

Children's Tiger-Head Shoes in Chinese Zhongyuan Folk Art

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Abstract—Zhongyuan Tiger-Head Shoes are a symbol of Zhongyuan traditional costume. This paper discusses Tiger-Head Shoes' art characteristics, and then points out Tiger-Head Shoes' artistic expression and featured embody form, contrasts and analyzes the structural modeling and function characteristics of Tiger-Head Shoes. This paper has analyzed Tiger-Head Shoes' artistic value to satisfy the demand of excellent traditional culture in modern dress development and innovative.

Keywords—tiger-head shoes; folk art; structural modeling; function characteristics

I. EMBODIMENT OF TIGER-HEAD SHOES IN ZHONGYUAN CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

A. Tiger-head Shoes form An Important Part of Zhongyuan Fork Art

Tiger-shoes are for children and they are made by traditional Chinese fork handicraft. They evolve from warrior tiger-head boots in Han and Tang dynasties. Zhongyuan tiger-head shoes have a very long history, meantime, they are an important part of traditional Chinese fork handicraft. The head of tiger-head shoes looks like the head of a tiger, therefore they are called tiger-head shoes. As an important traditional handicraft in Zhongyuan folk, they are the conscious and unconscious art creation having both function and aesthetic appreciation, a cultural product of development of Zhongyuan in a long time and an important witness of its historical development.

B. Embodiment of Tiger-head Shoes in Zhongyuan Fork Art Characteristics

As a kind of Zhongyuan folk art, tiger-shoes certainly embody characteristics of Zhongyuan fork art.

1) *Practicability*. First, infants around the age of one are still learning to walk, and circumference shoe sole of tiger-head shoes is suitable for them to learn to walk; second, mothers use a part of fragmentary shell fabric at home to make shoe sole for tiger-head shoes, and another part of fabric to decorate the head of shoes, embodying Chinese women's fine tradition of frugality in household

management; last but not least, since it is very cold in Zhongyuan's winter and infant's cotton-padded trousers include package of foot, displaying big feet, therefore too small shoes not only restrict normal growth of infant's feet, but also make it difficult to put shoes on for children.






2) *Artistry*. Zhongyuan fork art mainly displays ever changing modeling decoration and plain and natural aesthetic style. Cross-stitch and mending embroidery is a big category of drawnwork and it comes down in one continuous line with Chinese traditional embroidery. Primarily, cross-stitch is a kind of stitch in embroidery. Mending originates from "silk pile", a kind of handiwork made of silk. Collage of this kind of handiwork into flowers or figures is called mending. Tiger-head shoes in Zhongyuan folk use the folk handicraft of cross-stitch and mending embroidery to make ever changing modeling and decoration of tiger-head shoes. On the basis of inheriting ancient embroidery stitches, start from aesthetic appreciation of plainness and naturalness in the process of actual design and change silk material into manifold cotton cloth, linen, cotton thread to make tiger-head shoes.^[1]

3) *Symbolism*. Zhongyuan folk art uses certain art symbols to express symbolism.^[2] One art symbol is color. Tiger-head shoes usually use strong color contrast, like red, green, black, white, blue and so on. Each color is thick and heavy, expressing strong sight impact. Another art symbol is modeling. Zhongyuan tiger-head shoes are brutal, bold and unconstrained in configuration of main part, but they are delicate and exquisite in detailed parts. This art symbol symbolizes Zhongyuan people's crude and refined character.

II. TIGER-HEAD SHOES' ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AND FEATURED EMBODY FORM

Zhongyuan tiger-head shoes have unique artistic expression technique and features, which are mainly manifested in the five aspects of symmetry, exaggeration, decorativeness, comparability and randomness. Culture connotation of unique and characteristic Zhongyuan folk art is displayed through artistic expression form of tiger-head shoes.^[3] Please refer to Table I: Tiger-Head Shoes' artistic expression and featured embody form.

