Yilou people in the Warring States Period, Mohe people in Wei and Jin to the Sui, Tang dynasties and Nuzhen in Yuan and Ming Dynasties, the Manchu qipao was gradually perfected and satisfied the living needs of the Manchu people: such as narrow sleeve design for outdoor activities, arrow sleeve design for hunting and slit design for riding. During the reign from 1644 AD to 1912 AD, the Manchus changed from a nomadic tribe to a ruling class, and their clothing culture also

experienced a process from internal confrontation to integration. In the early stage of the Qing army's entry into the pass, in order to stabilize the regime, it adopted extremely tough political means, and emphasized that the Han people had to follow the dressing rules of Manchu. According to *Documents of History of Qing Dynasty*, Yu Fu Zhi, "Manchu people are good at riding and shooting. If we adopt Han people's clothes easily and gradually lose the skill of archery and horse riding and no longer worship martial arts, isn't that a pity that we will keep these weapons but have no reason to practice them."¹ However, in the process of "changing clothes", the cultural system of the Manchu contradicted and collided with that of the Han due to the differences in cultural background and aesthetic concepts, so the implementation of the policy that advocated total Manchu clothing was blocked. Later, in order to stabilize the political situation and deeply integrate into the cultural system of the Han nationality, the Qing government adopted the mitigation policy advocated by Jin Zhijun, a minister of the Ming dynasty who surrendered to the Qing dynasty: ten rules that must be obeyed and ten that need not be obeyed. The policy content are as follows: "Nan Cong Nv Bu Cong (Men had to shave and braid their hair, and wear Manchu clothes, while women still wore the original hairstyle and Han-style clothes); Sheng Cong Si Bu Cong (During his life, he had to wear Manchu clothes, and after his death, he could wear Han-style clothes); Yang Cong Yin Bu Cong (As for the affairs of the underworld, such as doing Buddhist rites, they are still handled according to the traditional Buddhist and Taoist customs of the Han nationality, and there is no need to follow the customs of the Manchu people); Guan Cong Li Bu Cong (The official must wear the Qing official uniform, but the slave still wear the Ming clothing); Lao Cong Shao Bu Cong (When a child is young, he need not obey, but when he is grown up, he must follow the rules of Manchu); Ru Cong Shi, Dao Bu Cong (Ordinary people had to wear Manchu clothes and shave their hair and wear braids. Monks will be allowed to wear Ming - and Han-style clothes); Chang Cong Youling Bu Cong (Prostitutes wore the clothes required by the Qing court, while actors were free to wear other clothes due to the role of the ancients); Shiguan Cong Hunyin Bu Cong (The official management must follow the system of the Qing dynasty, while the marriage

¹ Zhao Erxun et al. *Documents of History of Qing Dynasty* [M]. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1976 edition. P3033.

ceremony should keep the old system of the Han people.); Guohao Cong Guan hao Bu Cong (The state title was changed from Ming dynasty to Qing dynasty, but the official titlenames remain); Yishui Cong Yuyanwenzi Bu Cong (Taxes and official services should follow the Manchu system, while the language remain in Chinese)." ² Among them, "Nan Cong Nv Bu Cong" and "Chang Cong Youling Bu Cong" had a deep influence on women's clothing in Qing dynasty. On the one hand, the policy led Han women to retain the style and characteristics of women's clothing in Ming dynasty, on the other hand, the policy orientation led to the coexistence of Manchu and Han styles in women's clothing in the Qing dynasty. As a result, the Manchu qipao was influenced by the Han costume culture.

II. THE COMPOSITION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF MANCHU QIPAO CULTURAL RESOURCES

A. Historical and Cultural Resources of Manchu Qipao

In the process of historical development, the Manchu qipao culture presents a diverse and concrete form. In terms of pattern of qipao, it forms a pattern with characters, animals, plants and geometric shapes as its theme through embroidery, tapestry and brocade. Most of the patterns of the qipao are presented in a symmetrical and arranged way. Compared with traditional costume patterns, its patterns are more specific and vivid, and the effect of color shading and gradual change because of the influence of western paintings at that time. In addition to some auspicious patterns, the Buddhist belief patterns, the heavenly patterns symbolizing the rank and the analogical patterns also coexist on qipao.

