

# The Artistic Characteristics and Cultural Connotation of Manchu Traditional Clothing

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## Abstract

As one of the treasures of Chinese culture, Manchu traditional clothing has rich artistic characteristics and profound cultural connotation. As an important part of Chinese culture, traditional Manchu costumes not only show unique charm in artistic features, but also carry profound cultural connotation. As an important part of Chinese traditional culture, Manchu traditional clothing has rich artistic characteristics and unique cultural connotation. This paper aims to explore the artistic characteristics, cultural connotation and significance to Manchu traditional culture through the study of Manchu traditional clothing. Through the analysis of Manchu traditional clothing, we can better understand the unique features of Manchu culture.

**Keywords:** Manchu Traditional Clothing, Artistic Features, Cultural Connotation, Color, Tailoring

## Introduction

### *History and status of Manchu traditional costumes*

Traditional Manchu clothing is one of the treasures of Chinese culture. Its long history, unique design and rich cultural connotation make it occupy an important position in traditional Chinese clothing. Originating in the Qing Dynasty, traditional Manchu costumes have gradually evolved and developed in the long river of history. After the establishment of the Qing Dynasty, Manchu region became the political center of Manchu, and Manchu traditional costumes were formed and influenced by Han culture. During the evolution of the dress, the Manchu traditional dress absorbed elements from different historical periods and formed a unique style. The elements of clothing include headgear, blouse and dress, etc. Different elements carry rich social information, such as individual identity, social status and

marital status. The Manchu traditional dress varies in certain regions, and the climate and cultural traditions of different regions affect the design and style of the dress. However, such regional differences also make the Manchu traditional clothing show its unique charm in the diversity. In Manchu culture, the status of traditional costumes is not only reflected in daily life, but also manifested in important occasions such as weddings and festivals. Through the patterns, colors and other elements on the costumes, they convey the Manchu people's understanding of history, religious beliefs and social customs, and carry profound cultural connotations. Although there are more diversified ways of dressing in modern society, traditional Manchu costumes are still passed down and displayed on special occasions. Some designers and culture lovers have also incorporated traditional Manchu elements into modern clothing design, making traditional clothing breathe new life in the contemporary era.

#### *Development process of Manchu traditional clothing*

Traditional Manchu clothing has a long history, and its development process runs through many periods. During the Qing Dynasty, Manchu costumes gradually developed into a unique style and were further developed in Manchuria, its political center. With the evolution of history, the costumes experienced different influences of The Times, including the absorption and integration of Han culture, to form traditional costumes with unique Manchu characteristics.

#### The purpose of studying the artistic characteristics of Manchu clothing

The research on the artistic characteristics of Manchu clothing is also helpful to promote cultural innovation. The combination of tradition and modernity is one of the important directions of cultural inheritance. Through an in-depth understanding of the artistic characteristics of traditional Manchu costumes, we can integrate traditional elements into modern designs and create new types of costumes that both have traditional charm and conform to contemporary aesthetics. This helps the traditional culture to glow with new vitality in the contemporary society and promote the innovation and development of culture. In general, the study of the artistic characteristics of Manchu clothing aims to deepen the understanding of its aesthetic, cultural and innovative value, and provide a useful reference for the inheritance and development of traditional culture. Through this research, we can better pay attention to and protect the precious cultural heritage of Manchu traditional costumes.

#### **Literature Review**

##### *Definition and evolution of Manchu traditional clothing.*

Traditional Manchu clothing is a unique dress culture created and developed by the Manchu people in the historical evolution, which reflects their pursuit of beauty, symbol of social status and inheritance of traditional values. With the passage of history, traditional Manchu clothing has undergone many evolutions. During the Qing Dynasty, Manchu traditional costumes were influenced by Han culture and gradually incorporated more elements, forming a unique mixed style. However, even in the process of evolution, traditional costumes still retained their uniqueness and were passed down from one era to another. As the carrier of culture, traditional Manchu costumes not only have aesthetic uniqueness, but also carry rich social and cultural connotations. Its evolution process is not only the continuation of the tradition, but also the inheritance and innovation of contemporary society, aesthetic concepts and cultural values. Through an in-depth

understanding of the definition and evolution of Manchu traditional clothing, we can more comprehensively grasp this rich and colorful cultural heritage.

