THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION AND INNOVATIVE DESIGN OF QIANG COSTUMES

**Purpose.** This paper analyzes the evolution process and cultural connotation of Qiang costume form, discusses the application form of Qiang costume elements in modern clothing design, and provides a theoretical basis for the innovative design of national costumes.

**Methodology.** The field research method, literature analysis method, and case study method are used to analyze the evolution process, cultural connotation, and design application of Qiang costumes.

**Results.** By studying the development process and style design changes of the Qiang costumes, it is concluded that its unique cultural connotation and design characteristics are closely related to the social characteristics, production methods and religious beliefs of the Qiang people. It is the materialized expression of the Qiang people's world outlook and national psychology. It reveals the reasons for the change of the Qiang costume modelling and proposes the method of using ethnic elements in modern costume design.

**Scientific novelty.** This paper studies the development process of Qiang costume shape from the perspective of design, history, ethnology and anthropology, and puts forward that Qiang costume is the materialized expression form of local people's world outlook, values and aesthetics, and clarifies that the change of Qiang costume shape is influenced by religious culture and Han-Tibetan culture. Suggestions are made in the form of integration of national costume elements with modern clothing design.

**Practical significance.** The Qiang costume has been fused with other ethnic cultures in the course of historical changes, which is both inherited and changed, which is very inspiring to modern costume design. Digging deeper into the cultural connotation and design language of Qiang costume, so that it can innovate the design method and explore the design carrier while inheriting the national culture, so as to provide reference for the creation of a costume design that can embody both the traditional Chinese culture and the sense of the times.

**Key words:** Chinese costume, cultural heritage, ethnicity, clothing design, Chinese culture, national costume.

**Introduction.** The Qiang costume has its own unique cultural characteristics and artistic style, which can reflect the lifestyle, religious beliefs and aesthetic concepts of the Qiang people, etc. The Qiang costume has its own unique cultural characteristics and artistic style, which can reflect the lifestyle, religious beliefs and aesthetic concepts of the Qiang people. By analyzing the morphological characteristics and cultural connotations of Qiang costumes, revealing the internal and external factors of changes in Qiang costume styles, and searching for points of convergence between traditional Qiang costumes and modern costume design, exploring the design method of integrating ethnic costume elements with modern clothing, providing a theoretical basis for the creative transformation and innovative application of traditional Qiang costumes in modern design, and allowing those distinctive ethnic costumes, which are disappearing from the people's view, to enter into the public's field of vision once again. This is of great significance for the protection of traditional ethnic minority costume resources, the promotion of costume culture and the development of ethnic costumes.

**Analysis of previous research.** The Qiang nationality is one of the traditional ethnic minorities in southwest China. Its rich cultural heritage and unique costume culture have attracted the attention of many scholars and have done relevant research work.
In terms of historical and cultural research, China has organized a large number of experts and scholars to conduct detailed social and historical surveys and Qiang language surveys in the Qiang region, accumulating rich data. In 1961, the Sichuan Qiang investigation team compiled «A Brief History of the Qiang Ethnic Group» and «The Qiang Ethnic Group», which conducted a detailed examination of the social, historical, and cultural life of the Qiang region at that time. Since the 1980s, research on the Qiang ethnic group has become active again. With the efforts of scholars, research on the Qiang ethnic group has gradually formed a comprehensive disciplinary system covering various fields such as ethnology, ethnic history, and ethnic language [1]. The «History of the Qiang People», is currently an authoritative work on Qiang research in China. It collects rich historical materials from over 4000 years ago to the eve of the establishment of New China, systematically explores the origin and evolution of Qiang development and its branches, and is the most systematic and detailed monograph on Qiang history to date [2]. Wang M. K. [3] used «Qiang» as a case study to deeply discuss the origin of «ethnicity» and the integration and transformation of marginalized ethnic groups in China. He discussed the identification and differentiation in the social structure of the Qiang ethnic group, the exemplary narrative of the Qiang ethnic calendar and the formation of historical mentality, and the cultural reconstruction and performance under ethnic identity from the perspectives of defining cognition, construction, and other analysis using historical literature and field survey data. In order to truly and objectively introduce the perseverance of the Qiang nationality, Geng S. J. [4] made a lot of new and useful explorations on the history of the Qiang nationality by using the knowledge of archaeology, meteorology, genetics, sociology, history and linguistics, and comprehensively and thoroughly demonstrated the long history of the Qiang nationality.

