

Manchu Costumes in the Late Qing Dynasty The Meaning and Craftsmanship of the "Cuojin"

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Received: January 29, 2023

Accepted: February 7, 2023

Online Published: March 31, 2024

doi:10.5539/ass.v20n2p67

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v20n2p67>

Abstract

The aim of this study is to focus on the "Cuojin" in Manchu costumes in the Qing Dynasty, ("Cuojin" means the form of dislocation butt joint at the collar of the big lapel. "Shunjin" means the form of neat form butt joint at the collar of the big lapel.) Through the research of specimens and literature, it was found that in the late Qing Dynasty, the "Cuojin" form generally appeared in the large placket casual clothes. The "Cuojin" is produced with the appearance of the big front edge decoration. The collar edge embroidered pieces need to be broken the seam in the front and stitched with embroidered pieces on the large placket. The "Shunjin" with "neat matching" appeared first, and then "Cuojin" gradually formed. The conclusion of this paper is summarized in the literature collected at present. With the excavation and international exchange of more literature specimens, there will be more discoveries and new conclusions. Although "Cuojin" has no written rules and regulations, the use of it has a strict definition with its clothing level, that is, only for women use as casual wear. Although the "Cuojin" looks complex on the surface, in fact, it is easy to turn complexity into simplicity. The motivation is based on solving the problems of insufficient sewing and difficult craftsmanship, and guiding people from the aesthetics of "neat confrontation" to "winding path leading to a secluded spot".

This spirit of full of "make the best of an error" wisdom of "knowledge is acquired through experience" new-confucianism overturned the late Qing Dynasty clothing pretensions revealing the mainstream views of luxury.

Keywords: the large placket casual clothes, "Cuojin", "Neat confrontation", "knowledge is acquired through experience", "Winding path leading to a secluded spot"

1. Introduction

In the late Qing Dynasty, there was a common form of dislocation and docking of the front and middle position of the collar and edge decoration, which is tentatively called "Cuojin" for the time being. In the late Qing Dynasty, there were a large number of physical objects and records of ancient books, which provided important evidence for the study of "Cuojin". However, there are still many unsolved mysteries, such as why the "Cuojin" shape occurred in the late Qing Dynasty? Why does it only appear in casual clothes and only in women's clothes? Is that for decoration or function? What is the special technology? What is the most worthy that the "Cuojin" is diverse in shape, but it is always appear more in Manchu dress than Han. Considering these problems is helpful to understand the special history of dynasty and clothes

2. The Ethics Function of "Cuojin"

Through the collection of the samples and image documents of large lapel clothing in the late Qing Dynasty, both Manchu and Han have the forms of "Cuojin", but Manchu style is much diverse than Han. According to the structure of the existing samples, it is found that there are more than six kinds of Manchu costumes and only four kinds of Han costumes.

In terms of structural form, the Manchu and Han "Cuojin" have a lot of things in common. The important thing is that the Manchu costumes in the existing objects have certain age. The diversity of "Cuojin" and the particularity of structural form provide an important basis for revealing the fashion of the times.

Among the three types of Manchu "Cuojin", the first type of "Cuojin" is "Dacuojin" (The edge decoration of right side clothes part is different.), which shown in both men's and women's court clothes in the Qing Dynasty.

The reason is that the court robes are equipped with Shawls, which are completely covered around the round collar, and only part of the big Lapel trim is exposed. Therefore, the trim is only in the front to middle. Another reason is to increase the wear resistance of the big lapels, and narrow bands are mostly used around the round collar. The experience of this function will naturally be used in the large lapel Han of the same shape. At the same time, it also lays a foundation for the development of "Cuojin" to excessive decoration technology, which may be the Inherent way of thinking why people regard "Cuojin" as a non decorative function. It is not difficult to understand the second type of "Cuojin" in the form of "Mingzhengancuo" (From a distance, the edge butt joint is neat, but scan carefully it is staggered). It appears in women's auspicious clothes and early casual clothes because the level is lower than the dress and there is no need to wear Shawls. The round neck and large placket will be completely exposed, and the complete design of collar edge and placket edge will play a role. However, due to etiquette considerations, it is necessary to hide as much as possible, "Cuojin" has the style of "Mingzhengancuo". Of course, it will also bring the difficulty of technology. This evidence is reflected in the third kind of "Completely Cuojin". This kind of "Cuojin" mainly appeared in women's casual clothes in the middle and late Qing Dynasty, and gradually became more and more popular. Its rich content and gorgeous decoration reached an unprecedented height. The important thing is that "Completely Cuojin" is almost the standard matching of cloak. Cloak is the basic form of residential clothes and casual clothes among Manchu nobles in the late Qing Dynasty. This shows that "Cuojin" is generated by functional motivation, and the trend towards decoration is based on the needs of ritual system, not decoration itself. Behind it, it is full of the Enlightenment of ritual system and forms the Han isomorphism (Figure 1).

