

The Integration and Innovation of Shanxi's Intangible Cultural Heritages of Arts and Crafts and Modern Fashion Designs

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Abstract: Traditional Chinese cultures are formed along the line of social development and reflect the developing situations of this aspect. The artistic concepts and charms of the intangible cultural heritages of arts and crafts in China strongly signify the history and cultures accumulated throughout 5000 years. The fashion design industry is currently confronted with a bottleneck due to the continuous development of social economy; hence, its development has been restricted to a certain extent. In regard to that, the related sectors in Shanxi emphasized on the integration and innovation of intangible cultural heritages of arts and crafts with modern fashion designs to lay the foundation for creation of modern arts. Therefore, this paper expounds the relationship between the intangible cultural heritages of arts and crafts and modern fashion design in addition to the significance and strategies for their integration.

Keywords: Shanxi; Intangible cultural heritage of arts and crafts; Modern fashion design; Integration and innovation

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1. Introduction

China's traditional arts and crafts are basic cultural aspects which are formed along with social development. Due to continuous historical changes, it has undergone certain modifications which has affected its development; however, its' essence has never been affected. Therefore, by integrating the intangible cultural heritages of arts and crafts into modern fashion design, its' essence would be prominently demonstrated. In this way, Chinese traditional cultures would be inherited and passed down which would eventually promote the sustainable development of China's fashion design industry.

2. Relationship of Shanxi's Intangible Cultural Heritages of Arts and Crafts and Modern Fashion Designs

The demands for fashion have escalated in view of the continuous improvement of social and economic status in addition to the change in modern-day concepts; from desiring practicality to aesthetics.^[1] Moreover, the focus of fashion designers for clothing has changed.

In order to integrate aesthetic characteristics of traditional Chinese cultures as well as to recognize the purpose of inheriting and carrying forward these excellent cultures, designers are obliged to constantly learn the history and cultures of China. Hence, they would be able to genuinely understand historical designs, reexamine traditional arts and crafts, and comprehend the traditional Chinese arts and crafts connotations in order to establish a more effective fashion design system that could link the two aspects together.

With that, fashion designers would then be able to integrate the elements of traditional cultures into their designs accordingly. This allows their fashions to be in accord with the current style while enhancing the aesthetics of traditional cultures to meet the demands of the people.

Shanxi's intangible cultural heritages of traditional arts and crafts developed from folk arts and crafts. Their fundamental essence is the reality of life which involves certain cultural values and social heritages. To a certain extent, they are also in line with the modern peoples' taste which is the fundamental pursuit of the Oriental philosophy in the development process. Modern fashion designs are art forms to attain economic benefits. However, they need to be in line with peoples' taste and the traditional Chinese culture to enhance the sense of cultural identity. There is a need for fashion designers to inherit traditional cultures while creating and developing their designs so that their projects would be in line with peoples' taste. Their designs will then be accepted by more people; thus, defining the actual purpose of fashion designing. Traditional arts and crafts have aesthetic characteristics while modern fashion designs condone practicality. The integration of the two would fulfil both practicality and the aesthetic sense; hence, enlightening the fashion design industry. Integrating traditional cultures into fashion designs and innovating them allow traditional cultures to glow with a new light. Traditional arts and crafts cultures can travel across time and space. In short, they provide opportunities for building connections and encourage interactions between designers in advocating the perpetuation of traditional cultures.

3. Significance of Integration and Innovation

There are two main factors that have influenced the traditional Chinese arts and crafts in fashion designs which are, colors and patterns. The colors in traditional Chinese arts and crafts have unique artistry and aesthetics. Among the traditional people, colors symbolized status and an individual's personality which would reveal their perspectives on the society. Back then, colors also reflected the strong hierarchical divisions in the society and social superiority or inferiority. The highly sensitive nature of colors is illustrated in these contexts. For example, bright yellow could only be used by emperors which reflected their supreme rights. In the case whereby that color is used among commoners, it meant that they have overstepped the emperor's authority. On the other hand, black represented heaven which differs from modern times. When traditional concepts of colors are reasonably applied in the current society, they are able to create unique aesthetic styles and feelings. Moreover, the use of the traditional culture color matching skills in modern fashion designs would strengthen the appeal of current designs in addition to adding vibrancy to them.