Qiang costumes are closely related to Qiang's history and culture, reflecting the social identity, regional characteristics, and cultural identity of the Qiang people. The styles and decorative patterns of Qiang costumes carry the inheritance and evolution of Qiang's history and culture. The clothing of the Qiang ethnic group is mainly composed of robes, and in its historical process of formation, it has been influenced by neighboring Tibetans, Yi ethnic groups, and Han ethnic groups [5]. Deng P. M. [6] tells the basic characteristics of Qiang costumes in the form of documentary, and the relationship between costumes and daily life, festivals, etiquette, beliefs and living environment. On the basis of field investigation and literature, Li M. [7] took the Qiang women's clothing in Lixian County as an example to analyze in detail the cultural features of the Qiang women's clothing in Lixian County between Han and Tibetan. Jiao F. [8] started with the shape and composition elements of Qiang costumes, and through an in-depth analysis of the composition and elements of Qiang costumes in the «Shualeri» map, in order to interpret the aesthetic image and historical and cultural heritage of Qiang costumes from a new perspective.

The Qiang costume pattern takes clothing as the carrier, and its shape is beautiful, which is a symbol of symbol and memory. It plays an important role in enhancing the artistic value of Qiang costumes. Zhong M. L. [9] studied the classification and process of Qiang costume embroidery itself and analyzed its cultural connotation, historical evolution and background. Pan H. L. [10] studied the composition rules and design ideas of horn patterns in Qiang costumes in the Minjiang River Basin of Northwest Sichuan. So that people can have a deeper understanding of the origin, meaning and composition of the Qiang's horn pattern elements, enhance people's exploration and cognition of their design ideas.
and make the Qiang's clothing pattern culture better innovated, developed and inherited. Qiang H. [11] borrowed the concept of linguistics to understand the cultural connotation and symbolic significance of different levels of Qiang costume patterns and gave a systematic interpretation of the types of national costume patterns. In order to realize the transformation from planarization to three-dimensionalization of Qiang representative patterns «cloud pattern» and «horn pattern», Chen S.S. [12] carried out pattern innovation from both visual and tactile aspects, making Qiang costumes present multi-dimensional and diversified aesthetic effects.

It can be seen through the analysis of the literature that the historical evolution of the Qiang costume is understudied, and the relationship between national costume and modern clothing design needs to be further deepened.

Statement of the problem. At present, most of the research on Qiang clothing by experts and scholars is limited to the description and analysis of single clothing elements, such as embroidery, patterns, style, shape, aesthetics, etc., lacking a deep understanding and exploration of the overall historical changes of Qiang clothing culture.

This paper takes the Qiang costume change and innovative design as the research object, which has a strong relevance. By systematically analyzing the manifestations, factors and tendencies of the change of clothing form, it is not only conducive to the public's comprehensive understanding of the Qiang dress and its cultural value as a whole, but also beneficial to the designers to better and more accurately apply the ethnic elements to modern clothing design.

The results of the research and their discussion. Qiang costumes are the crystallization of the precipitation and fusion of multiple cultures in the region, with unique cultural and artistic characteristics, and are a valuable resource for the modern fashion industry.

The changing process of Qiang costumes shape

The origin of Qiang costumes can be traced back to the prehistoric era. It can be seen from the rock paintings of the northern nomadic people and the ancient literature of the Qiang people's «Buleri (Illustrated Sutr)» that the ancients had long feathers on their heads and beast-skin skirts at their waists. At that time, there were stone rings, bone ornaments and other accessories, which proved that the northern nomadic people longed for beauty a long time ago. The Qiang costumes reflect the history and culture of the Qiang people in different periods, such as the «draped felt» of the nomadic people in the ancient times to the robes in the agricultural period; from the custom of winding heads to headbands with different characteristics; from totem to clothing patterns; from the process of leather, wool, marijuana to modern cutting, etc.

The changes in the shape of Qiang costumes began during the Qing Dynasty. Before the Qing Dynasty, the most distinctive ancient costume was «draped felt», and the production process and process of felt were relatively simple. According to the literature, in the Han Dynasty, the Qiang people in Gansu and Qinghai's «women wore Dahua felt as a decoration», and the aristocratic men of the Qiang nationality such as the «Dian nationality» in the same period also wore felt. It can be seen that the «felt» was originally one of the oldest costumes of the Qiang nationality. During the Tang and Song Dynasties, Qiang felt was more common, «New Tang Book Dangxiang Biography» said: «Men and women dress brown, felt». The clothing is mainly composed of fur and collars, and the production materials are mainly animal fur. At this time, the clothing is still non-structured clothing. After the establishment of the Western Xia Dynasty, the Dangxiang people generally wore felt hats, leather robes, girdles, hanging knives and other accessories. Under the continuous influence of the Han nationality, they gradually
wore robes and long shirts. The Western Xia Dynasty's wide-clothes culture was introduced to the Qiang people. At this time, the costumes were semi-structured costumes.

