

# Application of Tu Pan Embroidery Pattern in Modern Design

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## ABSTRACT

Starting from the origin and development of Qinghai Tu pan embroidery, this paper introduces the application of Pan embroidery in Tu costumes and daily necessities, analyzes the internal and external aesthetic characteristics of Tu pan embroidery from its needlework, color characteristics and patterns, arranges and excavates the visual elements of Pan embroidery, and refines the aesthetic analysis and artistic characteristics of Qinghai Tu pan embroidery. The pattern of Qinghai Tu pan embroidery is combined with modern design.

**Keywords:** Tu pan embroidery, visual element, modern design

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tu nationality is one of the ethnic minorities in Northwest China. It mainly lives in Huzhu Tu Autonomous County and Minhe and Datong counties in the east of Qinghai Province. The rest are distributed in Tongren, Menyuan, Ledu, guide, Gonghe County and Tianzhu, Zhuoni, Jishishan and other places in Gansu Province. There are many Tu people who claim to be different from him, mostly depending on their place of residence. The origin of Tu people is based on "Tuyuhun", which has successively absorbed local ethnic components such as Qiang, Tibetan, Mongolian and Han. Tuyuhun people used to be an active ethnic group in the northwest in ancient times. Originally, they were the other branches of Murong Xianbei. They nomadized in the east of Liaoning Province. In the early 4th century, under the leadership of the leader Tuyuhun, they moved westward to Yinshan to graze. Later, they transferred to Qinghai, Gansu Province and established political power. From the early to the middle of the 7th century, Tuyuhun's national strength gradually declined, and finally attached to Tubo. With the rise and fall of Tuyuhun Kingdom, The local residents absorbed and integrated the culture of other nationalities in Zhou and gradually evolved into Tu nationality. The Tu people call themselves "Mongolians" and gradually changed their name to Tu after liberation. Their folk culture is inclusive and colorful. It inherited its ancestors and integrated with Qiang, Han, Tibetan, Mongolian and other nationalities, thus forming a comprehensive cultural characteristic.<sup>[1]</sup>

## 2. THE PROCESS OF TU PAN EMBROIDERY

The area where Tu nationality is distributed is located in Hehuang River Basin, which is suitable for grazing and living. After the Yuan and Ming Dynasties, Tu nationality turned to agricultural economy, integrated animal husbandry and was good at handicraft industry. Among them, embroidery, wool textile, horticulture, horse training and wine making are the most famous. Tu nationality clothing also has the geographical environment characteristics of Qinghai Plateau, reflecting the inheritance and continuity of history and culture. In the Qing Dynasty, it was quite common for Tu women to spin cattle wool. Tu women have a long history of being good at embroidery. It is generally inherited and developed by mother daughter transmission and sister mutual teaching. Embroidery has gradually become a necessary skill for Tu women. On May 20, 2006, Tu pan embroidery was included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list with the approval of the State Council.

There are many kinds of gold thread, silver thread and silk thread. Silk thread and cotton thread are the most common and used threads, while silver thread and gold thread are only rarely used on flowers or some patterns on necklines or cuffs.

The needle work of pan embroidery is to twist two threads into one strand. The needle is carried in a single strand, comes out from under the cloth and is pinned to

the left chest or left collar. The threads are twisted tightly clockwise into a circle, and the bottom is pressed with a thumb. Due to the impact of Tibetan Buddhism, most of Tu people embrace Buddhism. The thread used as a "coil" in pan embroidery always moves clockwise from left to right, which is consistent with the direction of prayer wheel.

Pan embroidery is uniformly arranged in semicircle on one side, and obviously linear on the other side. The resulting pattern has a strong three-dimensional sense and distinct ups and downs. For delicate pan embroidery, the circle made by each stitch has the same size. Each thread is fine and neat, with clear and even edges. Some of them can reveal the dark backing fabric, slightly reducing the strong visual impact caused by the bold use of complementary colors, so as to display harmony and serenity in the rhythm of conflict.

### ***2.1. Analysis of the Patterns and Colors of Tu Pan Embroidery***

The pan embroidery pattern of Tu Nationality in Qinghai has extremely rich imagination, harmonious and beautiful overall composition, smooth and exaggerated modeling, repetition and symmetry, eye-catching and exaggerated color, and has an obvious mark of totem worship. The embroidery art of the Tu people is obviously reflected in the easily worn places such as the cuffs and necklines of clothes. Due to the geographical location of the Tu people in the Qinghai Tibet Plateau, the summer is short, the winter is long, and the annual average temperature is low. The materials used for clothing are thick fabrics, such as leather, felt, brown cloth, etc. Many styles are mainly robes, and the colors are mostly black or navy blue. Dark color is more suitable for the regional climate, and black is easier to absorb and store heat. In the continuous exploration, the color matching custom of Tu nationality with black or Tibetan blue as the main color is formed. The Tu pan embroidery is often used in the parts of clothing that are easy to watch, which not only makes up for the lack of single color of clothing and enhances the appreciation, but also has certain functionality, is not easy to wear, and everywhere reflects the wisdom and beauty of the Tu people.