Traditional Chinese arts and crafts patterns have symmetrical characteristics which reflect their balance. Most of the traditional cultural patterns are composed of circles and curves. Order amidst disorder may reflect their actual beauty and provide people with abundant aesthetic experiences. These traditional patterns do not only have rich cultural connotations but also, a variety of creative values in view of the cultural backgrounds. Modern fashion designers can innovate and develop traditional culture patterns, transform traditional culture designs into patterns, as well as extract patterns to use them as separate entities. These would benefit in the integration of the modern and traditional culture. In that case, fashion designs with rich traditional culture connotations will be able to draw peoples' attention and boost the growth of the fashion design industry.

4. Strategies for Integration and Innovation

4.1. Basics of innovation and integration

Fashion designs should always be innovated along with the demands and development trends of the society so that the industry is in line with the current development status of social science, technology, and economy.^[3] At present, peoples' lives are constantly evolving; hence, their demands for fashion designs are also changing. Fashion designers should improve their innovative approach to conform with the social development trends in order to excel in the resource market as well as to cope with the rapid economic

growth and cultural obligations. The integration of Shanxi's intangible cultural arts forms in fashion designs requires changes in the context of form and content which will be reflected in the garments' structure, color, and decoration. In terms of structure, innovations are needed to its form, and the changes made should be highlighted. Other than that, color matching should also be utilized in its innovation. The use of Shanxi's papercut, embroidery, and some other materials should be integrated to create decorations. A new fashion style can then be created by controlling various aspects in a piece of clothing yet in consideration of the whole garment.

4.2. Innovation and integration in practical sense

Shanxi's intangible cultural heritages of arts and crafts work, "Ci • Qing" is used as an example in this paper to analyze fashion designs. "Ci • Qing" is one of the traditional cultural skill works in Shanxi which has a long historical background. It originated and developed in the Tang and Song Dynasties. Then, introduced to Shanxi in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. It had profound impact on the local aesthetics then. This handicraft was demonstrated in cotton weaving with the combination of the ten-stitch method and one stitch method. The simple arrangements of patterns with various alternating patterns appearing reflected the exquisite local craftsmanship. Its strong artistic air as well as the eco-friendly materials used laid solid foundations for cultural development and influenced the growth of the local fashion industry, respectively. The embroideries in "Ci • Qing" have certain national characteristics and is emphasized on this unique craft. In the process of inheritance and recreation of traditional cultures, a few designers had used simple arts and crafts. They also applied the meticulous composition skills of the traditional culture in creating new crafts with more distinctive features. Using the characteristics of "Ci • Qing" as their source of inspiration, modern fashion designers utilized cotton and hemp cloth, as well as natural materials for dyes and embroidery threads. They also integrated scenic views found in traditional crafts with their pattern selections. Hence, they were able to create excellent garments to meet the demands of current social development through embroidery, stitching, and other ways of three-dimensional tailoring.

Garments made by this kind of craft have the characteristics of nature. They are usually made and designed by splicing which preserves the symmetrical aspects in traditional arts and crafts. These designs are generally simple yet elegant. The combination of traditional and modern characteristics would exhibit the unique aesthetics of modern-day women. Considering that color selections are bold with sharp contrasts, the rhythm and coordination of a certain garment would then be enhanced. This type of fashion has strong cultural heritages and reflects the inheritance of Shanxi's intangible cultural heritages of arts and crafts.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, Shanxi has a long development history with impressive cultural heritages. Under the influence of historical development, cultural arts and crafts at this present time are treasures of the modern-day arts which have significant impacts on social development. Therefore, the integration of traditional arts and crafts into modern fashion designs would benefit in the development of the fashion design industry.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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