Since the beginning of the Qing Dynasty, Qiang men's costumes have been gradually «Manchuized» under the influence of the policy, but women's costumes are still the same as the Han Chinese costumes in the form of tops and skirts. Specifically, women like to braid their hair in a bun, mainly decorated with turquoise and coral, and some of them like to wear headgear, while men like to wear hats decorated with pheasant feathers; men's clothes are mainly brown, women's clothes are mainly right-over-oblique blouses and long pleated skirts, which are all embroidered with exquisite embroidery. The Manchu cheongsam of the Qing Dynasty had a greater influence on the Qiang costume, and the structure was also relatively similar, with an A- or H-shaped outline, wide and straight, simple modeling lines, ankle-length, sleeves and body even cut, a standing collar, and a bias lapel with a right overlap (Fig.1). At this time, the Qiang dress pattern had already been formed, which was roughly the same as today's Qiang dress, with long shirts and robes as the main ones, waistbands, kangs, blue or white pants, and embroidered shoes or boots (Fig.2).

In the early period of the Republic of China, under the oppression of the local warlords, the economic development was poor, and the poor Qiang people wore hemp long shirts, straw shoes or cloth shoes; the rich and strong Qiang people wore sheepskin shoulders, soil cloth or blue cotton long shirts. Clothing inherited the Qing Dynasty's robe system, and the fabrics were mainly wool, cotton, leather and hemp fabrics. At the end of the Republic of China, Western clothing was introduced into China. The traditional clothing of the Qiang people was influenced by Western clothing. Some people wore Zhongshan clothing, jewellery, and leather shoes.

After the reform and opening up, China's costume culture entered a period of prosperity. Influenced by the Han culture, the shape of Qiang costumes has also evolved from the initial right-necked long shirts and outer shoulders to Zhongshan suits, workwear, and popular costumes. Shoes have also evolved with the progress of the times into leather shoes, high heels, etc.

Factors Affecting the Cultural Changes of Qiang Costumes

Religious culture is the soul of the Qiang people and the spiritual pillar on which the Qiang people rely for their survival and development. To a certain extent, religious culture restricts and guides the cultural development of the ethnic group, and also influences the colours and patterns of Qiang clothing. The Qiang people believe in Tibetan Buddhism, primitive religion and polytheism, and worship more than 30 kinds of deities, including the sun god, the earth god, the tree god, the mountain god, the goat god, the fire god, the god of the family, the god of labour, the god of the countryside and the god of the place. Sheep, fire and sun in nature are the main sources of Qiang costume pattern themes. Sheep is an important animal in the daily life of the Qiang people. The ancient Qiang people trained sheep and herded sheep, giving them sacred and noble significance, and gradually formed a unique sheep totem worship. Therefore, sheep patterns are indispensable in Qiang clothing [13] (Fig.3).

White stone worship is the belief custom of the Qiang nationality. The Qiang people have believed in animism and polytheism since ancient times, but they only respect white stones in polytheism. The white stone represents the Qiang people's love of life and respect for life. It is the representative symbol of all beliefs in God and the representative symbol of a national spirit and belief. As the representative of the god, «white stone» can be seen everywhere.
Fig. 1. Women's embroidery blouse in Maoxian County in the late Qing Dynasty. China [14]

Fig. 2. Modern Qiang women’s clothing. China [15]

Fig. 3. Sheep totem on clothing. China [16]

Fig. 4. Qin Xu’s clothing design work. China [17]

Fig. 5. Ancel Chen’s clothing design work. China [18]

Fig. 6. Chen Shijiang’s clothing design work. China [19]
The Qiang people put white stone on the mountain, the edge of the field, the door, the roof, the window sill and so on, hoping to get the shelter of the gods. The worship of the white stone originated from the Qiang tribe’s migration from the northwest grassland to the upper reaches of the Minjiang River, because the ancestors, with the help of the gods, used the white stone as a snow mountain and got rid of the pursuit of the magic soldiers. After reaching the upper reaches of the Minjiang River, the Qiang people dreamed of the enlightenment of the gods, and used the white stone as a weapon to repel the Geji people and rebuild their homes. They took the white stone as the representative of the gods, and gradually formed the concept of «white». The Qiang people advocate white and regard white as auspicious. The white worship in clothing comes from the worship of white stone. White symbolizes auspiciousness, happiness, truth, goodness and beauty. The cultural consciousness of advocating white has long been retained in the costumes of the Qiang people, such as wearing white headbands, wearing white linen long shirts, wearing white sheepskin shoulders, and playing white leggings.

The Qiang traditional costumes reflect the aesthetic taste and aesthetic pursuit of the Qiang people. Their costumes reflect the mutual influence and traditional origin relationship between the Qiang culture and the Han and Tibetan cultures in the long-term development process from colour, style, pattern and pattern.

