

An Analysis of Mongolian Embroidery Patterns in Cultural Creative Products

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Abstract:

Mongolian embroidery patterns are one of the main forms of Mongolian folk art, showing the Mongolian people's rustic pursuit of faith and a strong sense of life. This paper takes traditional Mongolian embroidery patterns as the main object of study, analyses its uniqueness by comparing its formal features and expression styles, and innovates, develops and inherits Mongolian embroidery patterns by combining the new ways of cultural creative product design.

Keywords:

Mongolian, Embroidery, Motifs, Cultural and Creative Products

1. Introduction

The Mongolian embroidery culture adds a unique colour to the cultural resources of ethnic minorities, and the Mongolian embroidery patterns, as an important carrier of Mongolian embroidery skills, reveal the Mongolian people's aspiration for a beautiful and happy life in the weaving of a single needle and thread. It is imperative that the Mongolian embroidery culture is passed on and innovated. The application of Mongolian embroidery patterns to cultural and creative products enriches the market of cultural and creative industries, gives strong cultural connotation and artistic value to the creative products, and promotes the development of ethnic culture.

2. The Unforgettable Feeling of Moving From Stitch to Stitch Through Fabrics

2.1. Overview of the four traditional Chinese embroidery schools

The four traditional schools of Chinese embroidery (Suzhou Embroidery; Sichuan Embroidery; Hunan Embroidery and Cantonese Embroidery) are known throughout the world. Suzhou embroidery was born in the fertile land and mild climate of the Jiangsu region, the embroidery is delicate; quiet and elegant, with fine and clever stitching techniques. Suzhou embroidery is usually done on silk brocade using fine threads, the motifs are full of the hazy moods of the landscape, the exquisite interplay of the pavilions, and the lush foliage of the flowers and plants, revealing a fresh, fairy-like style of the south of the Yangtze River, showing people the beauty and comfort of

life in the landscape and the countryside. Cantonese embroidery was born in Guangdong, a region where merchants and traders gathered and traded frequently. It features vibrant colour and fantastic stitching. The unique gilt embroidery uses gold and silver threads to embroider the outline of the design and tucks in the fabric inside the embroidery to create a sense of relief and a sense of grandeur. The pattern is dense, richly coloured and strongly contrasting, often with a hundred birds facing the phoenix, peacocks opening the screen, three Goats to Open the Roof, dragons flying and phoenixes dancing, to express the meaning of great luck and prosperity. As one of the masterpieces of Sichuan silk culture, Sichuan embroidery has been willing to absorb the essence of other embroidery stitches and summarize them into twelve categories with a total of more than one hundred stitches, forming its own unique stitch system, which is the most abundant among the four famous embroideries. The rigorous and delicate stitching technique gives the embroidery a double effect of realism and imagery, showing the rhythmic beauty of fluent lines and the beauty of imaginary and realistic contexts, and giving the light, colour and shape of the embroidery a stronger and richer visual expression in light and clear colour, presenting a vivid and realistic texture [1]. Hunan embroidery, known as the 'cultural card of Hunan Province', often uses 'needle instead of brush' and 'thread in colour', transforming characters, animals, landscapes, flowers and birds into special artistic effects in a rigorous composition, bright colour and a variety of stitches, combining traditional Chinese painting, embroidery, poetry, calligraphy, gold stone and other arts into one, depicting the appearance and interior of the image with precision and nuance.

1.2. Analysis of Mongolian embroidery patterns and techniques

Mongolian embroidery, as one of the outstanding representatives of the embroidery culture of the ethnic minorities in the north, is no less unique than the four traditional Chinese embroidery schools, both in terms of embroidery techniques and in the expression of the spiritual rhythm of the patterns, Mongolian embroidery is not only limited to soft fabrics, but also sometimes uses thicker oxford threads and camel floss on harder and rougher materials such as wool felt and leather. In contrast to the delicate and hazy mood of Suzhou embroidery. Mongolian embroidery is a bold and unrestrained beauty (Figure 1), which reflects the broad-mindedness of the people of the grasslands in their pursuit of freedom.