*The preliminary study on the artistic characteristics of Manchu traditional costumes*

Manchu traditional clothing is an important part of Chinese traditional clothing, with unique artistic characteristics and cultural connotation. By observing and comparing the patterns, colors, cuts and fabrics of traditional Manchu costumes, the researchers summarized the unique features of Manchu costumes. For example, traditional Manchu clothing usually uses bright colors and fine embroidery, showing the Manchu people's love and pursuit of life. As cultural symbols, traditional Manchu costumes carry rich symbolic meanings. Researchers have revealed the values and traditional beliefs of Manchu culture through the interpretation of the patterns and patterns used in Manchu clothing. For example, dragon and phoenix, birds and animals, flowers and plants in Manchu clothing often have auspicious and auspicious meanings, reflecting the Manchu people's yearning and prayer for a better life. The design and production of traditional Manchu clothing are often influenced by local natural resources and lifestyle. Early researchers observed and analyzed the changes in material selection, craft skills and style design of traditional Manchu clothing, and deeply discussed the close relationship between clothing and natural environment and living customs.

*Review of relevant literature on the cultural connotation of Manchu traditional clothing*

As an important part of Chinese traditional culture, Manchu traditional clothing has rich cultural connotation. In the relevant literature review, many scholars have deeply studied the artistic characteristics and cultural significance of Manchu traditional costumes. According to the literature, traditional Manchu costumes reflect the historical, regional and social identity of the Manchu people. Some studies have pointed out that traditional Manchu clothing expresses the unique aesthetics of the Manchu people through patterns, colors and ornamentation. These costumes are not only decorative, but also rich in symbolic meanings, such as marriage, ceremony and religion. The literature also points out that traditional Manchu costumes play an important role in social communication and cultural inheritance, carrying the Manchu people's identification and inheritance of traditional culture. In addition, some literature reviews also explore the development and protection of Manchu traditional costumes in modern society. With the changes of society, traditional Manchu costumes are facing new challenges and threats. Therefore, some scholars have called for strengthening the protection and inheritance of traditional Manchu costumes to maintain their unique cultural charm.

*Artistic characteristics of Manchu traditional costumes*

*Common colors and symbolic meanings*

The common colors of Manchu traditional clothing carry deep symbolic meanings, reflecting culture, beliefs and social roles. Red is the most prominent color in traditional Manchu costumes, symbolizing prosperity, happiness and auspiciity. It is often used in weddings and important celebrations, symbolizing a bright future and family unity. Blue represents freshness, purity and tranquility, and is usually used in some important ceremonies or solemn occasions to express the yearning for a pure and beautiful life. Yellow symbolizes the harvest and richness of the land, and is commonly seen in farming activities, representing the expectation of a good harvest and a stable life.

White symbolizes nobility and auspiciousness; Red, stone blue, blue and other "normal colors" symbolize wealth and modesty; Purplish red, rose purple, lake blue, etc., symbolize solemn and strong; Yellow, a symbol of ruling power, sacred and inviolable, is the color of nobility<sup>[1]</sup>. The clever use of these colors not only makes the clothing more attractive in aesthetic, but also conveys the profound connotation of Manchu culture through color, adding unique cultural charm to traditional clothing.

