

# Discussion on the Extension of Dong Brocade Patterns Based on Dong Minority Humanities

Yi Xiao

Visual Communication Design, Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Huaihua University, Huaihua City, Hunan Province, 418008

email:1511529558@163.com

**Keywords:** Dong brocade pattern; Humanistic connotation; Artistic features; Inheritance application

**Abstract:** As one of the traditional handicrafts of ethnic minorities, Dong brocade has both artistic aesthetic value and ethnic cultural inheritance value, and patterns are the core elements of Dong brocade art. Through the interpretation of its types and humanistic connotation, this paper analyzes the artistic features and expression techniques of Dong brocade patterns, and explores the reference and application in fashion design, tourism product development and other fields, which is helpful to the inheritance of Dong culture and Dong brocade skills.

## 1. Introduction

Weaving technology occupies a place in the traditional culture of various ethnic groups. It not only represents the development level of handicrafts of ethnic groups in different periods, but also can help understand the origin and development process of people's cultural creation ideas and aesthetic taste in different time and space through the analysis of the raw materials, colors and decorations. The Dong brocade is the best material to study the process of Dong culture creation and inheritance.

## 2. The Origin and Development of Dong Brocade Skills and Related Cultures

### (1) Origin and Features of Dong Brocade

Dong Minority's brocade skills are divided into hand embroidery and weaving. During the process, cotton, hemp and natural dyes are processed into daily necessities and decorations through more than a dozen manual procedures. As the color, shape and composition are completed simultaneously with the weaving of the base cloth, Dong brocade works can perfectly show the creator's personalized aesthetic appreciation and impressionistic ideas. The double-sided relief pattern with distinct color contrast of Dong brocade has strong visual impact and artistic expression, while the rich ethnic cultural connotation, simple shape and diverse composition endow Dong brocade with extremely high cultural inheritance and aesthetic value. According to research, Dong's weaving and dyeing technology originated from its Guyue ancestors. Therefore, both Dong Minority's weaving brocade and embroidered brocade manifest characteristics to the representative works of Guyue culture in terms of aesthetic taste and artistic language application. Especially in the use of cultural symbols and styling techniques in decorative patterns, it proves that the two have the same nature worship and living customs. Therefore, since the Luoyue ancestors of the Dong Minority migrated to Hunan, Guizhou and Guangxi in the Qin and Han Dynasties, they inherited and developed the Dong brocade skills on the basis of the existing weaving skills and created the Dong culture.

### (2) The Current Situation of the Development and Inheritance of Dong Brocade Skills

The Dong people living in various branches at the junction of Hunan, Guizhou and Guangxi have creatively inherited brocade skills. Because they have experienced thousands of years of relatively independent ethnic cultural creation and development process, although they have the same cultural origin, they have obvious differentiation in aesthetic taste, Dong brocade

manufacturing skills and living customs. But they still have tacit understanding in the application of traditional cultural symbols and basic creative techniques. First of all, due to the obvious differences in the geographical environment and resource distribution of different branches of Dong Minority, the same production and life style originated from ancestors inevitably differentiates, while the weaving of Dong brocade is reflected in the differences in creative materials and color application. For example, the Jiao Branch of Dong people have gradually created and mastered unique architectural skills due to the characteristics of their environment, which has greatly influenced their aesthetics by the style of architectural art. Therefore, they are more appreciative of the simple and elegant brocade skills. Most of their works are made of green and white cotton and hemp threads. Secondly, in the process of independently creating the Dong culture of their respective branches for a long time, the ancestors' worship of cultural symbols such as sun, moon, star, dragon and phoenix has been unanimously inherited by the Dong people of each branch. In the brocade works of Dong villages in different regions, although the forms or shapes are slightly different, these elements can be found. For example, many Dong villages have dragon and phoenix decorations on their flags and costumes.

### **3. Dong Brocade Patterns and Their Connotation**

In the process of making Dong brocade, the changes of pattern styling and combination, color application and composition are the basis for endowing the works with artistic expression, aesthetic and cultural inheritance values. However, the lack of ethnic language makes the expression of artistic language more important in Dong's daily production and life, and artistic language becomes the key to record and inherit the ethnic culture. It makes cultural symbols and lyrics, oral literature in Dong brocade and other handicrafts play the same role in memorizing, spreading myths and legends, production and life skills, etc. Firstly, Dong brocade patterns comprehensively reflect Dong's production mode, living customs and ideological and emotional characteristics. Animals and plants, abstract cultural symbols, sun and moon and other natural images are the most commonly used elements<sup>[1]</sup>. However, through the combination of shapes and colors of different patterns, they can be used to decorate daily necessities such as clothing and bed sheets, or can be made into decorations that meet aesthetic needs, reflecting the discovery and creation process of beauty by Dong people in their daily production and life. Secondly, there are a large number of abstract and common cultural symbols in the decorative patterns of Dong brocade. For example, the use of circular lines with yellow and other colors constitutes symbols representing the sun and the moon, which are used to express Dong's natural worship and religious beliefs. In addition, mysterious images such as dragon and phoenix widely existing in the traditional cultures of various ethnic groups are also very common in Dong brocade patterns, which are used to express good wishes or blessings. For example, the Dong people in Guangxi use it as a decorative pattern on the quilt surface for the elderly, implying health and good luck.