Tu pan embroidery patterns often contain a potential moral and symbolic significance, which implicitly describes the psychological state of the people. The three most common patterns are Chinese character patterns, animal patterns, and religious patterns. Through the modeling of different themes, it reflects the will of wealth, evil spirits and life reproduction. Its expression methods are both realistic and freehand; Diversified forms of expression and rich aesthetic feeling; The bold and exaggerated composition and description methods highlight the exaggerated and mysterious aesthetic characteristics of the Tu people.

Among them, the most common patterns are palindrome, rich and noble, deformed fish, peony, and other animals and plants and geometric patterns. The common character patterns are auspicious graphic patterns composed of the reconstruction of Chinese characters such as Fu, Shou, Xi, Gong and Zheng <sup>[2]</sup>

The color use of pan embroidery is very bold and the colors differ. What's more, many pan embroidery works adopt the technique of gradual change. Tu people are very fond of strong color contrast, but blend contrast colors in an artful and harmonious way, rendering a rich aesthetic feeling and lasting appeal to embroidery, just like the "rainbow sleeve" of Tu ethnic group. They use red, yellow, blue, green, purple, white, black and other colors boldly. On the surface, such color rules seem to violate the perceptual expression of color, and lose the plain and honest styles and characteristics of folk colors, but essentially, they don't ruin the generality, symbolism and decoration of folk colors, but embodies the sensitivity and proficiency of Tu people in the use of color, as well as their love and yearning for a happy life, diligence, wisdom, nature worship, piety and faith.

### ***2.2. The Application of Tu Pan Embroidery in Life***

As a national cultural feature, pan embroidery is closely related to the life of the Tu people. The costumes of Tu nationality are colorful and full of significant national characteristics. Tu Men often wear white embroidered short coats and small collar slanted robes. The cuffs of the robes are inlaid with black edges (convenient for Tu Men to work on the ground). A 4-inch square plate embroidery pattern is sewn on the chest for decoration. The coat has a black or brown waistband, and the waist is embroidered with a long belt. As a Tu woman, if she wants to get a high evaluation from the outside world, the first thing to bear the brunt is the exquisite degree of plate embroidery. Unmarried Tu Men also often choose their partners according to the level of plate embroidery. The winter coat is a leather jacket with a large collar, and the neckline, lapel, cuffs, hem and other places are trimmed. Some also wear Satin robes and black or blue crotch pants. When they go out, they wear brightly colored embroidered belly, which is embroidered with auspicious words such as "rich Changchun", "mandarin ducks playing in the water", "peacock playing peony" and so on.

Tu women dress in bright colors. They usually wear embroidered jackets with high collar and big front, long robes with right lapel and rainbow sleeves, dressed in a black or brown vest, in pleated skirt or long trousers. Women also wear girdles, with patterns of flowers, birds, butterflies and colorful clouds, etc. at both ends. When wearing girdles, they tie both ends of the embroidery behind or in front of the body, to demonstrate exquisite embroidery. <sup>[3]</sup>

### **3. THE APPLICATION OF TU PAN EMBROIDERY ELEMENTS IN MODERN DESIGN**

#### ***3.1. The Advantages of Tu Pan Embroidery Elements Combined with Modern Design***

Any element in the world has its own culture, and behind the culture is the accumulation of history, and such history is traceable. Pan embroidery is a unique characteristic element of Tu people in Qinghai, which is not only a derivative of costume, but also a visual element, conveying the oldest and simplest visual culture to modern people. Culture belongs to both the nation and the world. If one wishes to show the characteristics of Tu ethnic group to the whole world and associate it with modern design, it is necessary to understand the connotation of Tu culture and the living needs of modern people.<sup>[4]</sup>

As an intangible cultural heritage, Tu pan embroidery has great energy to excavate, and each stitch and thread can be extracted and applied, including patterns, modeling, direction of stitches, color matching and line movement, all apply for modern design.