TABLE I. TIGER-HEAD SHOES' ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AND FEATURED EMBODY FORM

Tiger-head shoes' artistic technique and featured embody form	Concrete embodiment	Illustration
Symmetry	Zhongyuan tiger-head shoes belong to full symmetry in artistic symmetric form, and it is also called "even symmetry". It is completely equal in quantity, form and structure. As one of the most original structural element of art, full symmetry of tiger-head shoes embody dignified and stable sight effect. Symmetry, balance, rhythm and harmony act on people's artistic sense and produce symmetric beauty of art. [4] Sight pleasure of symmetry, innate balance, simplicity and equidistance reduce vision disorder, leave eyes in balanced tension when looking at the shoes, and give people pleasure of satisfaction when they look at the shoes(Both the single shoe and right and left shoes are completely symmetrical).	
Exaggeration	As an artistic form, Zhongyuan tiger-head shoes combine local feature with mind modeling. Apparently, it has strong freehand style, which is especially embodied in exaggeration of modeling. Exaggeration of appearance is a typical embodiment of Zhongyuan tiger-head shoes. Take embroidery squares on the face of shoes as an example, the tiger there is completely different from actual tiger. [5] Embroidery squares on the face of shoes have changed original proportional relation of tiger. Break the conventional proportion, exaggerate tiger's eyes, head and face and shrink tiger's body, thus combing tiger's mouth, nose and eyes as one.	
Decorativeness	Zhongyuan folk tiger-head shoes have many decorations. More than ten processes are needed from the most basic craftsmanship to completion of tiger head's basic features. In addition, it is necessary to complicatedly use colorful thread, lace, cloth, knitting wool, fur and feather, metal scraps, pearl, button, coloured ribbon and so on. Meantime, use animals' fur and feather to decorate ears and eyes of tiger and shoe throat to underline quality of tiger-head shoes as a whole and display tiger's boldness and bravery.	
Comparability	Zhongyuan folk tiger-head shoes rely on its vivid comparability to give people strong sight impact. First, color contrast. In order to avoid the suspicion of "vulgarity", academic artists emphasize transition of color in using it and avoid direct impact of bright red and green. Tiger-head shoes art is rooted in the yellow earth of Zhongyuan and it displays the characteristic of "earth" on purpose in some degree. It uses primary color pigment with high purity and forms striking color contrast to make shoes extremely irritating and attractive. Second, contrast of romantic charm. Tiger-head shoes have the symbolic meaning of auspiciousness and are charmingly naive, weakening the deterrent force of evil of tigers in actual life.	
Randomness	Tiger-head shoes' composition of picture occupies maximum two-dimensional space to make composition of picture of shoe upper full and complete. This kind of full composition of picture definitely can form full and tensile sight impact of the main object in the picture.	

III. STRUCTURAL MODELING AND FUNCTIONAL FEATURES OF TIGER-HEAD SHOES

Tiger-head shoes' special structural modeling and their function are closely related. The most typical structural modeling is displayed in the three aspects of multi-layer soles,

special structure of shoe warp and animal form modeling. It is exactly the three typical structural modelings that give play to functions of tiger-head shoes greatly, making tiger-head shoes still be used and loved by many people.

A. Structural Modeling and Functional Features of Tiger-Head Shoes' Multi-Layer Soles

Tiger-head shoes' soles are made of cloth by hand. Handmade cloth sole firstly appears in Zhou Dynasty. After more than two thousand years' development, handmade cloth sole has won fame as "multi-layer sole" both at home and abroad. Handmade cloth soles have the advantage of protection against the cold in winter and heat dissipation in summer. Children's feet are still growing and they are very soft and tender. They need to keep warm in winter and dissipate heat in summer to guard against fungal infection. Besides, children are restless, so their shoes must be soft and convenient for running.^[6] Tiger-head shoes' sole has the characteristics of wear resistance, protection against cold, heat dissipation, comfort etc., thus they are suitable for healthy growth of children's feet and are loved by Zhongyuan people in a long time. Please refer to "Table II". The comparison between children and adult's foot coefficient

TABLE II. THE COMPARISON BETWEEN CHILDREN AND ADULT'S FOOT COEFFICIENT UNIT: %

Comparison part	Children	Adults	Changing rule
Endpoint of little toe	84.50	83.73	The fifth toe of children is a little longer and toes are parallel and level
The first plantar toe	73.27	72.17	Hallux gradually becomes longer and forefoot becomes bigger
The fifth plantar toe	63.75	63.02	Forefoot gradually becomes bigger
Girth of former supernumerary bone	101.37	100.29	Children's supernumerary girth is a little longer than that of adults
Girth of foot pocket	128.47	132.00	Children basically have no heels
Slanting width of plantar toe	40.65	41.65	Slanting width of plantar toe increases gradually
Width of heel heart	70.21	68.20	Children's width of heel heart is longer than that of adults
Height of the first plantar toe	14.62	13.62	Gradually reduce(no evident change)
Height of hallux	8.22	7.95	Slight change
Height of former supernumerary bone	24.27	23.95	Children's supernumerary bone is higher than that of adults
Height of external ankle bone	18.84	19.60	External ankle bone constantly becomes higher

Seeing from "Table II", the comparison between children and adult's foot coefficient, we can know that there are great changes in growing from children's foot into adults', and there is a certain change rule. From foot of children to adults, great changes have taken place in endpoint of little toe, the first plantar toe, the fifth plantar toe, girth of foot pocket, slanting

width of plantar toe, width of heel heart, height of former supernumerary bone and height of external ankle bone. These parts become prominent features of children's foot: parallel and level toes, big forefoot, long supernumerary girth, no heels, and since children have more fat, their width of heel heart is longer than that of adults.^[7-8] According to change rule of foot growing from children to adults, in order to make foot grow normally from children to adults, it is necessary to consider features of children's foot in designing shoes. Tiger-head shoes' structural design of each part exactly conforms to the change rule, satisfies modeling of children's foot and gives play to their functional features.

