



Analysis of the Artistic Performance of Button Knots in the Republic of China Era

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Abstract. During the period of the Republic of China, clothing was influenced by the East learning from the West. With the rise of cheongsam, the art of button knots became colorful. This article combs the style and artistic expression of discounting in the Republic of China period according to historical documents, museum relics and other materials through field research, and provides a theoretical basis for the artistic expression of discounting in the Republic of China period. The conclusion is that button Knots originated from the Yi-Zi button Knot of the Han nationality, which reflects the good will of ancient Chinese ancestors to pursue good luck, and also shows the close relationship between button knots art and social politics.

Keywords: Republic of China; Button Knots; Society

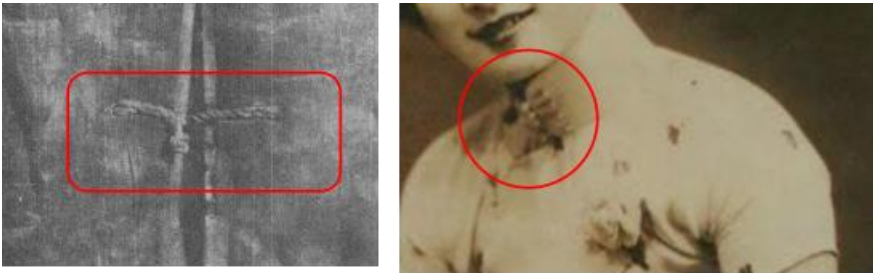
1 Introduction

As an adjective, button knots is a kind of button that is used to fix the placket by knotting the head of the button with a silk thread and combining it with the foot of the button. As a noun, button knots refers to the plate flower button, also known as the plate button. It was first widely seen in the fastenings of Han women's clothing. As an important part of Chinese traditional clothing, the button knot has a long history. It flourished in the late Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China and has become an important traditional element of intangible cultural heritage. With the evolution of social politics, the button knot has become more and more fashionable. Its function is gradually decorative on the basis of practicality, vividly showing the decorative taste of clothing that emphasizes meaning, connotation and theme. Through the button knot, we can also see the social politics at that time and the social value reflected behind it.

2 The study of the button knot in the Republic of China

2.1 The style of button knots in the Republic of China

The Republic of China was the first time that China overthrew the feudal monarchy and established a democratic republic. It was also the feature of China integrating the nation and The Times in modern society. With the use of science and technology at that time, Chinese clothing ushered in the climax of the first revolution, among which the most exemplary clothing is the Chinese tunic suit and cheongsam. As the finishing touch of the cheongsam, the button knot has become an irreplaceable accessory masterpiece in the fashionable dress. At the beginning of the Revolution of 1911, most of the button knots still inherited the ones in the feudal society. They were mainly Yi-Zi button Knots, with one ribbon woven into a ball shaped button head, and another ribbon folded in half to form a link. The button head and the link were sewn and fixed on both sides of the lapel and opposite each other, which was the simplest style in the button Knot modeling technology. In 1988, the Tomb of Zhou of the Southern Song Dynasty in De'an, Jiangxi.. In 1988, the Sleeved over-dress of colorless cotton rib unearthed from the Zhou Family Tomb of the Southern Song Dynasty in De'an, Jiangxi Province, showed a button knot and its shape is similar to that of the Republic of China (figure 1), and it also shows that the button knot is not a unique product of Manchu. Some aristocratic ladies in the Republic of China also wore some "exotic" buttons, such as emerald beads and gemstones, which not only looked beautiful but also showed their status; Fashionable women will also wear large decorative buttons with jewelry, which are elegant, modern and eye-catching. During the Republic of China, with the progress of technology, some civilians also coiled plastic iron wires into button knots, which are cheap and accessible. These button knots are more functional than decorative.



picture source: Summary of Zhou's Tomb of Southern Song Dynasty in De 'an, Jiangxi Province. Cultural Relics, No.9, 1990

Fig. 1. Comparison of the button knot unearthed from Zhou's Tomb of the Southern Song Dynasty with the button knot of the Republic of China

2.2 Characteristics of the Republic of China period

The inheritance of the button knot in the Republic of China.

Now we can see the shape of the button knot mostly decorated in the Manchu clothing, so the public impression often put the button knot as the finishing touch of cheongsam, and think the button knot is the Manchu accessories, in fact, is not the truth. The patterns of the Zhou Dynasty are already similar collar figures, and as early as the Warring States Period, there were similar Yi-Zi buttons. In the button knot unearthed from the tomb of the Zhou Dynasty in De'an, Jiangxi province, you can clearly see that the buttons in the costumes of the Southern Song Dynasty are So for the historical orientation of button knots, the button knot in the qing dynasty to the republic of China period to act the role of button knot more prosperous in application and decorative. Developed to the period of the republic of China, button knots with the development of economy and technology, absorb foreign culture, The reformational Qipao in the modern times with the characteristics of natural simpleness, graceful figure and free variety, is influenced by Western thoughts of equality, humanism and freedom. At the same time, the decoration of the button knot has been unprecedentedly developed. However, it is not rigorous to ascribe the button knot to the Qing Dynasty costume, because more historical evidence shows that the button knot should be a cultural and artistic work of the Han nation, and has a long history and culture (Fig2).



picture source: National Costume Museum

Fig. 2. The inheritance of the button knot in the Republic of China

The decoration of the button knot.