In terms of the color of qipao, it's dominated by pure color with higher saturation and matched with edges in contracting color. Whether it's for royal aristocratic women or folk rich women, the color of qipao has always been bright. The dressing etiquette of aristocratic women of the Qing Dynasty was similar to that of the aristocratic women of the Ming Dynasty. On formal occasions, qipao should be matched with embroidered vest and Buzi consistent with rank. In daily life, women will wear qipao according to the change of seasons with vest and other coats, wearing a long skirt and pants. These collocations are closely related to the life and customs of the Manchu nationality.

B. Inheritance Cultural Resources of Manchu Qipao

As a carrier of clothing culture, the Manchu qipao not only carries the clothing characteristics of the late feudal period in China, but its exquisite clothing production technology is an important cultural heritage resource.

The production of the Manchu qipao is relatively complicated: the surface of qipao is flat and broad, and then it is integrated with complicated decoration details. The decorative details of the Manchu qipao can be roughly divided into "embroidery", "inlay", "button", "binding" and other contents. To realize the requirements of women,

especially the noble women of Manchu Qing dynasty, for the luxury of qipao, the craftsmanship of Qing dynasty had been further improved. In terms of dyeing, there were hundreds of kinds of dyeing in the middle and late Qing dynasty, which laid the foundation for the rich color composition of Manchu qipao. Some of the colors of Manchu qipao, such as mahogany, jade green, pale pinkish gray, and agalloch-color, came from the Qing Dynasty when dyeing technology was improved. In terms of pattern rendering techniques, embroidery techniques in the early Qing dynasty have entered a highly mature stage, and different regions have formed corresponding schools of embroidery techniques, with distinct styles. In most Manchu qipao, traces of "Jing embroidery", "Su embroidery" and "Shu embroidery" are still discernable. In addition, in the late Qing dynasty, the appearance of "emulational embroidery" and "random-needle embroidery" also provided technical support for the rich theme, rich level and artistic effect of the Manchu qipao.

C. The Status Quo of the Inheritance and Protection of Manchu Qipao Culture

In recent years, the inheritance and protection of Manchu qipao culture has made great leap. More professionals, institutions and departments began to focus on the development of Manchu qipao culture, and made certain achievements in scientific research results, business practice and other aspects. In terms of cultural protection, in 2007, the craftsmanship of Manchu qipao was included in Jilin Provincial Intangible Cultural Heritage List. In 2009, Manchu clothing was included in the second batch of List of Inner Mongolia regional intangible cultural heritage. Ming Songfeng was listed as the inheritor. In 2011, Liu Shufen and Chen Yuqiu were awarded as inheritors of provincial intangible cultural heritage of Manchu qipao craftsmanship. In 2017, Xinbin Manchu autonomous county in Fushun, Liaoning successfully applied for the title of "hometown of Manchu qipao", connecting qipao culture with the city's economic development.

In terms of scientific research achievements, Professor Liu Yu of Donghua University has introduced the origin, development and influence of the Manchu qipao culture in key chapters in *The History of Chinese Qipao Culture*; Zhang Ruyin, a postgraduate of Minzu University of China, analyzed the culture of Manchu qipao in her 2017 master's thesis, *Study on Qipao of the Manchu Museum in Yitong, Jilin Province*, from the perspective of museology and curator research; Professor Lu Xin of Eastern Liaoning University discussed the internal and external causes of the transformation of Manchu qipao into improved one in his paper *About Changing "Shanghai" Style and "Beijing" Style of Chinese Woman's Gowns*; and in the paper *On the Evolution of Manchu Qipao and Culture in Qing Dynasty* jointly published by Wu Jing and Wang Bin of Hebei University of Technology, the development process of Manchu qipao in Qing dynasty was introduced in detail.

In terms of business development, Zhang Zhifeng, a well-known fashion designer in China, has restored or applied Manchu cheongsam elements for many times in the multi-series works of his designer brand NE Tiger, pushing

² Tian Jia. History of the Qing Dynasty [M]. Taipei: Wenqiao Book Company, 1972. P144-P145.

Manchu qipao culture towards the fashionable development direction.