B. Structural Modeling and Functional Features of Tiger-Head Shoes' Shoe Warp




The most typical feature of ancient Chinese shoes is that their tip upwarps. Since the pre-Qin period, tiger-head shoes have been using this kind of structural modeling to give play to important functions. Function of tiger-head shoes' tip can be concluded in the following four aspects:^[6]

- When they first learn to walk, children like to straightly look at the front direction. Tiger-head shoes' tip can let children sense the existence of barrier, thus the tip can make children keep alert and reduce frequency of falling down.
- Generally speaking, shoe tip is connected to sole. Fastness of sole is far greater than that of shoe surface, thus prolonging life of shoes.
- Upwarping of shoe warp corresponds to ancient traditional belief. It is like upturned eaves of ancient buildings and has the meaning of respecting and worshipping the god.

C. Structural Modeling and Functional Feature of Tiger-Head Shoes in the Shape of Animals

- Children are usually rash in walking, so it is easy to kick out shoe head. Mothers cut cloth or fur into different kinds of animal pictures and add them to shoe head and shoe upper, thus increasing children's shoes' abrasive resistance and interestingness of shoes at the same time.
- It also displays traditional Chinese's totemism by adding animal pictures of tigers and so on to children's shoes.
- Making children's shoes in the shape of various kinds of animals is also out of children's mental need. Animal like shoes satisfy children's nature of enjoying bright and fancy color and embody deep mother love through clever hands and complicated knitting at the same time.

TABLE III. TIGER-HEAD SHOES ELEMENTS' PERFORMANCE PRACTICES IN COSTUME DESIGN

Design element	Design performance	Illustration
Modeling	Adopt tiger-head shoes' modeling as main content of profile design of costume. Costume profile extends on the basis of tiger-head shoes' modeling. Design innovation of costume is conducted according to tiger-head shoes' modeling features and typical features and by combining today's analysis of costume profile's trend.	
Color	Tiger-head shoes have abundant colors which combine use of bright color, high and low purity and brightness. Tiger-head shoes' color is loved by many designers.	
Craft realization	Tiger-head shoes have complicated craftsmanship. In today's costume design, the four most used crafts in costume design are playing Gebei performance practice, embroidery craft and seed embroidery craft. Designers use these practices and unique innovative ideas to show new design ideas and design works.	

IV. INNOVATIVE APPLICATION OF ZHONGYUAN TIGER-HEAD SHOES' ELEMENT IN TODAY'S SOCIAL FIELD

A. Application of Tiger-Head Shoes' Element in Children's Toys Field

In our daily life, we can frequently see baby walking chair and tiger-head small bell which take tiger-head shoes' element as the theme. One of their most obvious features is that there is a big character of "king" in the middle of tiger head. They still adopt main color of tiger-head shoes to pass "tiger's" silly appearance and cute feature to children's childhood, like black, yellow, red etc.

B. Application of Tiger-Head Shoes' Element in Costume Design

From embroidery (Kaifeng embroidery), cross-stitch work, seed embroidery to craft method of more than ten procedures, every detail is the concerned object of costume designers. Please refer to Table III. Tiger-Head Shoes elements' performance practices in costume design.^[9]

C. Application of Tiger-head Shoes' Element in Home Decoration Artware

Currently home decoration artware is mainly divided into the two categories of pure modern style and ancient-modern style. Development of ancient-modern home decoration artware pushes forward continuous innovation of Chinese classic element. Artware design with innovation of Zhongyuan tiger-head shoes' element still is loved by many people. Tiger-shaped pillow and tiger-shaped earthenware are very like modeling of tiger-head shoes in spirit. People are using another

way to express their respect for tiger-head shoes' auspicious meaning. It is the unique way to beautify life for people and displays tiger-head shoes' art value.

V. CONCLUSION

Discussion of tiger-head shoes' art value has great importance on inheritance of Chinese civilization. The paper analyzes tiger-head shoes' art performance practice, feature embodiment, structural modeling and function, four aspects in total; it also combines innovative application potential of tiger-head shoes' element in children's toy field, costume field, home decoration artware field and so on. It provides basis for designers' design of children's shoes,^[10] and excavates huge application value of tiger-head shoes' element in future society.

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