Mongolian embroidery patterns are usually closely linked to the circle, and the composition presents a complete and compact visual effect, giving a sense of fullness and fullness, with a brave use of colour and strong contrasts, but very different from the dazzling and flamboyant beauty sought by Cantonese Embroidery, and different from the realistic beauty expressed by Sichuan embroidery and Hunan embroidery. Mongolian embroidery motifs are mostly drawn from the local area and are not limited to realistic representations, ranging from botanical motifs (such as peonies, lotus flowers, apricot flowers and chrysanthemums, Figure 2), to animal motifs (deer and horses, Figure 3) and geometric motifs (such as cloud motifs and bull-nose motifs, Figure 4), which are both figurative and abstract, to express The Mongolian people's desire for a better, happier life is expressed in the simplicity and vibrancy of their embroidery. The long nomadic life of the Mongolian people has led them to believe that their love and reverence for nature can enhance their understanding of beauty through the ever-changing forms of nature, and that the patterns are varied and at the same time stable and regular, forming a sense of order and harmony. (Figure 5).

Although Mongolian embroidery does not have the same extensive system of stitches as Sichuan embroidery, nor is it as elaborate as Hunan embroidery, Suzhou embroidery or Cantonese Embroidery, it does have its own craft characteristics. Sometimes the embroidery threads are embossed on various types of material, creating a rich and varied tactile texture on the embroidery surface, and the bright and vibrant patterns emerge in relief (Figure 6), which is similar to that of Cantonese embroidery. Mongolian embroidery is usually done in the flat embroidery technique, paste embroidery technique, pan embroidery technique and carving embroidery techniques. The flat embroidery technique uses colourful silk, gold and silver threads and various silk threads as the main material to embroider the designs onto the fabric, creating vivid landscapes, lively animals and vibrant plants, often used on boots, robes, purses and various accessories, showing the meticulousness and skill of Mongolian craftsmen. The paste technique is an embroidery technique that uses the edges of different coloured cotton and satin fabrics to cut the desired design into blocks and then stitch them together, often on pillows and purses. The patchwork technique is a more complex process, but the colours are brighter and more wearable, and it is suitable for yurts and felts, adding layers and texture to the embroidery, a unique technique not found in other embroidery schools. The main techniques used in disc embroidery are the hollow and solid disc stitches, which are mostly used for men's and women's boots, shoes, purses, etc. This technique uses two needles and two strands of thread to combine the two techniques of arch stitch and pan stitch. It is a highly technical and ornamental technique, but it is not as hard-wearing as the backstitch, the arch stitch or the nail stitch, so it is treasured. The engraving technique is also known as lead-edge embroidery, in which the design is first drawn on different materials such as fabric and leather, then engraved with scissors and an awl, the cut-out design is attached to the designated place and stitched with lockstitch or pan stitch. The embroidery technique produces strong and durable products with a strong visual effect and a distinctive regional character.

Each Mongolian craftsman pours his heart and soul into each side of the cloth with a needle and a thread. Each pattern embroidered has its own language from the outside to the inside, which is inextricably linked to life on the grasslands, incorporating what they see, hear and hear in life and the sensory experience formed by the outside world on themselves into the embroidery patterns, giving them a spiritual meaning, interpreting their inner feelings in a harmonious and unified aesthetic realm, and thus expressing their praise for life and their hope for a better life [2].



Figure 1. Xu Haiying; Carrying the Bag.



Figure 2. Up; Sulenkova; Sohaigutul. Lower; Taogeil; Bowl Bag.



Figure 3. Sqengqig; Nasopharyngeal Pot Bag.



Figure 4. Narengava; *The Snuff Bottle Corset.*



Figure 5. Bao Jinlian; *The Ear Protection.*



Figure 6. Suyilagelil; *The Mongolian Men's Boot.*

Picture from Inner Mongolia Exhibition Hall

3. Traditional Cultural Heritage Has Been Transformed

3.1. A spiritual repository of traditional auspicious symbolism

The Mongolian Custom Book by Lobsang Chodan states: “Before the second half of the thirteenth century, the Mongolian people attached great importance to the art of embroidery and used it for a wide range of purposes, such as tobacco bags, costumes, needlework bags, yurt bags, etc, and the patterns were varied and varied [3].” The ancient Mongolian people used different embroidery designs in all aspects of their lives, not simply to beautify and decorate objects to enhance the artistic effect, but to give connotation and warmth to objective, cold objects using embroidery as a medium to convey auspicious and beautiful symbolism. In addition, the patterns of Mongolian embroidery are not presented in a single way, but tend to be diversified, with two or more motifs arranged and set against each other, changing in order and maintaining regularity and stability in the change. The traditional Mongolian embroidered felts, for example, are embroidered on white felt in the distinctive colours of cow’s hair and camel’s hair threads, with a regular distribution of motifs in the form of rolled straw patterns, back patterns, coiled intestine patterns and butterfly patterns [4]. In Mongolian traditional costumes, for example, the embroidery patterns are mostly located on the cuffs, collars, slits and lapels of the costumes, and are arranged closely in a two-sided succession, with auspicious and beautiful symbolism running through the whole costume in an endless and recurring process. The floral motifs on the lapel and side of the garment are characterised by their varied composition and colourful selection of materials, and are arranged in a reasonable manner, with fragmented floral and bird motifs embellished with dazzling yellow and blue-green trim, giving the wearer a sense of “peace and good fortune” throughout the body. In the ancient times the Mongolian working people sang of the good life in a simple and natural way in their embroidery patterns, while at the same time providing a visual treat of beauty.

