

Article

Research on Folk Art Design of Manchu Decorative Patterns: From Historical Inheritance to Modern Innovation

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Abstract: This study focuses on the folk art design of Manchu decorative motifs in China, exploring their relationship with ancestors, neighbouring regions and the universe, and revealing their visual presentation laws and cultural and social values through textual interpretation and dissection. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods, the study analyses the historical and cultural background of Manchu decorative motifs and their transmutation in contemporary culture, with the aim of systematically collating and researching outstanding folk art design culture, and refining the design laws and wisdom with Chinese characteristics, in order to develop and enhance the level of Chinese design, and to strengthen the soft power of culture.

Keywords: Chinese Manchu; decorative motifs; folk art design; history; value; heritage

1. Introduction

The establishment of the discipline of Chinese art and design and the discipline of Chinese art and design history has opened the way to re-examine and summarise the design culture of the Chinese nation. As a treasure in China's multicultural system, Manchu culture, with its excellent folk art elements, is an important guide and reference for contemporary design. This study aims to explore the inner logic and value of Manchu decorative motifs through in-depth research, so as to provide theoretical basis and practical guidance for modern design.

2. Historical and Cultural Background of Manchu Decorative Patterns

2.1. Overview of Manchu Culture

The Manchu were once the rulers of the Qing Dynasty, the feudal king of China, and their culture has an important position in Chinese history. The Manchu culture has fused the cultural elements of the northern nomads and the Han Chinese in the central plains, forming a unique cultural system. Manchu folk art, especially decorative patterns, reflects its rich historical and cultural connotations [1].

2.2. Historical Development of Manchu Decorative Patterns

The development of Manchu decorative patterns has gone through many stages, from early totem worship to later auspicious symbolism, and these patterns are not only decorative, but also carry deep cultural significance. For example, the cloud and dragon patterns of the Manchu not only reflect the reverence for nature, but also symbolise power and good fortune.

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3. The Visual Presentation Laws of Manchu Decorative Patterns

The visual presentation laws of Manchu decorative patterns are the core of their folk art design, which not only reflect the aesthetic concepts of the Manchu people, but also reflect their deep cultural heritage and historical inheritance. Through the in-depth study of these patterns, we can reveal their unique laws in composition, colour application, pattern subject matter, etc., which can provide rich creative inspiration and theoretical basis for modern design [2].

3.1. Laws of Compositional Form

Manchu decorative patterns often use symmetrical or balanced forms in the composition, which gives people a sense of stability and harmony. Symmetrical composition is especially common in Manchu decorative patterns, especially in costumes, artifacts and architectural decoration. For example, the front lapel and cuffs of traditional Manchu costumes often use symmetrical pattern designs, showing a strict sense of order and symmetry [3]. Balanced composition, on the other hand, achieves visual balance and harmony through the arrangement of asymmetrical elements. This kind of composition is also more common in Manchu decorative patterns, especially in some complex pattern designs. For example, in Manchu screens and murals, balanced compositions are often used to make the whole picture both varied and balanced through clever arrangement of elements.

3.2. The Law of Colour Application

Manchu decorative patterns have distinctive characteristics in terms of colour, often using red, yellow, blue, green and other bright colours to form a strong visual impact. Red symbolises passion and good luck, yellow represents dignity and sanctity, blue signifies tranquillity and profoundness, and green symbolises life and hope. These colour combinations not only reflect the aesthetic taste of the Manchu people, but also convey specific cultural connotations. For example, in the traditional costumes of the Manchu people, the combination of red and yellow is often used to show the love of life and the desire for a better future.

3.3. Patterns of the Law of the Subject Matter

Animal motifs occupy an important position in Manchu decorative motifs, and common animal motifs include dragons, phoenixes, tigers, deer, fish and so on. These animal motifs are not only decorative, but also have rich symbolic meaning. For example, the dragon pattern symbolises power and good luck and is often used in the decoration of royal articles and religious ceremonies; the phoenix pattern symbolises beauty and good luck, and is often used in the decoration of weddings and festivals. Plant motifs are also important subjects of Manchu decorative motifs, and common plant motifs include peony, lotus, pine, bamboo and plum. These plant motifs not only have ornamental value, but also contain rich symbolic meaning. For example, peony symbolises wealth and good fortune and is often used in the decoration of costumes and artifacts; lotus flower symbolises purity and elegance and is often used in the decoration of religious ceremonies and art works [2-3].

3.4. Symbolism of Patterns

The symbolism of Manchu decorative motifs is rich, covering many aspects such as ancestor worship, nature worship and religious beliefs. For example, the dragon pattern symbolises power and good luck, and the cloud pattern represents the fear and worship of nature. These symbolisms not only reflect the cultural beliefs of the Manchu people, but also reflect their reverence for nature and the universe. Through the in-depth study of these symbolisms, the cultural connotation and artistic value of Manchu decorative patterns can be better understood.

