

# The Integrated Development of Guangfu Culture and Garment Trade Against the Background of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

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**Abstract:** The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area is one of the most dynamic regions for economic and cultural development in China, among which, Guangfu Culture is rich in cultural deposits. Simultaneously, the garment trade in the Greater Bay Area develops rapidly. However, influenced by international fashion elements, Guangfu Culture faces a series of opportunities and challenges. In order to implement the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and promote the high-quality development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the countermeasures of the integrated development of Guangfu Culture and garment trade should be adopted. And in this paper, it is suggested to inherit Cantonese feelings by using package with cultural elements; to embroider new costumes with traditional Guangfu Culture; and to show the new featured products by making good use of exhibition. What's more, improving the competition of garment trade by paying great attention to personnel training. In this way, we can create a win-win path for the economic and cultural development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

## 1. Introduction

Located in southern China, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area is one of the world's four major Greater Bay Areas with strong economic and cultural development momentum.<sup>[1]</sup> It is also locating the coastal area, with a long coastline, three rivers converging together and mountains surrounded on three sides. It is said that Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area enjoys a favorable geographical location, broad space for development, and large ports and airports including Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Hong Kong and Macao. Also, the transportation is extremely convenient, forming a convenient and efficient modern integrated transportation hub<sup>[2]</sup>. Therefore, Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area sustains great responsibilities as a giant hub and gateway in the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).<sup>[3]</sup> In addition, the implementation of "one country, two systems" policy can also promote collaborative innovation and high-quality development in the Greater Bay Area.<sup>[4]</sup>

Guangfu Culture—Cantonese folk culture, is one of the Lingnan culture with a history of over 2200 years, among which, it shows distinctive features, rich connotation and great influence. Some culture attributes with regional characteristics give people a multi-level and three-dimensional feeling in daily life, such as Cantonese Cuisine, Cantonese Opera, Cantonese and Cantonese Embroidery, etc., which are well-known to people. Taking Cantonese Embroidery as an example, it has exquisite workmanship, well-proportioned, bright-colored features and highly decorative. There are various designs of Cantonese Embroidery, and they are mostly used in costume embroidery and decorations.

Under the background of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the foreign trade in the Greater Bay Area develops rapidly. The garment trade closely follows the international trend and is exported to Europe, America, Japan, South Korea and other countries and regions, bringing great economic benefits to the industry. Nowadays, cultural industry has become an important part

of the national economy. Meanwhile, cultural resources are regarded as valuable strategic resources in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) <sup>[5]</sup>. As a kind of Guangfu Culture, Cantonese Embroidery is closely related to the garment industry. Hence, to some extent, the rapid development of garment trade affects the inheritance and development of Guangfu Culture.

## **2. Current Situation of Guangfu Culture and Garment Trade Development**

### **2.1 International Fashion Costume Elements Bring Opportunities to Guangfu Culture**

Through the ages, trade and collision come with each other. Where there is a trade, there is communication; and, where there is communication, there is cultural collision. As a result, various fashion cultures from abroad have been pouring into Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area through garment trade and brand sales. For instance, American brands like VANS and Converse extends Hip-Hop culture and Street culture to Street wear. There is no doubt that the rise of international trends and fashion culture, and the entry of international fashion brands into China, play an important part in boosting garment industry in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and even in the whole China. In order to follow the trend of fashion and meet the demand of the international market, some fashion brands from China rise accordingly. Among them, there are some achievers, like Beaster. Founded by Mark Fairwhale, Beaster, with its weird, personalized and recognizable grimace LOGO, has become a Dark Horse on the international fashion list. It has cooperated with World of Warcraft, Starbucks and other famous companies successively to make cross-border cooperation, catering to the fashion trend and the taste of young people. That may explain why it has achieved great success.

### **2.2 International Fashion Costume Elements Bring Some Impacts to Guangfu Culture**

Although international fashion costume elements bring unprecedented opportunities to Guangfu Culture and contribute to the economic development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, opportunities and challenges exist side by side. In the frequent garment trade, international fashion costume elements also bring some great impacts to Guangfu Culture. With the awakening of consumers' self-consciousness and the release of individual needs in the new era, a group of new consumers represented by the post-95 and post-20 generations have become the vanguard of self-appreciation, following the trends. Influenced by information technology, some young people in Canton blindly follow the trends and are keen to pursue foreign brands and costumes, while forgetting the local culture rooted in their heart. Since ancient times, red color is indispensable in wedding. The traditional wedding dress is mainly Xiuhe dress or Longfeng dress in red. Guangzhou, Foshan and other places also use their traditional wedding dress with unique local cultural characteristics. Nevertheless, influenced by international culture and fashion, these wedding dresses in some places is gradually replaced by white wedding dress and suit. Many traditional Canton costumes are gradually fading out of people's sight.

### **2.3 Garment Trade is Gradually Promoting the Inheritance and Development of Guangfu Culture**

In recent years, the industrial structure of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area has been continuously optimized; old growth drivers are replaced with new ones speedily. Now, as a result, the industrial system with large-sale and complete structure has been preliminarily formed. <sup>[6]</sup> Among them, the garment industry is constantly innovating and transforming, which greatly promotes the economic development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area coordinately. In order to be more competitive in international fashion market, some foreign trade enterprises in the Greater Bay Area begin to focus on the cultural connotation of costumes, and the combination of garment design and Guangfu Culture, in order to produce special costume. In particular, under the initiative of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), many garment enterprises invest a lot of money in new products development. Furthermore, Guangdong Costume Culture Promotion Association, as a grand gathering of industrial benchmarking, has also made great

contributions to promoting the development of Guangfu Culture. Fashion, enterprises, brands and Chinese media elites from Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao gather together to contribute ideas and discuss the inheritance and development of the garment trade and Guangfu Culture in the Greater Bay Area.