3.2. Modern, colourful and creative applications

Mongolian embroidery is a new and different pattern language, a visual art created by the industrious and simple Mongolian people in their folk life, and has a high recognition in the treasury of folk patterns. In the process of inheritance and development, following the footsteps of time and following the rules of visual art, it has not only inherited the practical aesthetics of primitive art, but also closely combined with the aesthetic consciousness of modern people, reflecting the principle

of practical orientation of creation. Modern Mongolian embroidery has been used in a wide range of ways, from traditional Mongolian items such as yurts, felts, costumes, boots and hats, to a wide range of everyday objects such as handbags, pillows, coats, stationery, silk scarves and necklaces. The modernisation of Mongolian embroidery is based on a thorough understanding of the patterns, the extraction of typical and representative elements and the fusion of current design materials, the removal of complicated decorations, the simplicity of the patterns and the unity of the products themselves [5]. The key messages of the pattern are highlighted while following the symmetrical and rugged beauty of traditional Mongolian embroidery patterns, thus enhancing the recognition of the product.

The embroidered felt bag from the Inner Mongolia Exhibition Hall (Figure 7), for example, uses traditional felt as a material, simplifies the shape of the product itself, and uses an appliquéd embroidery technique to embroider white flowers in large gatherings on top of navy blue felt. The two contrasting colours of navy and white reflect the Mongolian people's unique sense of colour, while at the same time following a modern understanding of colour. The use of beads in the centre of the flowers spreads out in radioactive lines in all directions to construct the snowflake pattern. The linear direction of the beads and the blocky surface of the main flower gather to create a new shape for the pattern by combining traditional Mongolian embroidery patterns with modern decorative materials, allowing user's mind in a bold and subtle visual interplay. The patterns are reconstructed in a new way, but still reveal their richness and versatility, blending with modern aesthetic trends of novelty and simplicity, making Mongolian embroidery patterns more unique in the context of modern design, and making cultural and creative products more popular and commercialised.



Figure 7. Mangan Qigir; The Felt Shoulder Bag.

Picture from Inner Mongolia Exhibition Hall

4. A Desire to Promote the Spirit of Traditional Craftsmanship

Since entering the 21st century, the cultural and creative industries have flourished and their industrial development has become an important indicator of current economic competitiveness and cultural centripetal force, and an important element in the search for new economic growth points everywhere [6]. Cultural and creative products of various themes (theatre, museums, murals) have emerged, greatly enriching the cultural and creative industry market. With the protection of the intangible cultural heritage, Mongolian embroidery is also being used in various modern cultural and creative products (stationery, costumes, leather bags, etc.), and is coming into the public eye in an orderly manner. In this era of “creativity is king”,

people are no longer just looking for ornate patterns in products, but are more concerned with the inherent “quality” of cultural and creative products. This “temperament” is reflected in the transformation process from two-dimensional space to three-dimensional world, shaping a unique vitality of cultural and creative products [7].