3.5. Evolution and Innovation of Patterns

The Manchu decorative patterns have undergone many evolutions and innovations in the process of historical development, which not only reflect the inheritance and development of Manchu culture, but also reflect its exchange and integration with other cultures. For example, after the Manchus dominated the Central Plains and established the Qing Dynasty, their decorative patterns were further developed in the exchange and fusion with the Han culture, presenting diversified characteristics. Through the in-depth study of these evolutions and innovations, the development law and artistic characteristics of Manchu decorative patterns can be better understood.

3.6. Modern Application of Patterns

Manchu decorative patterns have been widely used in contemporary culture, and these applications not only reflect the inheritance and development of Manchu culture, but also provide a wealth of creative inspiration for modern design. For example, the application of Manchu decorative patterns in modern product design, such as clothing, home furnishings, packaging design, etc., not only protects the cultural heritage, but also adds unique cultural elements to modern design. Through in-depth study of these modern applications, the modern value and application prospects of Manchu decorative patterns can be better understood.

3.7. Protection and Inheritance of Patterns

The protection and inheritance of Manchu decorative patterns is an important task facing us at present, and through the protection and inheritance of these patterns, we can better protect and promote Manchu culture. For example, through education and training, the public's knowledge and understanding of Manchu decorative motifs can be improved; through policy support and financial investment, Manchu decorative motifs can be protected and inherited; and through digital protection and dissemination, the effect of protection and inheritance of Manchu decorative motifs can be improved. Through in-depth study of these protection and inheritance measures, the significance and methods of protection and inheritance of Manchu decorative patterns can be better understood.

4. Transformation of Manchu decorative patterns in contemporary culture

Manchu decorative motifs have undergone remarkable transmutation in contemporary culture, which is not only reflected in the dissemination and application scope of the motifs, but also in their integration with modern design concepts and technologies. The following three aspects are analysed from design concept and innovation, technical means and innovation, market environment and innovation.

4.1. Design Concept and Innovation

In the contemporary design concept, the Manchu decorative pattern is no longer just a symbol of traditional culture but has become a design element with modern aesthetic value [4]. Designers combine Manchu decorative patterns with modern design concepts to create works that have traditional cultural connotations and meet modern aesthetic needs. For example, in modern clothing design, designers combine the traditional patterns of the Manchu people with modern fashion elements to create clothing styles that are both ethnically distinctive and in line with contemporary trends. The innovation of this design concept not only gives new life to Manchu decorative patterns in modern society, but also provides a possibility for its dissemination on the international stage.

4.2. *Technical Means and Innovation*

With the continuous progress of science and technology, the production and dissemination of Manchu decorative patterns have also undergone significant changes. The application of digital technology makes the preservation and dissemination of Manchu decorative patterns more convenient and efficient. For example, through three-dimensional scanning and modelling technology, Manchu decorative patterns can be accurately digitised so that they can be displayed and disseminated in a virtual environment. In addition, artificial intelligence technology has also been applied to the design of Manchu decorative patterns to create new pattern designs by analysing and generating traditional patterns, providing new possibilities for the innovation of Manchu decorative patterns.

4.3. *Market Environment and Innovation*

Under the impetus of market economy, the application scope of Manchu decorative patterns has been expanding, and the figure of Manchu decorative patterns can be seen from traditional costumes and artefacts to modern household articles and electronic products. This change in the market environment provides a broad space for the innovation of Manchu decorative patterns. For example, in modern home design, designers apply Manchu decorative patterns to furniture, lamps and other products to create modern home furnishings with traditional cultural connotations. This kind of innovation in the market environment not only makes Manchu decorative patterns widely used in modern society, but also provides a possibility for their promotion in the international market.

5. **Protection and Inheritance of Manchu Decorative Patterns**

As a treasure of Chinese folk art, Manchu decorative patterns carry rich historical and cultural connotations and unique artistic value. However, with the acceleration of the modernisation process, these precious cultural heritages are facing the inheritance dilemma. In order to protect and pass on the Manchu decorative patterns, it is necessary to take comprehensive measures starting from various aspects such as education, policy support, digital protection and dissemination.

5.1. *Education and Training*

Education is an important means to protect and pass on Manchu decorative patterns. By adding the content of Manchu decorative patterns in school education, students' national pride and cultural identity can be cultivated. For example, the teaching content of Manchu decorative patterns can be added to the art curriculum so that students can understand its history, culture and artistic value. In addition, the production techniques and design concepts of Manchu decorative patterns can be taught to the public through training courses and workshops, so as to cultivate a group of inheritance talents who love Manchu culture.

5.2. *Policy Support and Financial Input*

Government policy support and financial input is an important guarantee for the protection and inheritance of Manchu decorative patterns. The government can introduce relevant policies to give policy support to the protection and inheritance of Manchu decorative patterns. For example, it can formulate tax incentives to encourage enterprises to invest in the development of Manchu cultural industry; set up special protection funds to give financial support to the inheritance projects and research topics of Manchu decorative patterns. In addition, it can also support social organisations and enterprises to carry out the protection and inheritance of Manchu decorative patterns through the form of government purchasing services [5].

