

# ***A Brief Analysis of Representation and Reflection of Chinese Traditional Garment of Women***

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**Abstract:** Chinese clothing, especially women's clothing, is very exquisite. Not only the texture of the clothes but also the expression of each clothing style. A lot of information can be reflected in women's clothing. Through the combination of documents and historical materials, this paper analyzes the aesthetic characteristics and cultural connotations of Chinese women's clothing. The results show that Chinese traditional culture is all-encompassing and is the spiritual source of contemporary Chinese clothing design. From the choice of fabric to the colors and embroidery patterns, there is a unique meaning and status symbol. In the end, it is found that the influence of traditional Chinese women's clothing is profound. Women's clothing has not only become powerful evidence for ancient civilization study but also can make future generations strongly feel the spiritual abundance of ancient people. People can only effectively communicate profound cultural implications in fashion design and develop and innovate based on inheriting heritage by deeply comprehending traditional clothing culture and respecting its aesthetic meaning. The proper approach to carrying down traditional clothing culture is to continually improve upon, advance, and transcend it. Rather than concentrating just on the form of traditional Chinese cultural aspects, the vitality of traditional Chinese clothing culture lies in the harmonious fusion of form and connotation.

**Keywords:** Chinese traditional garment, women, culture

## **1. Introduction**

China has the reputation of the "Kingdom of Clothes" and is very sophisticated in terms of clothing, which has also created a variety of clothing patterns and content forms. Clothing is the most obvious characteristic of human image expression, in the Chinese clothing industry gradually rising today, and the design of clothing patterns is also developing in the direction of diversification, national style, personalization, and stylization gradually become synonymous with China's clothing pattern design, initially constitute a systematic clothing language. Based on this, the role of clothing pattern culture in the long history of Chinese culture, so exploring the ethical beauty in ancient Chinese clothing has also become an important research direction in the field of clothing today, which is enough to highlight the artistic status and cultural style of Chinese clothing patterns, which has a positive effect on improving the aesthetic level of clothing design in China [1]. This study is mainly aimed at the social significance of traditional Chinese female clothing, as well as the aesthetic and deep spiritual values brought by traditional female garments.

## 2. The Importance of Clothing for Ancient Women

The world that humanity has created is a kingdom of cultures, which grow along with the course of human history and are fundamental to society's development. The fusion of human spiritual and material civilization is known as costume culture. On the one hand, clothing is a significant part of culture, and the growth of culture stimulates people's desire for clothing; on the other hand, people's desire for clothing enriches the meaning of culture, connects the transformation of culture to nature with people's own cultivation and life aesthetics, and ultimately encourages the growth of society. The famous anthropologist Francis pointed out in her book that the pursuit of artistic expression and elegant appearance is a common denominator of human beings. It can be said that in ancient societies, many people already felt the need to beautify their lives, and their consciousness was much stronger than that of their civilized descendants. In the process of human history, clothing for human beings is not only limited to covering the body and cold but also to meet people's psychological needs and life recognition in other aspects, such as the hunters of the northern nomads in ancient China used teeth, hooves, claws, feathers or tails of their prey to decorate their clothes to show their heroism or high status. With the development of economy and society, the material, color, style, and ancillary decoration of people's clothes are more and more echoing with the entire social mentality and personality psychology, and the clothing itself as an information symbol can convey the information of the fashion of the times, cultural characteristics and personal cultural education, knowledge level, demeanor temperament, and social role [2]. Clothing is regarded as a person's "second skin", which can reflect the personality and psychological state of a person, especially a woman. American costume scientist Blanche Penny wrote that the first girl who wears a flower on her head or dyes her lips red with plum juice must have her aesthetic point of view [3]. The material, color, sewing, and matching of women's clothing can strengthen women's own identity and self-confidence, demeanor, and competitiveness on specific occasions.

## 3. Spirit of Chinese Clothing

### 3.1. Representation of Each Chinese Cloth

Clothing is a vital component of human civilization and a fundamental aspect of human life. It provides for people's practical requirements and serves as a symbol of a particular era's culture. Clothing's design, fabric choice, color scheme, and other elements all reflect a society's productivity level and social context at a given time, as well as its inhabitants' ideologies, religious convictions, and aesthetic ideals. So, whatever of which dynasty, there is a principle of dressing. The clothes with dragons and phoenixes were only for the royal household, especially the clothes with dragons, which could be only dressed by the emperor. And this dress code was mandated. Because In China's traditional clothing, the pattern of "dragon" and "phoenix" is the mainstay. "Dragon" is a traditional pattern with a prominent status, which belongs to the representative of human totems in ancient times and has the status of a guardian deity in the hearts of people at that time. From the perspective of traditional culture, "dragon" represents heroes and strength, and later evolved into a symbol of power, mainly referring to ancient emperors. During the feudal society, the "phoenix" was also an important traditional clothing pattern with representative status, as important as the status of "dragon", known as the king of birds, and also an important symbol of the Chinese nation. With the continuous development of society, people have given "dragon" and "phoenix" more connotations. In the feudal society period in China, poultry and animal patterns were often used to distinguish official positions, civil officials embroidered poultry to show Wen Li, and military attachés embroidered beasts to demonstrate martial arts [4]. It can be said that these patterns on official uniforms can be regarded as symbols of cultural symbols in a specific historical period.