4.1. Innovation in pattern form and messaging

Mongolian embroidery patterns have the function of conveying a message, and the wide range of materials taken reflects the Mongolian people’s worship of totems, reverence for nature and aesthetic decoration. Throughout its thousands of years of development, Mongolian embroidery patterns have been transformed from form to connotation. Using cultural and creative products as a vehicle to bring intangible cultural heritage to consumers in a silent manner, modern design codes are applied to transform the inner metaphor of the patterns into an outer flow. In the instinctive dimension of emotional design, Donald Norman focuses on the first impressions of the user based on the appearance of the product, including colour, shape, pattern, material, etc [8]. The modern designers have transformed the “patterns”, “techniques” and “colours” of the “Mongolian embroidery” cultural design factor into design symbols. The modern designers have transformed the symbols of Mongolian embroidery by transforming the “patterns”, “techniques” and “colours” of the cultural design factor into design symbols, by following the “technique” oriented element reproduction method and the “element transplantation method” along with the “patterns” and “colours”. The design is based on the “elemental transplantation” method, which is based on the stitching techniques and paths of Mongolian embroidery, and is carried in the cultural and creative products, with the representative patterns of Mongolian embroidery being selected and applied to the cultural and creative products. Through modern design methods such as geometry, deconstruction, reorganisation and deformation, the traditional Mongolian embroidery patterns are preserved in their stylistic features and cultural semantics, so that the user can directly feel the aesthetic features and information conveyed by the Mongolian embroidery patterns, thus completing the transformation from passive inheritance to active creation of traditional Mongolian embroidery patterns [9].

The Mongolian people have a unique understanding and use of colour, dividing it into coloured (red, blue, green, orange, etc.) and uncoloured (black, white) colours, which are usually used in combinations. The combination of black, white and colourless is often used in Mongolian embroidery for its sacred symbolism. The colourful combination of red, yellow, blue and orange in the colour palette creates a bright and colourful visual impact, highlighting the wild and unrestrained character of the Mongolian people [10]. The colour application of modern Mongolian embroidery patterns is based on the use of exaggerated expressions and contrasting applications, more generalised shaping in a rich and varied colour system, vivid and bold without losing the tension of colour expression in the generalisation. While retaining the overall ethnic flavour, it also gives a strong sense of visual impact and beauty in its simplicity.

Taking the design of the handbook “The Lion and the White Horse” of the Inner Mongolia Exhibition Hall (Figure 8) as an example, the designer extracted the lion and white horse motifs, which symbolize the pursuit of strength, from the traditional Mongolian embroidery patterns and “transplanted the elements”, using two traditional techniques, “paste embroidery” and “flat needle embroidery”, to “reproduce the

elements”. The two traditional embroidery techniques of “paste embroidery” and “flat needle embroidery” are used to “reproduce” the elements, and the threads are combined with each other on the surface to show the rhythm and rhythm of the pattern and the fullness and continuity of the visual aesthetics. The lion and white horse motifs both focus on the head, with vertical blocks arranged to show the hair of the lion and the mane of the white horse fluttering in the wind, extracting the blues, oranges and reds of the Mongolian coloured family and the black and white of the uncoloured family to render the motifs. In the simple expression of highly generalised colours, the flowing and simple hair form, the sharp and pure colour contrast, and the thick and simple colour block overlay give the pattern a sense of hierarchy, transporting the dual beauty of the pattern’s decorative language of wild and bold and stable to the user’s eye and stimulating the user’s visual senses. The blue colour represents the freedom and peace, the red colour the passionate pursuit and the orange colour the power and authority into the structure of the lion pattern, the black colour symbolising the “majesty of the father” and the white colour the “love of the mother” into the white horse pattern, the colour language conveys that in the pursuit of the colour language is used to convey the message that in the pursuit of knowledge, one must remain hot, brave and persistent, and find one’s own purity and tenderness in the solemn and solemn house of learning. The embroidery is also a great way to add a touch of spirit to the design, making it more lively and dynamic. This has created an emotional link between the user and the product, bringing the cultural and creative product closer to the user.



Figure 8. Wang Huiqin; Liu Na and Hao Yongju; The White Horse and the Lion.

Picture from Inner Mongolia Exhibition Hall

4.2. Pattern creation reconfiguration and multiple applications

The subtlety of Mongolian embroidery patterns lies in the organisation of the patterns, which in their smooth, regular, shifting organisation transform the very tense formal beauty in the laws of balance in a thousand different ways, freely and with a variety of characteristics. The designer has to give the user the formal beauty of the traditional Mongolian embroidery patterns while meeting the specific needs of the user in terms of practicality, which leads the designer to recreate the structure of the patterns. The patterns are redesigned according to the shape and decorative needs of different cultural and creative products to meet the dual purpose of decorating the patterns and conveying cultural connotations. The Mongolian embroidery motifs have evolved from their early decorative purpose to a cultural function of aspirations and aspirations, and their design language has become more diverse, following the footsteps of the times. The Mongolian embroidery patterns, while making use of traditional techniques, will be expanded in terms of expression and application, so that the patterns will not only be decorated on a fixed surface, but will also be explored in

the transformation of the patterns from two-dimensional space to three-dimensional world, using modern design principles to integrate and innovate with other fields.