5.3. Digital Protection and Dissemination

The application of digital technology provides new means for the protection and dissemination of Manchu decorative patterns. By digitally collecting, arranging and preserving Manchu decorative patterns, a digital database can be established to facilitate inheritance and research. For example, Manchu decorative patterns can be accurately digitised through three-dimensional scanning and modelling technology, allowing them to be displayed and disseminated in a virtual environment [6]. In addition, the cultural connotation and artistic value of Manchu decorative patterns can be widely disseminated through Internet platforms, social media and other channels to increase public awareness and attention.

5.4. Cultural Creative Product Development

Developing cultural creative products with the theme of Manchu decorative patterns is an important way to protect and inherit Manchu decorative patterns. By applying Manchu decorative patterns to modern product design, such as clothing, household goods, packaging design, etc., it can not only protect cultural heritage, but also add unique cultural elements to modern design. For example, by applying Manchu decorative patterns to modern clothing design, we can create clothing styles with national characteristics and in line with contemporary trends, which are loved by consumers. In addition, you can also develop stationery, ornaments, handicrafts and other cultural creative products with the theme of Manchu decorative patterns, so as to make them an important carrier for spreading Manchu culture.

5.5. Cultural Tourism and Festivals

By organising cultural tourism and festivals, the public's awareness of and attention to Manchu decorative patterns can be improved. For example, activities such as Manchu Culture and Art Festival and Exhibition of Manchu Decorative Patterns can be held to show the artistic charm and cultural connotation of Manchu decorative patterns. In addition, tourism routes and tourism products with the theme of Manchu decorative patterns can be developed to attract tourists to visit and experience, and promote the dissemination and inheritance of Manchu culture.

5.6. Community Participation and Cooperation

Community participation is an important foundation for the protection and inheritance of Manchu decorative patterns. By organising community residents to participate in the production and inheritance activities of Manchu decorative patterns, the cultural identity and sense of belonging of community residents can be enhanced. For example, a Manchu decorative pattern inheritance association can be set up to organise community residents to learn and make Manchu decorative patterns and carry out inheritance activities. In addition, it can also cooperate with cultural institutions and enterprises to jointly carry out the protection and inheritance of Manchu decorative patterns, forming a good situation of joint participation by the whole society.

5.7. International Exchange and Cooperation

Through international exchanges and cooperation, the international influence of Manchu decorative patterns can be improved. For example, international exhibitions and exchanges of Manchu decorative patterns can be organised to show the unique charm of Manchu culture to the world. In addition, it can also cooperate with international cultural institutions and artists to carry out the creation and research of Manchu decorative patterns and promote the international dissemination and exchange of Manchu culture.

5.8. Cultivation and Support of Inheritors

The training and support of inheritors is the key to the protection and inheritance of Manchu decorative patterns. The inheritance and development of Manchu decorative patterns can be ensured by training a group of inheritors who love Manchu culture. For example, a training programme for inheritors can be set up to provide them with opportunities for learning and practice and to support them in their inheritance activities. In addition, the inheritors can be encouraged to actively devote themselves to the protection and inheritance of Manchu decorative patterns by means of commendations and rewards.

5.9. Formulation and Implementation of Laws and Regulations

The formulation and implementation of laws and regulations is an important guarantee for the protection and inheritance of Manchu decorative patterns. The government can formulate relevant laws and regulations to give legal support to the protection and inheritance of Manchu decorative patterns. For example, it can formulate the law on the protection of intangible cultural heritage, clarify the protection scope and measures of Manchu decorative patterns, and strengthen the fight against infringement. In addition, publicity and education on laws and regulations can be used to raise public awareness of protection and law.

5.10. Protection and Restoration of Cultural Ecology

The protection and restoration of cultural ecology is an important foundation for the protection and inheritance of Manchu decorative patterns. By protecting and repairing the cultural ecology of Manchu decorative patterns, it can provide good conditions for their inheritance and development. For example, the cultural heritage of Manchu settlements, such as ancient buildings and traditional villages, can be protected and restored to provide a material basis for the inheritance of Manchu decorative patterns. In addition, a good natural environment can be provided for the inheritance and development of Manchu decorative patterns through the protection and restoration of the ecological environment.

6. Conclusion

Through the in-depth study of Manchu decorative patterns, we have not only revealed its rich historical and cultural connotations, but also explored its inheritance and innovation in contemporary culture. As a treasure of Chinese folk art, Manchu decorative patterns have important cultural and social values. Through measures such as education, policy support and digital protection, Manchu decorative motifs can be effectively protected and inherited, providing rich creative inspiration for modern design and promoting cultural innovation and development. Future research should further deepen the understanding of Manchu decorative motifs and explore their application in more fields to promote cultural diversity and prosperity.

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