

Hanfu Elements in Modern Fashion Design and Innovation

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Abstract

Combining with Chinese traditional Han costumes and modern fashion, this paper expounds the relationship from the aspects of fashion styles, garment structure, patterns, fabrics, etc. And with different concrete examples, every aspect was made a detail analysis to discuss how Hanfu elements are used in modern fashion design, and we may come to a conclusion that traditional Chinese costume culture is an important source of modern fashion design. Accordingly, we carried on a research on modern fashion design, with having important cultural inheritance value and design significance for modern dress.

Keywords: Han costume, elements, modern fashion design, features

1. Introduction

Hanfu, also known as "Hanzhuang" or "Huafu", is namely national costume of Han Chinese people. The concept of Hanfu is distinguished from the broader concept of traditional Chinese clothing. The ancient Chinese called Hanfu as Yiguan. As the ancient Hu people's traditional costume to be known as "Hufu", the Han Chinese traditional dress is referred to as "Hanfu". The succession of Hanfu elements in fashion is called as the fashion localization with Hanfu elements, also known as modern Han-style fashion. To the western fashion, the Han fashion is a kind of charm of Chinese culture to shape fashion. Han fashion does not belong to the types of Hanfu in essence, and it is free creation with no fixed specification requirements, through retaining the verve of Hanfu and drawing lessons from Hanfu characteristics.

Today we talk about Hanfu, which is not to copy Hanfu original elements, or prefer Han costumes with narrow nationalism to the modern clothing. And not only does cultural revivalism and nationalism be no market ; but also we should realize that under the background of modern dress, which is in the emphasis on humanity, diversified, utilitarianism and so on, it is our aim to find the breakthrough and innovations of modern fashion design from thousands of years of spread characteristics of Hanfu.

2. Style Elements

2.1 History and Development

Hanfu, which is said to have been worn by Yellow Emperor, has a history of several millennia. In fact, its commonly assumed that beginnings are in Xia dynasty, from which to Zhou dynasty, the style "upper and lower garment" became the most popular clothing in China. The difference is that the coat has narrow sleeves in Xia and Shang dynasty, but more wide and loose since the Zhou dynasty.

In the Eastern Zhou dynasty, one-piece upper and lower garment appeared, which was up and down connected, and this outfit style represented a new fashion innovation upon the "upper and lower garment" design, which was well known as "Shenyi" and the second ancient of the Chinese dress. Since that time, they have become two basic shapes, and two shapes in China's history of several thousand years are cross - use, and compatible, which have become lots of kinds of styles such as robe, coat, Ru skirts, Beizi, Bijia, cape, scarf, horse-face skirt etc. As a matter of fact, we can make a conclusion about style characteristics as table 1.

All in all, a complete Hanfu garment consists of several pieces of clothing into attire: Yi, Ru, Shan, Qun. Since the Qing dynasty, pants or trousers, called as Ku, and coats named Pao had turned up, which were involved in Hanfu Components.

Table 1. Style characteristics

Component	Characteristics
Upper Garment	Named as "Yi", which have loose lapels and are open
Lower Garment	Skirts called "Shang"
Collars	Diagonally crossing each other, with the left crossing over the right
Sleeves	Generally, long and loose
Buttons	Sparingly used and concealed inside the garment
Fittings	Belts and sashes are used to close, secure, and fit the garments around the waist

2.2 Modern and Fashionable

From Tab.1 and Hanfu actual styles, it is not hard to find there are many superiorities, and for example they wear loose, comfortable whether in summer or winter, and warm in winter and cool in summer. What is more, it represents Chinese traditional history culture, when you wear them.

Therefore, there are many style elements and concepts used in modern fashion or clothes. Actually, the modern skirts are similar to "Shang" in Hanfu, let alone coats, trousers, dress, etc, in nowadays, which are all found basic styles from Hanfu styles. It tells that there is a certain kind of connection between Hanfu and modern fashion concepts. Because of this, there are many modern clothes are fashioned by modern fashion designers. When Chinese First Lady Peng liyuan's first visit to the Netherlands in 2014, the upper garment in her is a double-breasted coat with black peony embroid--ery edging, and the lower garment is a both--side nattier blue pleated skirt. In fact, the coat is originated from Beizi, which began in the Sui and Tang dynasties, popular in the Song and Yuan dynasties, and known as the cloak in the Ming dynasty. The skirt is originated from horse-face dress turned up in the Ming dynasty. And her style of dressing is from the Han woman dressing formats named as "upper Ru, lower skirt" prevailing in the Tang, Song and Ming dynasties. I believe as she had the world's attention, Hanfu will be popular with more and more people over the world.