### **3. Countermeasures for the Integrated Development of Guangfu Culture and Garment Trade**

Guangfu Culture is not only a traditional culture with rich connotation, but also a modern culture full of vitality and charm. It plays an important role in promoting China's economic growth. As a part of the economy, the role of garment trade should not be underestimated. In today's world, both economy and culture are important components of China's comprehensive national strength. Economy is hard power, while culture is soft power. They both interact with each other. In this way, a win-win path of economic growth and cultural development can be created.

The gradual implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has promoted the inheritance of Guangfu Culture, driven the development of foreign trade in China, and provided opportunities for the development of garment trade in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. To integrate the development of Guangfu Culture and garment trade is the further implement of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), conforming to the theme of "Peace and Development" in the present era. Besides, it can highlight the characteristics of local culture, promote high-quality development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, create new growth points for the national economy, improve China's comprehensive national strength, and enhance China's status and influence in the international community. Consequently, Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area should seize the opportunity and adopt a variety of countermeasures to promote the integrated development of Guangfu Culture and garment trade, which can be implemented from the following four aspects.

#### **3.1 Inheriting Cantonese Feelings by Using Package with Cultural Elements**

Nowadays, China has become the world's second largest economy, and Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area is one of the world's most famous Greater Bay Areas, thus attracting a large number of foreign personnel. Many foreigners are also interested in Chinese culture. And, Guangfu Culture, with local characteristics, is indispensable to the development of garment trade in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. Only by integrated development can there be tremendous space for development. One of the most simple and effective way is to use package with cultural elements. It means that some distinctive Cantonese cultural elements can be printed on the products or on the external package of the products. For example, some character images with cultural characteristics like Sun fen, Huang Feihong, or some genre paintings can be printed on the packages with marginalia. By doing so, it can not only show regional characteristics, spreads Guangfu Culture, inherits Cantonese feelings, but also promotes the development of garment trade, stimulates the industry and capacity of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and increase the overall economic efficiency.

#### **3.2 Embroidering New Costumes with Traditional Guangfu Culture**

Cantonese Embroidery is a kind of traditional embroidery handicraft, which is a significant manifestation of Guangfu Culture. It has a great correlation with costumes, which include "sewing", "embroidery", and "cut". Therefore, garment making can be combined with Cantonese Embroidery, the traditional handicraft of Canton, to produce costumes with Cantonese cultural characteristics. While embroidering new costumes, it also promotes the inheritance and development of Guangfu Culture. Under the intense competition of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, only by constantly innovating the design, optimizing the product design, and developing the characteristic costumes can we make the costumes comparable to the international fashion culture, highlight the characteristics, cater to the international trend, promote the development of garment trade, and give Guangfu Culture an opportunity to show on the international stage.

### **3.3 Showing Featured New Products by Making Good Use of Exhibition**

In addition to using package with cultural elements and embroidering new costumes with traditional Guangfu Culture that conform to the theme of era and have the characteristics of Guangfu Culture, the garment trading companies also need to promote Guangfu Culture to the world through propaganda, such as exhibition, to show some featured new products. At present, China's exhibition industry chain has been quite complete. All kinds of exhibitions, expos, trade fairs, with distinctive cultural characteristics and innovative technological elements, have various novel forms and types, and all over the industry, which can produce huge economic and social benefits. Through this kind of exhibition, it seems that the featured new products can be launched to promote the development of garment trade. But it also implies the inheritance and development of Guangfu Culture. As a result, it actually promotes the integrated development of garment trade and Guangfu Culture. If we can grasp this opportunity for the garment trade in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, it will achieve greater development.

### **3.4 Improving the Competition of Garment Trade by Paying Great Attention to Talents Training**

The regional advantages of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area have brought not only great economic benefits to the garment trade, but also a series of challenges. If we want the garment trade in the Greater Bay Area to achieve sustainable development, it not only needs to break the thinking pattern, innovate working methods, develop local products and highlight cultural characteristics, but also needs to deeply integrate with the Guangfu Culture, improve the cultural connotation of products. More importantly, it needs the support and efforts of professional technical and practical personnel. Meeting the need of communication and cooperation of the countries and regions along the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), colleges in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area should pay attention to the cultivation of humanities, majors and cultures for the talents, and cultivate a group of high-level, compound, innovative applied talents who are proficient in English, familiar with business, good at communication and familiar with culture. In this way, we can improve the competitiveness of garment trade effectively, promote the healthy and orderly development of the industry, and expand the influence and competitiveness of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in the international community.

## **4. Conclusion**

As an important hub of foreign trade in China, Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area has promoted the high-quality development of local economy and culture. With the thorough implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the integration of garment trade and Guangfu Culture will be promoted. Governments at all levels, enterprises and citizens in Canton should make full use of the opportunity—the development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, to struggle courageously and be innovative. Moreover, it's important to assume the responsibility and obligation spontaneously to promote the development of industries and inherit Guangfu Culture, striving to explore the integrated development way for garment trade and Guangfu Culture as well as and creating a win-win way for the economic and cultural development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

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