### 3.2. The Importance and Significance of Different Colors in Ancient Dress

The dress styles and aesthetics of China changed over time and dynasties. The research aims not only to analyze the characteristics of the garment but also what spirit can be reflected in traditional Chinese clothing. Traditional Chinese clothing culture is not an isolated cultural phenomenon, it is the unity of material and spirit, but also the materialized form of the main beauty attached to the material carrier, which advocates both symbolic ideology and aesthetic pleasure, pays attention to the creation of formal beauty and advocates the expression of emotional ideas, so that the connotation meaning and expression form are perfectly unified, and the beauty of scene integration and image unity is used to show the life art of national aesthetics. Taking the color in traditional Chinese clothing culture as an example, its cultural connotation has also evolved with the development of society and the changes of the times, and presents distinct phased, national, and epochal aesthetic characteristics [5]. The life of traditional Chinese clothing culture is rich in color, it takes the hierarchical logo as the main sign, and is given specific ethical signs, such as the Shang Dynasty took the five colors of blue, red, yellow, white, and black from nature as noble colors, stipulating that only the dress of slave owners and aristocracy can use these colors, and "green and red words, red and white words, white and black words, black and green words, colorful embroidery". In addition, the five colors are combined with the cognitive methods of traditional Chinese culture, corresponding to the five elements, etc., forming the so-called "five square colors" schema, and according to the principle of the five elements of mutual survival, the "five virtues always say" is derived, which is associated with life morality, such as Shang with King Jinde and Shang Bai, Zhou with King Huode and Shang Hong, Qin with King Shuide and Shang Hei, etc. [6]. After the pre-Qin dynasty, in the hierarchical feudal society, the color of clothing as the external form of political ethics was directly used to "not be up and down, bright and noble", becoming the iconic symbol of the difference between the ruling class and rank, while yellow and dragon patterns became the special colors of the emperor and symbols of royal power. Under the dual effects of the high pressure of the feudal hierarchy and Confucian ritual thought, the application of color has been detached from the material attributes of nature and its original meaning and has been given a strong political and ethical color. It can be seen that the cultural connotation of traditional Chinese clothing is extremely rich, it stems from the infinite worship of nature and life and the deliberate expression of hierarchical signs and presents a bright color style and harmonious and unified psychological pursuit, the overall effect is both pleasing to the eye and simple and generous, forming its own unique five-color system and style expression, becoming the keynote of Chinese traditional clothing culture.

### 3.3. Embodies the Beauty of Traditional Chinese Garment

To achieve the artistic effects of inspiring association and intriguing evocation, this technique typically embeds the author's emotional expression in the image and artistic conception of the work, highlighting the artistic realm of "love in the scene, and love outside the scene." The pursuit of "implicit beauty" and "implicit" belongs to the traditional Chinese literary and artistic beauty [7]. In that it stresses the perception of a particular hazy implicit beauty and concentrates on the publicity of "virtual" in the link between the virtual and the real, this is comparable to the freehand technique in Chinese painting. Introduced into the artistic creation of clothing culture, that is, the designer gives special consideration to the beauty of "no signs, super and flexible", does not consciously pursue numerical accuracy or pure form of objective beauty, but encourages the use of infinite image beauty to subtly express emotions. For example, the use of wide robes, modest styles, realistic and variant animals, geometric patterns, flowers and branches, vine arabesques, and other abstract and allegorical clothing patterns to convey a political or ethical intention. The "robe" of the early Han Dynasty was used as a ceremonial dress, generally with large sleeves, the cuff part was tightened and reduced, and

the tight and narrow part was "dispelled" [8]. The "4 Forest Seven Sages" in the Weiyin period, their portraits are all dressed in spacious clothes, with open collars, bare bosoms, or barefoot, or scattered, unrestrained, and debauchery, showing the life character of advocating nothingness and contemptuous etiquette, giving the world an aesthetic mood that is as casual and natural as mountains and rivers [9]. Chinese traditional attire for women Cheongsam is the standard clothing for modern Chinese women that combines Chinese and Western clothing characteristics is representative of Chinese clothing culture, and has an irreplaceable and important position on the women's stage. It is a model of the perfect combination of traditional clothing culture and modern fashion design and has the perfect shape, suitable structure, and harmony between inside and outside. The design of the cheongsam is tepid on the surface, but in essence, it is rich in connotation and far-reaching, achieving the perfect integration of form and content. The smooth texture and simple shape show the smooth and bright lines and harmonious charm, showing the gentle and elegant beauty of oriental women. This charm is not only displayed on the outside but also the inside. Wearing a cheongsam can fully express the subtle beauty of traditional Chinese clothes and provide a hazy condition similar to the rhythm of natural living. It can also highlight the attractive figure of oriental women and reveal their elegant mood and leisurely rhythm of life. The mutual infiltration and influence of many ethnic groups led to the development of Chinese clothes, just as Chinese culture [10]. Since the Han and Tang Dynasties, and particularly after the modern era, a significant amount of good genes from many foreign cultures of different ethnic groups have been assimilated and combined. Only then has it evolved into the so-called Chinese clothing culture, with the Han as the major body. Through the study of the diverse styles, unique styles, bright colors, and exquisite craftsmanship of Tang Dynasty ladies' clothing, people will understand the development trajectory of the Chinese nation's broad and deeply selected clothing culture and explore the heritage of Chinese clothing culture.

#### 4. Conclusions

In conclusion, Chinese traditional culture is all-encompassing and is the spiritual source of contemporary Chinese clothing design. People can only effectively communicate profound cultural significance in fashion design and evolve and innovate based on inheriting heritage by deeply comprehending traditional clothing culture and respecting its aesthetic meaning. The proper approach to carrying down traditional clothing culture is to continually improve upon, advance, and transcend it. Rather than concentrating just on the form of traditional Chinese cultural aspects, the vitality of traditional Chinese clothing culture lies in the harmonious fusion of form and connotation. It is found that the influence of traditional Chinese women's clothing is profound. Among them, clothing has not only become powerful evidence for people's study of ancient civilizations but also can make future generations strongly feel the spiritual abundance of ancient people. From the choice of fabric to the colors and embroidery patterns, there is a unique meaning and status symbol.

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