### *The application of color in clothing*

The use of color in Manchu traditional clothing is full of artistic sense and cultural connotation. Red is commonly seen in traditional Manchu costumes, representing prosperity, happiness and auspiciousness. It is especially widely used on festive occasions such as weddings to convey the hope for a better future. Green usually represents nature, vitality and health, and is commonly seen in spring or important ceremony clothing, implying vitality of life. Yellow is often seen in harvest and sacrificial occasions, symbolizing the richness of the land and people's yearning for a better life. Blue represents freshness, tranquility and purity, and is often used in some formal ceremonial costumes to express the pursuit of pure beauty. The use of these colors not only makes the traditional Manchu costumes have a unique beauty in appearance, but also conveys culture, beliefs and social values through profound symbolic meanings, and infuses profound cultural connotations into the costumes. This paper interprets the cultural connotation of the color and pattern of Manchu costume pattern embroidery from the perspective of national customs<sup>[2]</sup>.

### *Craft charm of tailoring and design*

#### *Characteristics of traditional cutting and design*

The tailoring and design of Manchu traditional clothing show unique artistic characteristics. First of all, tailoring pays attention to smooth lines and curvy beauty and emphasizes the display of body curves, which reflects the Manchu people's aesthetic pursuit of soft and graceful women. Delicate embroidery and decoration are often used in the cuffs and necklines of traditional clothing, demonstrating exquisite handicraft skills. Secondly, the design pays attention to the use of patterns, usually using rich meaning patterns, such as dragons, phoenixes, flowers and birds, etc. These patterns into the clothing, not only enrich the decorative effect, but also contain cultural, religious and historical symbolic significance. The tailoring of Manchu traditional clothing pays attention to curves, and the design emphasizes the matching of patterns and colors, which fully reflects the Manchu culture's pursuit of beauty and its cherishing of traditional crafts.

### *The influence of crafts on body curves*

The traditional Manchu clothing craft has a profound influence on the exquisite design of body curves. Craftsmen pay attention to the consideration of body curves through unique cutting techniques, so that the clothes can better fit the curves of the human body and highlight the soft beauty of women. Pouch, gown and other garments are carefully designed from the waist, chest and cuff, emphasizing the curve of the waist line and the arm, creating a smooth curving feeling for the body. At the same time, through ingenious embroidery and decoration, craftsmen created a variety of unique patterns on the clothing, such as waist belt and neckline decoration, which further highlighted the beauty of the body curve. These exquisite crafts not only make the traditional clothing more elegant and charming in appearance, but also show the deep understanding of the feminine beauty of the traditional

Manchu clothing through the careful presentation of the body curves, making the wearer show a confident and graceful charm in the clothing.

### *Cultural implication of patterns*

#### *Common patterns and their cultural background*

The common patterns in Manchu traditional clothing carry a profound cultural background and reflect the Manchu people's understanding of history, beliefs and traditional values. Dragons, phoenixes, flowers and birds are common pattern elements. Dragon, symbolizing imperial power, power and honor, is an auspicious object in Chinese culture and is commonly seen in the Manchu royal dress, representing the symbol of imperial power. Phoenix represents auspiciousness, beauty and happiness, and is often seen in wedding costumes, implying a good marriage life. Flower and bird patterns express the love for nature and yearning for life, such as plum blossoms, pine trees and so on are commonly seen in Manchu clothing, implying toughness and longevity. Butterflies represent happiness, freedom and a bright future, and are commonly seen in children's clothing, implying joy and happiness of the family. These patterns not only enrich the appearance of clothing in decoration, but also convey the Manchu people's understanding of life, nature and society through profound cultural connotations, becoming an important symbol of traditional culture. From the perspective of Manchu women's clothing patterns, this paper summarizes the law of traditional clothing patterns and the rule of formal beauty, which provides effective reference value for designers to learn from Manchu clothing embroidery patterns<sup>[3]</sup>.