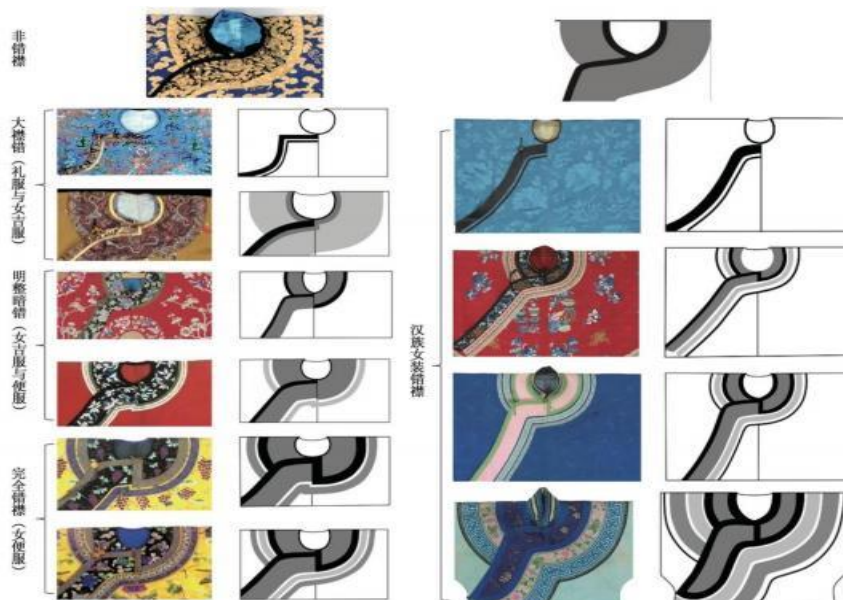


Figure 1. The Isomorphism of Manchu and Han culture with "Cuo Jin"

3. "Cuojin" Form from Prosperity to Decline

A large number of image documents and studies show that Manchu costumes have clear stages. Through the statistical analysis of the objects collected in museums and the publications of collectors at home and abroad, it can be concluded that the form of "Cuojin" began in Daoguang, ended by the early Republic of China, and reached its peak during the Guangxu period. Based on *Classic of the Forbidden City: Outer Garments of the Qing Imperial Consorts* as the unit sample (relatively authoritative), the statistics are shown in the following table: (Table1)

Table 1. Statistics of clothes with "Cuojin" are based on *Classic of the Forbidden City: Outer Garments of the Qing Imperial Consorts*

Dynasty	"Shunjin"	"Cuojin"	Proportion of "Cuojin"
Daoguang	19	2	9%
Yanfeng	6	0	0%
Tongzhi	18	9	33%
Guangxu	4	79	95%

In addition to the lack of specific samples in articles, "Cuojin" first appeared in the Daoguang period, but it did not become the mainstream. The Xianfeng period was a special period, the existence of the material was decreased, which was related to the Eight-Power Allied Forces invasion of Beijing, burning, killing and plunder.

The collections of costumes from the Xianfeng Dynasty in Beijing Palace Museum are less than 100 pieces, which is almost negligible compared to the tens of thousands of pieces in the Palace Museum. (Zhengxiong, 2014) Therefore, the lack of physical evidence in the Xianfeng period has its historical reasons, but it does not mean the interruption of the inheritance of historical objects. It also answered from the main pulse information of the inertia of the development of events in different dynasties. The "Cuojin" in the Tongzhi period accounted for 33.3%. By the reign of Guangxu, the proportion of "Cuojin" was up to 95%, which became the dominant position. During the reign of Xuantong, "Cuojin" decreased sharply again, which was directly related to the social unrest and the general trend of "changing to the court and changing to clothes easily" at that time. However, in the royalist forces, "Cuojin" was still their symbol and became the watershed of the era.



Figure 2. "Cuojin" cloak and cheongsam of the Republic of China

Therefore, it is not difficult to find that the "Cuojin" form generally appeared in the late Qing Dynasty casual clothes, including vest, mandarin jacket, shirt and cloak.