#### ***3.2. Extraction of Tu Pan Embroidery Elements for Symbolization.***

There is a close tie between modern design and symbols. Since the 20th century, semiotics has gradually become the most common method in the field of visual culture and visual art. Semiotics is a science that investigates linguistic and non-linguistic symbols systematically. As far as the research content is concerned, verbal language is the accumulation of history and culture. And images are more like a conventional thing, laws and rules that people generally understand and acquiesce in. The free development of images makes up the principle of formal beauty. Points, lines and planes are the foundation of images. Light forms a three-dimensional structure and colors enrich the hierarchy. Symbols are the medium of information dissemination. During the design of cultural and creative products, information can be quickly transmitted by symbolizing cultural elements, so that consumers can read the emotions in the work concisely and explicitly and pass on the culture. When designing evolution symbols, it is essential to focus on the cultural connotations reflected by symbols in culture and design. Symbols load information sent by both sides of communicate on. After characteristic elements are extracted and symbolized, it is imperative to blend symbols with modern culture, aesthetics and technology for evolutionary design.<sup>[5]</sup>

### **4. PRACTICE OF COMBINING TU PAN EMBROIDERY ELEMENTS WITH MODERN DESIGN**

#### ***4.1. Religious Elements***

A large number of religious patterns can be seen from the clothes of the Tu people. Most Tu people in Qinghai believe in Tibetan Buddhism, and the square palindrome is the most common one. The interpretation of the word "Hui" in Shuowen Jiezi is: "Hui, turn also. From the mouth, the middle is like the shape of rotation". The square palindrome forms a mysterious pattern through typesetting, which symbolizes a stable and prosperous life. It is as continuous as a river and has a long history. Pan Chang is also a common pattern of Pan embroidery used by the Tu people in Qinghai. Pan Chang was originally one of the magic tools of Buddhism, also known as auspicious knot. Its implication is similar to the square loop. Because the shape of the knot is continuous, there is no difference between the head and the tail, and it also implies long-term and eternity. Many religious elements are used in Tu pan embroidery. This idea and form composition have been reflected in Tu visual art forms, forming characteristic modeling laws and composition methods.

#### ***4.2. Chinese character elements***

The ancients said: "reading history can be wise, clear your mind, know the rise and fall, and know the change". History comes from a large number of written records. Writing is a symbol gradually summarized and sorted out by human beings through the observation of daily life and nature. Chinese characters have evolved from the earliest recorded oracle bone inscriptions to gold inscriptions, seal scripts, official script, regular script, cursive script and running script. Chinese characters are unique and intentional beauty, There is also the art of formal beauty. Chinese characters have the beauty of contrast, density, rhythm and form. The traditional aesthetics formed has something in common with the rules of modern design. Understanding the meaning behind Chinese characters can better combine form and spirit and more appropriate expression design. In Qinghai Tu pan embroidery, the application of Chinese characters is also very common, such as Shou, Gong, Zheng and Fu. These Chinese characters form new patterns and auspicious patterns through continuous and reorganization. Tu people have learned about Han culture since the Wei, Jin, southern and Northern Dynasties. Chinese characters have long penetrated into people's daily life. These Chinese characters are displayed through pan embroidery, revealing the wishes and expectations of Tu people for a better life between the lines.<sup>[6]</sup>

#### ***4.3. Animal and Plant Elements***

Among the patterns of Pan embroidery of Tu Nationality in Qinghai, there are mostly animal and

plant patterns, and animal patterns include dragon and Phoenix. Animal patterns generally appear together with plant patterns. For example, there are cloud patterns, rolling grass patterns and dragon patterns in the patterns of two dragons playing with beads, while phoenix patterns are generally matched with patterns such as rose and peony. Among the plant patterns, lotus pattern is the most common, followed by peony, peach, chrysanthemum, pomegranate, bergamot, grape pattern and so on. Each pattern has a unique meaning. For example, the lotus pattern in marriage is the meaning of praying for more children; Peaches symbolize happiness, wealth and longevity in the old man's birthday, with good wishes; Moreover, for example, the combination of Begonia, peony and plum blossom implies outstanding people, and there are many such things. These patterns have been recognized and passed on by the Tu people for many years. They have evolved into the characteristics of the Tu people in the form of plate embroidery, which has been handed down to this day and used by people.<sup>[7]</sup>

With the development of society, the traditional pan embroidery of Tu Nationality in Qinghai needs to push through the old and bring forth the new. How to combine traditional elements with modern design is what a modern designer should do. Pan embroidery itself is a kind of embroidery, with exaggerated expression, obvious contrast, bright color and regular pattern. I extracted the pattern elements, mainly lotus pattern, the designed pattern is semicircular, and the pattern is relatively full, The lines have a sense of rhythm and tension. They use light gray and dark gray as the background, semi-circular pattern printing for cultural and creative design, and use the law of formal beauty. The Morandi color system and minimalist design loved by the modern young generation publicize the traditional culture of the Tu nationality and interpret the ancient traditional culture in a new way.<sup>[8]</sup>

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

All of the patterns and symbols in Qinghai Tu pan embroidery culture are valuable design resources. The cultural spirit of China can be conveyed by referring to the unique cultural characteristics, re-ideating and re-designing. Graphic symbols are blended into the cultural connotation of products to achieve the transformation between form and connotation. It is not only a command of cultural symbols, but also an inheritance of culture. The integration of cultural symbols into modern design is not a simple imitation of symbols, but to blend it naturally with art and design and bring forth the new through the old based on an understanding the historical background and cultural connotation of these symbols.

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