#### *Layout and combination of patterns in clothing*

The layout and combination of Manchu traditional clothing patterns in clothing presents a unique design art. Usually, these patterns are cleverly arranged in key positions of clothing, such as necklines, cuffs, belts and so on. Symmetry is often emphasized in the layout, making the pattern appear balanced and harmonious as a whole. On robes, common patterns are arranged lengthwise along the length of the robe, emphasizing the linear beauty of the body and highlighting the graceful beauty of the wearer. The combination of patterns is also an important design element. Different patterns are cleverly combined to create colorful visual effects. For example, elements such as dragons, phoenixes, flowers and birds may blend with each other in the same garment, conveying different meanings and symbols. This layout and combination not only make the clothes more aesthetically layered, but also show the deep understanding of nature, culture and religious beliefs in traditional Manchu clothing through the clever use of patterns. This unique design style not only highlights the aesthetic pursuit, but also cherishes and inherits the Manchu cultural tradition.

#### *Cultural connotation of Manchu traditional costumes*

This paper studies the influence of Manchu culture on the "shape" and "color" of Manchu costume from the Angle of color and pattern of Manchu costume embroidery, and analyzes the application of Manchu costume color in modern design. A series of studies conducted by scholars on Manchu costumes are not only of great significance to the protection and inheritance of Chinese national art, but also provide a solid theoretical basis for the development of national art<sup>[4]</sup>. Traditional Manchu costumes deeply carry rich cultural connotations and reflect the history, beliefs and life attitudes of the Manchu people. First of all, the patterns and colors in the costumes are not only decoration, but also the expression of cultural symbols. Common patterns such as dragons, phoenixes, flowers and birds, etc.,

symbolize luck, prosperity and happiness, reflecting the Manchu people's pursuit of a better life. Secondly, clothing in design reflects the symbol of social status and status. People of different ages, social status and marital status will choose different types of clothing to highlight their identity and status and build social hierarchy and order through clothing. In addition, traditional clothing also reflects the Manchu people's deep feelings towards nature, family and community. Common natural elements in the patterns, such as flowers, birds and trees, express love for the natural environment, while symbols of family and community, such as butterflies, emphasize the importance of family and society. In general, traditional Manchu clothing conveys deep cultural connotations through patterns, colors and designs, and is an integral part of Manchu culture, as well as a visual interpretation of historical traditions, values and human relationships.

### **Research Methods**

To study the artistic characteristics and cultural connotation of Manchu traditional clothing, we need to use a variety of research methods comprehensively and deeply to explore this topic. Firstly, the literature review will review historical documents, academic works and cultural materials related to Manchu traditional costumes in order to establish a comprehensive understanding of their development, evolution and influencing factors. Secondly, the visual analysis method will reveal the artistic characteristics of the costume through detailed observation of its patterns, colors and designs, including aesthetic elements such as cutting, pattern combination and color matching.

In-depth interview and participant observation are the key means to obtain field data. Through in-depth interviews with the makers, wearers and cultural inheritors of Manchu traditional costumes, in-depth information about costume-making techniques, traditional cognition and cultural inheritance can be learned. Participating in the observation can give a deep understanding of the use of Manchu traditional clothing in real life, so as to grasp its cultural connotation more comprehensively. Finally, the comparative analysis method will compare the Manchu traditional clothing with the traditional clothing of other regions or ethnic groups to find out the similarities and differences, so as to better understand the unique features of the Manchu traditional clothing. The comprehensive application of these methods will help to reveal the artistic characteristics and cultural connotation of Manchu traditional clothing, and provide a comprehensive and in-depth perspective for the study.

### **Conclusion**

#### *The summary and induction of Manchu traditional clothing*

The traditional Manchu clothing embodies rich cultural connotation and unique artistic characteristics. Its cutting design pays attention to showing the curves of the body, making the wearer exude a graceful and soft beauty. The clever collocation of patterns and colors, such as dragon, phoenix, flowers and birds and other elements, not only enriches the appearance of the dress, but also conveys profound cultural symbols and meanings. Through the symbolic design of social status and identity, clothing has become an important medium of identity. This paper discusses the national culture and aesthetic art<sup>[5]</sup> of Manchu costume patterns from the aesthetic point of view<sup>[5]</sup>. The artistic characteristics of Manchu traditional clothing are embodied in the meticulous handcraft, the unique use of natural patterns, and the ingenious consideration of color matching. This is not only the pursuit of aesthetic appreciation, but also the cherishing and inheriting of traditional culture. In general, Manchu traditional clothing, in its unique design and cultural connotation, shows a deep

understanding of the good life, family and society, and has become one of the representatives of Chinese cultural treasures.