Figure 1. 2014 Peng Liyuan and Beizi

Maybe, there are some people who do not forget he ceremonial dress in the 2008 Beijing Olympics, which look elegant and charming, and it is quite clear that the style has some Hanfu elements, for example the collars, the symmetrical pieces, the upper and down connected styles, not to mention that the colors and patterns.

And many loose dress and overcoats are popular and on sale in the spring of 2014 in China, which wears casual and comfortable, as we know it is the essence of Hanfu.



Figure 2. Ceremonial dress in the 2008 Beijing Olympics

3. Garment Structure

3.1 Hanfu Traditional Structure

Hanfu is influenced by traditional philosophy "perfect" or "flawless", called as "*Tian yi wu feng*" in Chinese. Garment body often uses a conjoined cutting method. Generally garment body are cut with the front and back pieces, or cut in the back seam on the whole, and then split with collar and hem.

Hem generally adopts the way of oblique cutting. Taking "Shenyi" as an example, which, is through the winding to the body, using a way of "continued the fly and crochet" called as "*Xu ren go bian*" in Chinese. And in this way, the fishtail fringing modelling can be formed because of tension for skirt and garment, and spiral spinning in tension direction. In addition, opening structure are often designed for the collar edge in the upper and lower garments joint position, in order to increase the inner space or make the neck activity free and comfortable.

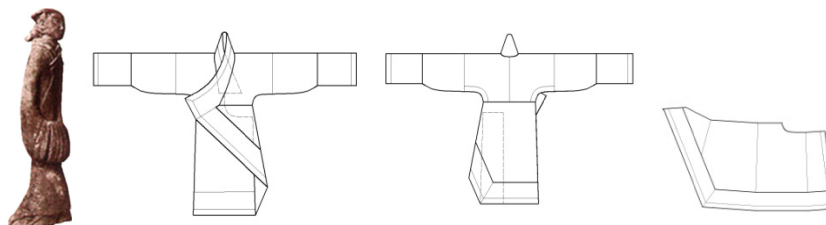


Figure 3. *Qu Ju Shenyi* style and garment structure

3.2 Modern Design

Chinese traditional clothing aesthetic is highly affected by the Confucianism, which think form is common, and metaphysical spirit is the highest realm of beauty. This tells us that we should grasp the good spirit of Hanfu. And accordingly, on the basis of which, not does we combine the Chinese excellent culture with the western design ideas, design styles, fashion trends, but combine the ancient Chinese garment flat cutting way with the west drapping way, and blend western fashion information into the traditional elements in design.

As the leading fashion, women's dress is the most highly respected. Modern women are the new type of women under a new system of combination of the classical temperament and the modern fashionable breath. And in this era of diversification, the embodiment of the "people-oriented" self-consciousness and personality publicity become the standard of design. So the modern women's dress designs pay more attention to the individuation and vogue. Besides traditional clothing constitute elements, there are a variety of modern elements should be used in the modern fashion design, so as to make the concept of Hanfu innovative design be improved, and to ensure Hanfu have the unique charm and vitality. Only when we take thousands of years of Chinese costume culture to a more scientific, rational and personalized territory, can we design the contemporary "Hanfu" full of vitality and suitable for the characteristics of modern women. As shown in figure 4, in 2014 China Fashion Week, which is the most influential fashion cradle and vane in China, the CRZ or SEC style embodies generous free design principle, simple process, which is same to the Hanfu style characteristics.



Figure 4. CRZ and SEC styles in 2014 China Fashion Week

4. Patterns and Colours

Since the Han dynasty, it has become a trend that using the patterns in Hanfu garments, such as animal images, deformed Moiré, Plants, geometric lines, Han character inscription, which give us a kind of beautiful artistic conception of combining false and true, with flow change, especially for stretch flow of moire, free change of animals.