As can be seen from the clothes left over from the Qing Palace in the existing collection of the Imperial Palace, the cloak and shirt were the clothes most frequently worn by the concubines in the Qing palace. However, the two are not from the clothes that in the Qing Dynasty entered the customs. The earliest visible thing in the existing objects is the Daoguang Dynasty. Before Daoguang, the palace casual clothes also retained many characteristics of nomadic clothing, such as emphasizing twisted lapels, horseshoe sleeve thermal function, emphasizing the style of narrow sleeves for easy riding and shooting, etc. After Daoguang [...] The names of cloak and shirt also appeared in the records of the Qing Palace, such as *Work File*. (Yan & Ruifang, 2011).

Thus it can be seen that the appearance time of casual clothes and "Cuojin" form are consistent. It can be inferred that "Cuojin" may be evolved from the formal dress shape of a good front, and "Cuojin" began with Daoguang. Along with the cloaks and shirts, which were the codes that gave rise to the era of desire for casual sociability. The more concise Qipao has replaced the complicated "Cuojin" (Figure 2).

4. The Essence of the "Cuojin" Form Is to Return to Simplicity

According to the research of surviving objects and historical documents shows that "Cuojin" only appear in women's casual clothes, no matter how "Cuojin" shines in women's casual clothes, it has never appeared in higher-level clothes, that is men's clothes, from auspicious clothes to casual clothes. Obviously, this is a Manchu interpretation and expression of the traditional concept of etiquette. In ancient China, the clothing system was perfect and rigorous, which could not exceed the patriarchal ritual system, but this did not mean that it was unreasonable, For example, its universal value coincides with the ritual spirit (introversion principle) of Western clothing gentleman culture:

It's easy for the elements of upper level flow to the lower level, but it should be more cautious when the

lower level elements used for the upper level elements. For example, the elements composed of dresses generally flow smoothly to the regular clothes, while the elements of regular clothes flow much more difficult to the dress. It follows the social principle of 'water flows to the lower level'... The elements of men's clothes flow smoothly to women's clothes, and vice versa. (Ruipu, 2015)

This principle was also popular in the clothing system of the late Qing Dynasty: casual clothes could use "Cuojin" or "Shunjin", while higher-level clothes can only use "Shunjin", and there has never been "Cuojin"; As an element of women's clothing, it cannot be used in men's clothing, but women's clothing can be used freely, which is also recorded in historical materials.

In the *Qing Collected Statutes* and *Imperial ritual vessels*, the wearing systems of formal dress, auspicious dress, regular dress, walking dress and rain dress were recorded and drawn in detail, and the quality, color, form and pattern were all specified in detail, with strict hierarchy and should not be assumed. However, it is also limited to formal dress. Although the materials, colors, patterns and other restrictions are stipulated for casual clothes, the specific clothing shape and system has not been drawn and recorded, and the "Cuojin" shape and system as casual clothes will not be recorded, which shows that its shape and system can be flexible, and also provides space for the development and richness of "Cuojin".



Figure 3. Sample and real winter robe of the Qing Dynasty's Canon painter

It can be said that dress and casual clothes are two different record systems, before the regulations after the craftsman, but this does not mean that the "craftsman" cannot be unscripted, in fact, the traditional craftsman is her true face. We can recognize the craftsmen's mental process of making "wrong lapel" through the process of recording the laws and regulations. To make a court dress, first of all, according to the *Qing Collected Statutes* and *Imperial ritual vessels* as a reference, without violating the etiquette and law system, the painters of Ruyi Pavilion drew small samples according to the requirements of the emperor, empress, concubines and their families.

It is different from ordinary small samples. It only needs to draw the clothing sample and pattern outline. This kind of small sample should also be painted with the required clothing color and the pattern color to be drawn, and at the same time, the size of various parts of the clothing should be marked. Drawing such small samples has almost never been successful. If there is a slight dissatisfaction with the background color, pattern or pattern color, it needs to be redrawn, they won't make do with it at all. Some small samples can only be satisfactory after repeated several or dozens of times. (Fengying, 2004)

Then, these samples were sent by the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Bureau of Weaving and Dyeing. In the process of weaving and embroidering, the craftsmen had to process them meticulously according to the pattern and color of the samples, requiring the semi-finished materials of the ready-made garments to be exactly the same as the samples. The woven material was then transported to the palace, and the office, hat room, sewing room and clothing supervisor under the administration of the Internal Affairs Office were responsible for sewing clothes and articles for the royal staff (Figure 3).