### **4. The Artistic Features of Dong Brocade Patterns**

#### **(1) The Styling is Simple and Various.**

Since Dong brocade decorative patterns are woven or embroidered in the process of weaving the base cloth, the application of techniques will be restricted by the trend of warp and weft threads, and the composition and creation will be completed at one time by memory and imagination without design sketches, thus requiring the lines and shapes of decorative patterns to be simplified as much as possible. Therefore, straight lines, points and surfaces are the main elements of Dong brocade decorative styling, and the structure of decorative patterns is often composed of multiple units with simple lines. Therefore, whether objects with simple lines such as sun and moon or relatively complex animal images are simplified into the most basic straight lines, points and regular geometric figures in Dong brocade decorative patterns. However, at the same time, the Dong brocade decoration does not lose its flexibility or lack of artistic expression due to its simple styling, but shows regular changes through the diversification of basic units and the combination of

impressionistic items. With the form of **two-party** continuity and four-party continuity accompanied by decoration of the core unit, colorful composition can be evolved. Therefore, the simple styling of Dong brocade patterns contains rich changes.

#### (2) Brilliant Colors and Abundant Meanings

Color matching is also an important way to express the rich cultural implication of Dong brocade patterns. The same patterns use silk and cotton threads of different colors to weave or use the combination of shaping elements with distinct color contrast, which can reflect different implication. However, bold color use and good use of color matching with strong contrast are the prominent features of Dong brocade patterns, such as orange weaving of the sun on cyan base cloth, or bright red decorative lines around emerald **two consecutive** geometric patterns. This bold style, which is in strong contrast with minimalist lines and shapes, strengthens the artistic expression of Dong brocade and shows the unique aesthetic orientation of Dong Minority. Moreover, through exaggerated color contrast, it highlights the reverence for things representing beautiful meanings such as sun, moon and star, and sets off the cultural atmosphere of different scenes in the composition of Dong brocade works.

#### (3) Practicality and Artistry

Dong brocade is one of the main raw materials for making costumes and daily necessities. It plays a role in decoration and beautification in Dong people's production and life, and also plays a role in recording and inheriting traditional culture and meeting practical needs. First of all, Dong brocade, like other minority handicrafts, originates from people's daily requirements. Whether it is used to make clothes, leg wraps or decorations, it is to meet people's most basic needs in life. However, through the combination and application of various patterns with various changes and profound meanings, Dong's costumes have extremely high aesthetic value, and people's pursuit and yearning for beauty have been satisfied<sup>[2]</sup>. Secondly, in the process of continuous development and inheritance of Dong brocade weaving techniques, the types of patterns and their implications are becoming more and more diverse and detailed, making Dong brocade have increasingly profound ethnic cultural connotations in different application scenarios. Through the use of cultural symbols and special connotation images, costumes and articles used in different occasions such as birthday celebrations, sacrifices and festivals can be woven. For example, Dong brocade used in ancestor worship activities will contain totem and myth elements, while animal and plant patterns with auspicious meanings are mostly used in infant swaddling clothes. Therefore, the Dong brocade pattern is not only an element to meet the daily aesthetic needs of the Dong people, but also a practical artistic language to record and inherit the ethnic culture.

#### (4) The Styling is Abstract, Exaggerated but Intuitive and Concrete.

After extremely simplifying the classic images in animals, plants, myths and legends, Dong brocade patterns embody the characteristics of abstract and exaggerated styling without losing intuition and concreteness. For example, according to historical records, the image of phoenix is made up of the shapes and color elements of various animals and natural images, so both appearance and color are very complicated. However, the phoenix in the Dong brocade pattern is made up of completely straight lines, and its basic form is that the square outline contains the basic figures, straight lines, dots and other elements representing the phoenix's body, wings and head. Therefore, compared with the image in traditional cognition, its shape is extremely exaggerated and abstract. However, for those who are familiar with Dong cultural symbols, they can quickly identify the image and understand its implication from Dong brocade works. So, they have to admit that they are intuitive and concrete. This not only meets the technological requirements of Dong brocade weaving, but also reflects the characteristics of Dong brocade patterns as a medium of cultural inheritance.

## 5. The Development and Application of Dong Brocade Pattern Art and Cultural Value

As an important carrier of Dong culture, the importance of Dong brocade patterns in the process of spreading and inheriting Dong culture is self-evident. Today, when cultural diversity is threatened unprecedentedly, more and more people begin to cherish their traditional cultures and are

willing to pay attention to the cultural heritage of various ethnic groups under different social backgrounds. In view of the extremely high artistic value and profound cultural implication of Dong brocade patterns, exploring the development and application of Dong brocade patterns in different fields of artistic design and cultural communication is not only helpful to innovate design concepts and styles, but also helpful to the inheritance of Dong traditional culture.