Dragon in the ancient represents a symbol of power, but today, which is a kind of national spirit, and the embroidery drawing in the Buzi and 12 Heraldries are not a representative of the class, but an expression of art. The "Dragon robe" and "Plant patterns" which were dressed by Fan Bingbing in Cannes Festival, became a fashion trend, and she also wore a "crane garment" with Chinese style element content and in Chinese traditional culture, cranes symbolize longevity. Moire application in modern fashion design is also very wide, for example, the shirt moire patterns design for the APEC summit in 2001 with the "flower drum" satin, and the moire design for Ceremonial Dress in the 2008 Beijing Olympics. The auspicious Chinese inscriptions in Hanfu suggest we should consider the traditional auspicious word style, and the era word style which spread the positive energy, the correct values, as an important option of modern women's clothing pattern design. The colour is also no longer on behalf of the different classes, and it makes Modern women's dress colour more diverse.



Figure 5. Fan Bingbing in 2012 Cannes Festival

Nowadays, Chinese red has become an expression of the national spirit, the embodiment of the humanistic feelings, and an important symbol bearing national emotion, and accordingly, Chinese red in modern women's clothing design, has begun to embody Chinese characteristics. In Vera Wang 2013 spring/summer wedding dress show, the west had not only the white wedding dress, but also the red wedding dress, which is no more peculiar to Chinese national colour.



Figure 6. 2001 APEC summit

5. Fabrics and Craft

5.1 Fabrics and Modern Choice

There are a variety of fabrics such as silk, yarn, "Luo", and so on, used as choice in Hanfu garment production process. Modern women's clothing also should choose all kinds of new fabrics rationally, under the premise that dress fabrics are comfortable, in order to meet consumer demand for the fine fabric performance and quality. A kind of new silk fabrics, named the shrink no-iron pure silk, on the basis of the advantage of original pure silk, doesn't need to be ironed after washing, still keeping the size stability, especially suitable for the modern female dress. "Memory fabrics" is quite broad, and doesn't shrink after washing. Pure cotton mercerized fabric is smooth, with the characteristics of silk, and wears comfortable. New hemp fabric has a lot of features like soft, gloss, heat resistant, anti-corrosion, mildew, etc.

5.2 Dyeing Craft and Innovation

Hanfu dyeing process is more mature, and the way of grass, stone dyeing formed in the Han dynasty, that is natural, comfortable, and environmental, conforms to the trend of the times. But traditional dyeing techniques have limitations, the extraction of colour and richness, and the change of the requirements are both behind the times. So the application of modern new colour extraction equipment and dyeing equipment, integrates the traditional dyeing process, make modern women's clothing more colourful, while environmental as far as possible in the process and structure.

Application of modern digital printing technology has become the popular trend of fashion, and application of new type of computer technology and digital textile technology in modern women's fabric design can show the results of Chinese traditional craft: as shown in figure 7, the use of digital colour weaving technology, make landscape painting, figure painting can be directly weaved on the silk fabrics, and traditional tie-dye patterns combined with modern technology come true, and it changes the way the traditional tie-dye patterns, with computer digital printing technology reflecting the traditional techniques (such as tie-dyeing).

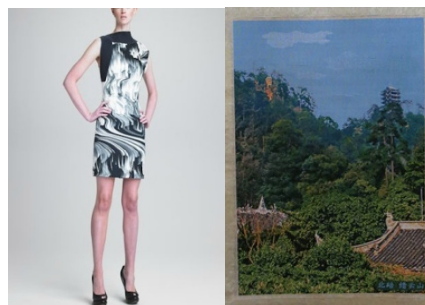


Figure 7. Digital textile technology and digital printing technology

6. Conclusion

Since the new century, there has been innovation in competition in every field, and development in innovation, and the same is true for modern fashion design. Look around the world, many countries now have their own

national dress as a symbol of identity. Hanfu as symbolic traditional clothing in China, so through the above analysis, the characteristics of Hanfu, and mining good design ideas and elements from traditional Chinese costumes, it will provide innovation and opportunity for the modern women's dress design, and has a role in promoting rapid and sound development of modern women's clothing industry.

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