The Qing palace painting samples of gowns, auspicious clothes, regular clothes, walking clothes and rain clothes have all drawn complete style drawings. Among the casual clothes, in addition to the four waistcoats worn by Cixi, there are complete style drawings. The cloak painting samples are now collected by the *RARE BOOKS AND SPECIAL ARCHIVES 15: Pictorial Archives on the Qing Palace Textile and Accessories*. Only one example is a complete style drawing, that is, the "yellow land hundred life cloak sample", However, in the figure, the collar trim is not completely painted. In addition to the widest edge, there is no other sash decoration. Although it does not directly provide the "Cuojin" information, the owner of the "Cloak sample" is extraordinary, because it is an exception for the clothing sample to enter the laws and regulations. Other custom-made cloaks have no drawing samples, just the color patterns and material samples (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Huangdi Baishou cloak sample

The relevant information of cloak material samples may record other secrets of "Cuojin" casual clothes. For example, the cloak material sample has such a record: *Another no.4 Make bright red cloak material with the same pattern*, according to this pattern refers to *No.5 Powder ground hundred butterflies and gardenia cloak material sample*. It is known that two kinds of clothes with the same pattern and different background colors need to be prepared in the end. This operation frequently appears in historical materials, such as *No.44 Make two pieces of moon white cloak material with the same pattern*, *No.45 Make green cloak material with the same pattern*, *No.46 Make moon white cloak material with the same pattern*. In addition, there are also written expressions requiring the same pattern to make the cloak in the canvas and mandarin jacket paintings included in them, such as: *No.78 Make cloak material with the same pattern* and so on, the matching of the same waistcoat and the same cloak appears directly. (Figure 5) These records show that there was a great demand for cloaks in the late Qing Dynasty. In October Twelve years of Tongzhi, *Suzhou weaving Yuxiu was sent to make three sets of Kesi dragon robes, 36 cloaks and 59 shirts, which were sold to 85000 taels of silver* (the First Historical Archives, 2015).

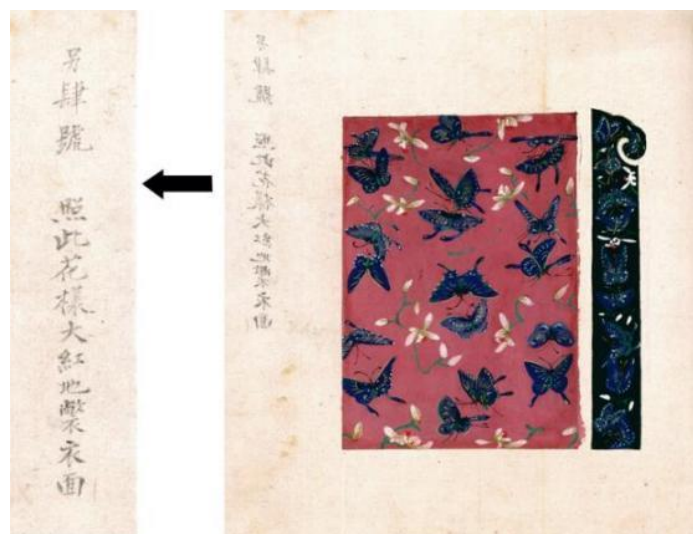


Figure 5. Reflective writing on xuan paper *Sample of 100 Gardenia Cloak Material in Powder Field*

On February 8, the 20th year of Guangxu's reign, I have handed down in the preceding paragraph. There were 87 pieces of dragon robes, coats, shirts, Mandarin coats, tight fitting, which were necessary (the First Historical Archives, 2015). Most of the time, there is no time for one draft of the cloak. In fact, it is more than one draft, and there are only material pattern cases and Ruyi cloud heads. There are no specific requirements for collar details and sleeve details.

Some costumes not only roll the edges, but also use flower tapers to form highly decorative big Ruyi cloud heads at the front, back or left and right of the clothes. These one edge after another and big Ruyi cloud heads are very difficult to sew. It requires not only the craftsman's exquisite sewing technology, but also

the craftsman's high aesthetic ability to make several flower tapers from color to flower Pattern; the configuration is both coordinated and beautiful. (Fengying, 2004)

It can be seen that although there is no specific regulation on "Cuojin" in women's casual clothes, the techniques and skills of final molding and sewing craftsmen have been completely stylized, and the mystery lies in the frugal skill of "complexity outside and simplicity inside". The appearance of the "Cuojin" form neckline covered with tapestry for the first time in the reign of Daoguang may also be related to the wind of thrift and "fine workmanship" at that time.