#### (1) Enlightenment of Dong Brocade Patterns to Fashion Design Circles

Dong brocade is one of the important raw materials for Dong costumes. Its patterns are widely used in the decoration of ethnic costumes, shoes, hats and other accessories, which is the key to the formation of unique ethnic characteristics of Dong costumes. The minimalist style and personalized color matching of Dong brocade patterns have many points of agreement with the aesthetic orientation of modern people. Its changeable combination and flexible application can also be applied to the design of works of different styles. Therefore, Dong brocade patterns can bring enlightenment to designers in modern fashion and help them enhance brand value. First of all, designers can properly use Dong brocade patterns according to their own brand style characteristics, for example, in clothing skirts, cuffs and other positions directly decorated with handmade Dong brocade works; Or learn from its basic techniques and patterns to beautify clothing by means of computer embroidery, and design unique brand style works with ethnic customs, integrated with Dong culture, which fits the current consumer's psychology of advocating traditional culture of ethnic minorities<sup>[3]</sup>; Secondly, in the design of luggage and ornaments, we can learn from the design concept and artistic language application skills of Dong brocade patterns in terms of styling and decoration. For example, based on the understanding of Dong's traditional culture, a series of works with cultural implications are designed with Dong's myths and legends as the theme, which can not only play a role in spreading the traditional culture of ethnic minorities, but also form a unique artistic style and enhance the image of fashion brands.

#### (2) Creative Product Design of Cultural Tourism

The development of cultural tourism industry has multiple meanings for the protection, promotion and inheritance of the traditional culture of ethnic minorities, and cultural tourism creative products are the key to promote the economic development of ethnic minority areas and enhance the benefits of tourism industry. Therefore, it should be explored and utilized in the creative and related product design of cultural tourism projects in areas inhabited by Dong people.<sup>[4]</sup> Firstly, in the development process of cultural tourism projects, Dong brocade patterns can be used as brand image elements, and the artistic and cultural elements of Dong brocade patterns can be integrated into it in coordination with the design planning of specific service contents, facilities and environment. It enables tourists to experience Dong customs and perceive Dong traditional culture in all aspects. Secondly, enterprises and individuals engaged in tourism souvenir marketing, based on market research and accurate positioning of their own products, can apply Dong brocade patterns to the product development and production process to meet the needs of tourists and other consumers interested in Dong culture, and to promote the spread of minority culture and the economic development of Dong populated areas.

#### (3) Inheritance of Dong Ethnic Culture

In view of the fact that Dong brocade patterns record a large number of information about the origin, development and inheritance of Dong traditional culture, Dong brocade is not only a traditional skill with extremely high artistic quality and practical value, but also an indispensable carrier to record the history of ethnic culture creation for Dong people who do not have their own language and characters. Therefore, in the publicity and inheritance of Dong culture, we must strengthen the recording of Dong brocade patterns and the excavation of the value of inheriting traditional culture. On the one hand, through in-depth investigation and data collection of Dong people's settlements, the weaving skills of Dong brocade, which are on the verge of danger, are protected, and the cultural connotation of Dong brocade patterns is further studied, so as to clarify its inheritance context and accumulate resources for the development of Dong people's traditional culture and education. On the other hand, based on the study of typical Dong brocade patterns, explore its application rules as a record of Dong's traditional cultural language, so as to innovate

Dong brocade patterns and maintain their vitality under the background of increasingly open social living environment and accelerating cultural blending among ethnic groups, making it continue to play a role in the creative inheritance of Dong's traditional culture.

## **6. Conclusion**

In the process of thousands of years of ethnic culture creation and inheritance, Dong brocade patterns have played a role in decorating Dong people's life, recording history and expressing ethnic aesthetic orientation. Exploring its artistic features, cultural implication and application value is not only of great importance to the further inheritance of Dong's traditional culture, but also can bring enlightenment to the development of cultural and creative industries and fashion design, making full use of the artistic and cultural value of Dong brocade patterns.

## **Acknowledgments**

This work was financially supported by the funds: (1) The construction and research of online digital platform of Dong brocade art in the context of Rural Revitalization (No: 19C1486, Department of education of Hunan Province); (2) Research on the collection, arrangement and application of Dong brocade patterns in Western Hunan (No: 19YBX014, social sciences of Hunan Province).

## **References**

- [1] Hu Yuxuan. On the Patterns of Dong Brocade Extended from the Humanities of Dong People [J]. Science, Education and Culture, 2019, 000 (020): 165-166.
- [2] Wu Juan. Research on Dong Brocade Techniques and Patterns of Chinese Minority Costumes [J]. Literary Life, Late Journal, 2018 (2).
- Chen Lifang. Innovation and Application of Dong Brocade Art Patterns in Modern Clothing Design [J]. Tax Payment, 2018, 000 (014): P.243-243.
- [4] Xiao Jiuling. Research on the Application of Regional Cultural Symbols in Modern Tourism Products-Taking Dong Brocade Patterns in Tongdao Hunan as an Example [J]. Textile Industry and Technology, 2019 (8).