Although there are many progresses and breakthroughs in the development of Manchu qipao culture, there still exist some shortcomings and problems. First of all, the Manchu qipao craftsmanship has been protected as intangible cultural heritage. However, the professional situation of the technology inheritor is still not ideal: most inheritors are elderly, and few new inheritors. Secondly, the external promotion of Manchu qipao culture has limited dimensions and time. In recent years, the activities related to the Manchu qipao culture are mainly focused on the discussion of the professional scope, static or dynamic display of skills, etc., while there are few promotional activities for the wider public. The public's understanding of the Manchu qipao craft and culture is still limited to traditional media. From the perspective of innovation and development, the cultural and creative development of Manchu qipao culture still has a large space for development.

III. CULTURAL CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF MANCHU QIPAO CULTURE

To develop the cultural creation of Manchu qipao, it is necessary to study and practice specific culturally creative products. Combined with the existing cultural resource base of Manchu qipao, the strategy of cultural creation and development of Manchu qipao can be started from the following aspects: creative physical products, the commercial application of Manchu qipao cultural elements and the integration of "new media technology" and Manchu qipao culture.

A. Creative Physical Products

It is a direct and effective way to promote the culture to design and make creative products based on traditional cultural resources. The design of exquisite physical products of Manchu qipao with a certain degree of dissemination can not only enhance the charm of culturally creative products, open up new development direction, but also make more public groups understand the Manchu qipao culture, and improve the public aesthetic trend.

There are two ways for the design of physical products of Manchu qipao. One is to establish a "craftsman's studio" as inheritor. The exhibition, craftsmanship teaching and sales of Manchu qipao will be taken as the content to form a cultural innovation studio with cultural transmission and skill teaching as the main part and product sales as the supplement. The other is to form a traditional Manchu qipao handicraft brand based on the business model. The purpose is to package the original traditional Manchu qipao through commercialization so as to add commercial value.

B. The Commercial Application of Manchu Qipao Cultural Elements

As for cultural and creative resources of Manchu qipao, most elements are not only a whole, but also a mix of individual elements, each of which can serve as the creative point or main line of culturally creative design. The cultural

and creative design themed by the Manchu qipao is mainly manifested as follows: the expression of traditional Manchu qipao elements remain as the core during the process from the original inspiration to the completion of the design. For example, a series of office stationery products were designed with "auspicious pattern", "animal and plant pattern" and "celestial premier" in the Manchu qipao as the theme design elements. Secondly, the integration of Manchu qipao culture and other design is mainly reflected in the inclusion of individual elements of deconstructed Manchu qipao craft in a design, which makes the original "homogeneous" products more novel and cultural attributes enhanced. Taking the "binding" design of Manchu qipao as an example, multiple "binding" patterns were printed into clothing as decorative elements. Strong sense of national culture arises spontaneously, which makes it more "symbolic" and "creative" compared with other clothes.

C. The Integration of "New Media Technology" and Manchu Qipao Culture

The integration of Manchu qipao culture and emerging applied technology takes the craft elements of Manchu qipao as the main content of design, relying on advanced technologies with application-oriented characteristics, such as "3D printing technology", "recyclable materials" and "AR technology". Its purpose is to innovate the culturally creative products with Manchu qipao elements.

The integration of Manchu qipao culture and emerging visual technology refers to the formation of innovative culturally creative design projects based on the craftsmanship of Manchu qipao through "VR technology" and "3D front-projected holographic display". Its original intention is to bring some lesser-known craft elements to a better cultural project experience through more visual effects.

The integration of Manchu qipao culture and new media technology refers to the use of "WeChat platform", "weibo platform", "big data technology" and other new media technologies to spread and promote Manchu cheongsam culture to a greater extent, and understand the public's affection and cognition of the Manchu qipao culture through the interaction with visitors on the new media platform. What's more, professional analysis is carried out based on the collected data to serve as the basis for the design and improvement of the corresponding culturally creative products, so as to enhance their comprehensive value.

IV. CONCLUSION

The protection and inheritance of the Manchu qipao culture require not only the development of the traditional skills and the cultural spirit of clothing, but also the sublimation of cultural transmission in line with the trend of the times, so as to make it develop in the long run. The commercial communication of creative industry products, creative design elements and craft culture can endow the protection and inheritance of Manchu qipao culture and its craft with multiple new forms of development. It is necessary to take the inheritance of Manchu qipao culture as the breakthrough point and carry out the "cross-field" research

under the integration of the two based on the urgent needs of transformation of the creative industry. Finally, the dual research results of protecting and inheriting the Manchu qipao culture and expanding its creative industry can be gradually formed in the future stage.

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