Due to its long history, the shape of the button knot condenses thousands of years of ancient Chinese working people's artistic wisdom. Button knot modeling has a variety of combination forms, including uniform change, symmetric balance, rhythm, etc., these combination forms are not only the model of formal beauty, but also the treasure of the Chinese nation's modeling aesthetic spread.

The beauty of the change of button knots in the harmony of local and overall. In the domestic independent designer Yang Ziqi brand "ComunqueYang" 2021 A/W, the designer can reproduce the Chinese traditional "buckle" through fashionable modern technology, both the traditional beauty and perfect harmony with the current fashion. In the details, the designer also borrowed from the form of "button knot", with the buttonhole by using shoelaces to connect each accessory, increase the elegant feeling of clothing and interactivity, and the addition of manual embroidery also promoted the simple sense of fashionable dress itself to a new level. No other nation's art can be

as demonstrated in the Chinese nation's artistic aesthetics, almost all works, from large architecture to button knot, almost all works have a central point to balance, which is derived from the nature worship of ancient Chinese to heaven, Earth and water. The symmetry of the button knot is the traditional modeling aesthetics, which is centered on the button head and about the same, reflecting the dignified and virtuous quality. The equilibrium takes the imaginary center of gravity as the fulcrum and visually maintains the equality of left and right button flowers, with a unified style in the process of change (Table 1).

Table 1. The beauty in form of the button Knot

The self-made table

The beauty of unity of change			The change in the button Knot means the difference of the shape; Unity means an organic connection between the parts and the whole.
The beauty of symmetry and equilibrium			Symmetry is a kind of static balance, which is a relatively stable condition of the unity of force and center of gravity contradiction. Equilibrium is a combination of different shapes and equal amounts, so that the asymmetric forms maintain the same amount of each other visually, to achieve a sense of balance.
The beauty of contrast and harmony			The contrast in the button Knot refers to the differences in shape, color, quality and other factors. Harmony is the embodiment of unity, meaning the approximation of form, color, quality and other elements.

3 The social significance of button Knot

3.1 The embodiment of national thought and emotions

The flower modeling of button Knot is a new thing in the Republic of China, and the modeling theme is mostly derived from Chinese traditional auspicious patterns. The ancient Chinese people respected nature, followed the five elements, and emphasized the cosmic concept of "harmony between man and nature". The appearance of auspicious patterns originated from the ancients' fear of nature and their attempt to sense nature, so auspicious symbols emerged at the historic moment. For the use of auspicious patterns, the Ming and Qing dynasties became a epitome. The use of official

uniforms in Ming and Qing Dynasties is a typical example. The aesthetic psychology of the Ming Dynasty tended to be festive and simple, which directly reflected the Qing Dynasty costume patterns. Some patterns of animal and plant patterns were gradually accepted as symbols or symbols of good meaning, so these patterns contain the corresponding auspicious meaning. For example, in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the pattern of the official uniform of a civilian clothing (the highest official rank in imperial China) was "crane", which was "under one bird and above ten thousand birds" in ancient times, second only to the "best bird" of phoenix. The pattern of the official uniform of a civilian clothing in the Ming and Qing Dynasties was "crane". The text pattern of Draw text clearly expresses a wish, such as longevity, happiness, happiness and other words, and these words are combined with beautiful flower patterns that complement each other. The application of all these auspicious patterns also influenced the theme of the button Knot. (Figure 3). In the Republic of China period, behind the colorful theme of the button Knot pattern was the reaction of politics, religion and values in ancient times, which conveyed the idea of the ancient people to pursue a better life.



This image is from the Internet

Fig. 3. "Crane" button Knot and "longevity" button Knot

3.2 The female glamour symbolizes

The rapid development of button Knot in the Republic of China was inseparable from the popularity of Shanghai cheongsam. Compared with the pursuit curve of western women's clothing, the traditional Chinese clothing has always been pursuing straight lines. After the outbreak of the Revolution of 1911 and the collapse of the Chinese feudal dynasty, women began to be liberated from the shackled feudal ideology, Western clothes became popular in Shanghai, China. During the period of the Republic of China, under the influence of Qipao and Western clothing, the style of "Chinese and Western" cheongsam became the popular fashion in this period. The broad silhouette of traditional dress became tight, and the cheongsam had slits on both sides, showing the graceful posture of Oriental women. As the finishing touch of cheongsam, button Knots with the popularity of cheongsam, the shape of the button Knot is also rich and colorful, which highlights the charm of women. From the perspective of design, this phenomenon provides more design elements for Chinese women's clothing. From the social point of view, it shows the promotion of women's status during the Republic of China.

4 Conclusion

The period of the Republic of China is a special period in Chinese history. In terms of politics, the feudal dynasty was overthrown and the first democratic republic was established. In terms of economy, the Western powers carried out a brutal economic plunder on China. In terms of art and culture, the Western countries forced open the door to China, and the costume art was influenced by the West, which played a positive role in the development of Chinese costume. During the Republic of China, the rapid development of button Knot not only benefited from the clothing market environment at that time, but also the condensation of thousands of years of Chinese art and culture, representing the wisdom of the Chinese working people.

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