*The relationship between artistic features and cultural connotations*

The artistic features and cultural connotations of Manchu traditional costumes are closely connected and complement each other. The artistic characteristics are reflected in its unique cut, pattern and color design, which not only constitute the aesthetic characteristics of the dress, but also deeply carry the inner spirit of Manchu culture. Through the delicate presentation of the curves of the body, the tailoring design shows the graceful and soft beauty, while conveying the worship of the female image. The choice of pattern and color is not only a visual decoration, but also carries a rich cultural meaning. The clever combination of traditional patterns such as dragons, phoenixes, flowers and birds on the costumes conveys the beautiful expectation of auspiciousness, prosperity and family happiness.

Therefore, artistic features and cultural connotations blend with each other, making traditional Manchu costumes not only an expression of aesthetics, but also a profound inheritance of culture, history and family values. This close relationship makes traditional Manchu clothing become a carrier of culture, which conveys rich cultural connotation through its unique artistic expression.

*Prospects for the contemporary inheritance and development of traditional costumes*

Manchu traditional clothing is facing the dual mission of inheritance and development in the contemporary era. In terms of inheritance, it is necessary to pass on the production skills to the new generation through planned cultural education and training of traditional handicraft skills. At the same time, activities such as cultural exhibitions and temple fairs should be held to arouse society's attention and awareness of traditional Manchu costumes. In terms of development, tradition and fashion can be combined by incorporating modern design elements and innovating the cut and pattern of clothing. Push traditional Manchu clothing to find new ways of expression in contemporary society, so as to meet modern people's needs for unique cultural symbols. At the same time, traditional costumes should be applied to modern life scenes, such as weddings, festivals, etc., to expand their functions and make them closer to contemporary people's lives. Through inheritance and development, traditional Manchu costumes are expected to glow with new vitality in contemporary times and make positive contributions to the inheritance of Chinese culture.

*Importance of the existing body of knowledge and its role in the wider context*

Manchu traditional clothing is one of the important components of Chinese traditional culture, its unique artistic characteristics and profound cultural connotation in the existing knowledge system is of great importance, and plays an important role in the broader cultural background. The cultural connotation of Manchu traditional clothing contributes to the inheritance and promotion of national culture in the existing knowledge system. As a carrier of culture, clothing conveys national history, tradition and values through patterns, colors, patterns and other elements. The dragon, phoenix, flowers and other patterns commonly found in Manchu traditional costumes carry profound cultural connotations and reflect the good wishes of Manchu people for auspice, wealth and auspice. The inheritance of these cultural connotations helps to carry forward the traditional culture of Manchu, deepen people's cognition of history and culture, and promote the coexistence of multi-culture. In the broader cultural context, traditional Manchu clothing also plays a role as a bridge of cultural exchange. With the development of society and the globalization of culture, the

communication between different cultures becomes more and more frequent. As one of the representatives of Chinese traditional culture, Manchu traditional clothing presents the unique charm of Chinese culture to the international community through its unique artistic characteristics and cultural connotation. Its display on the international stage not only promotes the development of diverse cultures, but also promotes mutual understanding and respect among different cultures.

In general, the artistic characteristics and cultural connotation of traditional Manchu costumes are of great importance in the existing knowledge system, which not only helps to inherit and promote national culture, but also plays a positive role in broader cultural exchanges. By deeply understanding and respecting Manchu traditional costumes, we can better understand and appreciate China's rich and colorful cultural traditions and promote cultural integration and development.

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