5. "Cuojin" Has Simple Process and Frugal Skill

The structural analysis of "Cuojin" cloaks may reveal something. In fact, both "Cuojin" and "Shunjin" are related to maintaining the integrity of the collar edge decoration, 180 degrees of the collar edge is the best crack decoration in the front midline, so the collar edge decoration should be broken here. "Shunjin" is forced to leave a narrow gap, as a seam and front edge decoration to complete the grain case. Therefore, "Shunjin" pre-embroidered collar and lapel embroidery pieces must be calculated accurately. In order to better stitching without revealing traces and prevent embroidery breakage, a very narrow seam must be left at the front and middle neckline, and the process flow is also very exquisite. Firstly, the collar edge embroidered piece and the lapel edge embroidered piece are sewed neatly at the opening, and then the whole is sewed at the collar of the main cloth piece. The structural study of the "Shunjin" auspicious clothing shows that the edge embroidered piece completely coincides with the front and middle seams of the main cloth piece. At the same time, the pattern in the back of the collar also limits the alignment of the sewing of the back and middle body. Therefore, the "Shunjin" process requires strict requirements. The silk fabric decorated with embroidered pieces on the edge is slightly less rough, and it will be unusable if it is broken to the embroidery pattern. The embroidery patterns in the front and middle should be alignment, so that there is no trace on the placket, which provides a guarantee for the follow-up process and highlights the highest standard of embroidery and sewing technology. Therefore, it is not difficult to understand why the placket edge decoration is correct, and the placket shape is only used in dresses above auspicious clothes instead of casual clothes. (Figure 6 and Figure 7)



Figure 6. Samples of collar edge embroidery pieces and lapel edge embroidery pieces of Qing auspicious robe

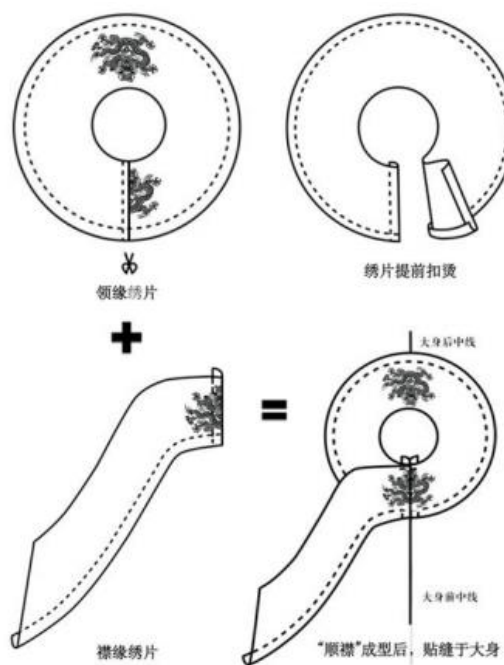


Figure 7. Restoration process of "Shunjin" of collar edge decoration of auspicious robe

From the surface, the process of "Cuojin" seems complicated, but in fact it is easy to simplify complexity. From the research on the structure and technology of typical specimens, it is found that the "Cuojin" is a unique process and fashion of the times based on solving the problem of alignment and stitching between the collar edge and placket edge embroidery pieces. This spirit full of the wisdom of "make the best of an error" completely subverts the mainstream view of extravagant clothing decoration in the late Qing Dynasty. Through

the "Cuojin" structure restoration experiment, it is proved that using the necessary cracks of the collar edge embroidery piece and the "Z" shaped edge decoration cannot only solve the problems of insufficient sewing and difficult craftsmanship, but also guide people from the aesthetics of "neat confrontation" to the aesthetics of "winding path leading to a secluded spot". This is the reason why it is used as a casual language, and the interpretation of its structure and technology will be empirical. First of all, there is no need to match neatly before giving up the front and middle pattern case, and the "Z" shaped edge decoration makes up for the narrow seam, resulting in the scattered changes of the visual center, which also gives researchers the illusion of decorative motivation. This discovery workmanship come from the three "Cuojin" yarn fabric cloaks provided by the collector Wang Jinhua. Because the clothes are single-layer unlined summer casual clothes, and the yarn fabric is sparse and transparent, we can see the process structure of "Cuojin" without damaging cultural relics. The left part of the collar edge is 0.6cm away from the front middle seam, but the "Z" shaped black edge decoration completely covers the rough edge, the right part of the collar edge can be used for the hem curling seam (Figure 8).