The Butterfly Lovers embroidered stationery in the Inner Mongolia Gallery is an example (Figure 9), the butterfly is light and lively, and its beautiful form and insect breeding properties give it a variety of symbolic meanings. In addition to its traditional auspicious and beautiful meaning, the butterfly motif is also regarded as a symbol of love in folklore, conveying the emotional love between an erudite and talented man and a fair lady and the desire for a better life [11]. The butterfly motifs in this work are different from the traditional embroidered butterfly in that they are geometrically deconstructed and reorganised, with the wings, body and flowers geometrically disassembled, using a modern abstract design approach without affecting the user's recognition. In the traditional two-sided continuous arrangement, the dynamic spreading form of the butterfly and the principle of order and stability in the organisation of the embroidery pattern are reflected in each other, and the collision of external force stretching and internal force contracting outlines the wonderful scene of the butterfly flocking to the flower cluster, depicting the female and male butterflies meeting and getting to know each other in the sea of flowers, making the static pattern dynamic and decorative in a calm space, reflecting the rugged and rustic artistic texture while allowing the user to experience the designer's warmth. The designer has cleverly conveyed to the user the attitude of "a heart like water" and the spirit of learning "gentle as a mirror", elevating the design of stationery items from a simple purpose of pattern decoration to a new level of cultural connotation.

Mongolian embroidery is used in modern cultural and creative products not only to satisfy commercial interests, but also to pass on and promote this precious artisanal skill. Each embroidery pattern is gradually presented by Mongolian craftsmen in a thousand threads. The Mongolian embroidery patterns are therefore symbols of folk artisans' emotions and messages, which are reinterpreted, transformed and sublimated with a modern aesthetic vision and then applied to cultural and creative products, allowing users to enter the splendid world of ethnic culture.



Figure 9. Naren Gova and Zhang Qiyu; 'Butterfly Lovers' embroidered stationery.

Picture from Inner Mongolia Exhibition Hall

5. Enhancing the Artistic and Emotional Value of Cultural and Creative Products

In a modern society where material resources are abundant, people's needs for products do not stop at basic needs such as aesthetics and practicality, but begin to make demands on the spiritual aspect of products. Donald Norman proposed the concept of emotional product design in 2002. From a psychological point of view,

emotion is the core of personality, and the real value of a product lies in meeting people's emotional needs and bringing them an aesthetic experience of inner pleasure. We should take a break from the "functional" mindset and turn our attention to the emotional needs of the user, integrating emotional design into the product to achieve the unity of aesthetics and usability, so that "attractive objects work better" [12]. The Mongolian people have come a long way from history and have left a strong impression on the world with their ethnicity and their unconventional style, which has given birth to a unique culture of customs. From the perspective of ecological aesthetics, the pursuit of harmony and artistic survival between people is also the most shining, unique and attractive part of the free and open spirit of Mongolian traditional culture. The aesthetic value of mining and studying the ecological concept of Mongolian culture not only enhances the artistic value of cultural and creative products, but also enables consumers to fully experience the national emotions it conveys.

Mongolian embroidery patterns are applied to cultural and creative products, combining the essence of traditional culture and national emotions with the cultural and creative products themselves, injecting national sentiments on top of the aesthetic beauty of the products and the artistic aesthetics, paying more attention to the emotional interaction experience of the users, allowing consumers to have emotional resonance with the cultural and creative products. It is a change from the current status quo of most cultural and creative products, which is to pursue the appearance and decoration of patterns, and to show the unique skills of Mongolian embroidery and the various embroidery patterns in modern cultural and creative products, which undoubtedly adds a bright colour to the modern cultural and creative products market. Mongolian embroidery patterns are used as a carrier for cultural and creative products, breaking through existing forms and contents to innovate. The modern design language is used to reinterpret the connotation of traditional culture, reflecting the unique flavour of cultural and creative products, satisfying the user's sense of identification with Mongolian culture and promoting the collision of emotions, thus reflecting personal values and realising personal emotional values.

6. Conclusions

Mongolian embroidery patterns are rich, varied and colourful. The use of Mongolian embroidery motifs in cultural and creative products is a way to pass on the culture of the people and to give new meaning to the unique Mongolian embroidery motifs. The creative use of Mongolian embroidery patterns in the process of inheritance and innovation is an effective way to unite traditional aesthetic concepts with modern aesthetics, and is of great practical importance.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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