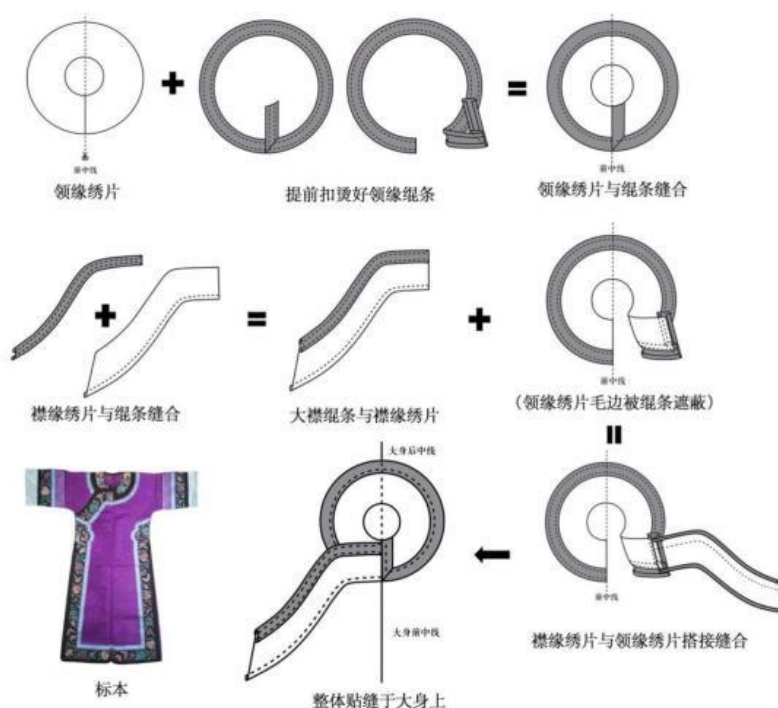


Figure 8. The process of "Cuojin" of collar edge of purple yarn fabric peony round pattern cloak

6. Suggestions for Implementation and Future Research

The shape of "Cuojin" has become a symbolic symbol of the civilian clothes of Manchu noble women in late Qing. The evidence of this conclusion comes from the restoration research and statistical methods of times and object specimens, and the motivation of "Cuojin" has nothing to do with ethics, noble and humble, Manchu and Han culture, or even the times. It is not the style theory of ostentation and extravagance in the late Qing Dynasty. The conclusive evidence of clothes research shows that it is to prolong life of ordinary clothes, lapel edge decoration. The widespread use of collar edge decoration is a prominent expression of the Chinese tradition of "respecting things and advocating thrift" in this era. The seam of the lapel and collar edge is a vivid demonstration of practicing the traditional Chinese scientific concept of learning from facts. In order to connect; we need "neat confrontation" and exquisite craftsmanship. Therefore, there is a "Cuojin": is used for "convenience", not used for "etiquette", and only used by women. During the rule of the Qing Dynasty, The popularity of edge decoration (increasing the service life of the whole garment) is naturally "After Manchu people use it, Han people follow it". The "Cuojin" is not so much the abandonment of the "Shunjin" and the craftsmanship, but rather the method of patchwork (leftover materials at the edges and corners) to make the "Cuojin" look complex. In fact, it is easy to stitch out. In addition to the confirmation of clothes structure restoration, a large number of image documents show that the "Cuojin" shape is only used in non dress, so the "Cuojin" has an educated secret symbol, the improvement of Qipao in the early Republic of

China was the elimination of this decoration.

7. Conclusion

The emergence of "Cuojin" is closely related to the collar edge decoration. The edge decoration is not decoration, but to enhance the strength of vulnerable parts, and the edge decoration should be designed to be replaceable to enhance the service life of the whole garment. The principle is that the collar edge embroidered piece is in the shape of a 360 degree disc, which leads to a remedial method of sewing without sewing, resulting in a variety of "Cuojin". What remains unchanged is that the "Z" shaped edge decoration always exists, because it is the reason for the existence of "Cuojin".

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Acknowledgments

Not applicable.

Authors contributions

Not applicable.

Funding

Not applicable.

Competing interests

Not applicable.

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Canadian Center of Science and Education.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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