In the process of migration, the «Qiang people» had close contact with the Han people and the Tubo people, absorbed the Han and Tibetan culture, formed a diversified aesthetic consciousness, and created a unique costume art. The Qiang costumes are mainly divided into two regions: the north and the south. Close to the Han nationality, the costumes of the Han nationality are affected by the costumes of the south. Close to the Tibetans, the use of Tibetan costumes and the elements reflecting the grassland area are the northern costumes [11]. The southern clothing is influenced by the Han nationality. For the convenience of daily life, people mainly wear Han costumes, sheepskin coats, girdle waists, long shirts become shorter, and wide clothes become narrower, simplifying the complex edging and pattern patterns. The northern costumes are deeply influenced by Tibetans. They wear costumes similar to Tibetans, such as big collars, long sleeves, gowns, belt belts, and high-rise leather boots. The accessories are mainly agate, coral beads, and jade. They also wear silver rings, Tibetan knives, gold and silver jewellery and other decorations.

Qiang costume elements and modern clothing design

Qiang costumes have unique artistic styles, national characteristics and artistic charm. With the continuous evolution of fashion and the intermingling of multiple cultures, Qiang costume culture has gradually attracted the attention of designers, integrating the traditional elements of Qiang dress with the innovative thinking of modern design, bringing new possibilities for clothing design.

The patterns of Qiang costumes are rich and varied with deep meaning. In modern clothing design, these patterns can be borrowed and utilized to make the clothing present unique cultural connotations and visual effects. Whether the patterns of Qiang costumes are directly applied to modern costumes or reinterpreted and combined with the patterns, artistic costumes can be created. The pattern work «December Flower» by Yang Huazhen, the inheritor of Chinese Tibetan and Qiang embroidery, was selected by the luxury brand Hermès, which applied it directly to silk scarves. The work of designer Qin Xu's «Dashan Zhitu» is based on modern dresses and combines with the traditional patterns of the Qiang people, presenting a perfect blend of modern and traditional clothing culture. She used pomegranate flowers and autumn begonia to form a sheep's head pattern, which
The colours of Qiang costumes are unique. The Qiang people believe in white stone and fire, so white and red have become the representative colours of Qiang costumes, together with yellow, blue and green, which, through clever matching, create a warm and cheerful atmosphere, conveying the Qiang people's love of life and reverence for nature. Under the modern aesthetic concept, combining traditional colours with popular colours can create clothing that is both fashionable and rich in national characteristics. For example, through the fusion of colours, traditional colours and popular colours are naturally transitioned and articulated to create a harmonious and unified visual effect. In 2019, Ancel Chen’s «Qiang as Source» collection was launched at Milan Fashion Week. She extracted the highly saturated colours of red, orange, yellow, and blue from the headdresses, magic weapons, and totems on the heads of goats used in the rituals of the «Shibi» culture, blending them into the main colours of the entire collection, which is very ethnic (Fig.5).

The style and structure of Qiang costume focus on comfort and adaptability, and its loose and free design concept reflects the lifestyle and aesthetic concept of the Qiang people. This design concept has been newly interpreted and innovated in modern clothing design. When designing clothes, we can improve, optimize and reconstruct the traditional flat clothing structure combined with modern three-dimensional clothing to create clothes that meet modern aesthetics and have functionality at the same time. In 2023, designer Chen Shijiang’s «Crazy Magic» works incorporate novel and avant-garde design concepts, and her design style is subversive. She breaks the traditional structural framework of Qiang clothing, combining traditional Qiang clothing and cheongsam boldly, realizing the organic combination of Chinese style and Western three-dimensional cutting method, and designing works that are both subtle and full of tension (Fig.6).

In the innovative design of clothing, the application of ethnic elements can give clothing a unique cultural flavour and sense of art, expanding the designer's design space. In the process of applying Qiang costume elements, it is not only the borrowing and innovation in design form, but also the inheritance and promotion of cultural spirit, which is an expression of inner emotion and the embodiment of cultural identity.

Conclusions. As an important carrier of Qiang culture, Qiang dress has become a cultural symbol. People can understand the lifestyle, values and aesthetics of the Qiang people through the costumes. The changes in the form of Qiang costumes are divided by the Qing Dynasty. Before the Qing Dynasty, the Qiang costumes are the most distinctive in «draped felt» and belonged to semi-structured costumes. After the Qing Dynasty, the main form of men’s clothing is long robes, while women followed the Han style of upper and lower skirts, belonging to the fully structured clothing. Qiang costume culture is influenced by religion and Han-Tibetan culture. Sheep and white stone are the most worshipped. Therefore, the pattern on the costume is mostly a horn pattern, and the white in the costume means auspiciousness, happiness and beauty. Due to regional differences, the costumes of villages are also different in shape. The rich decorative language of Qiang costumes can be a source of inspiration and an important material for designers to create, and it has brought a lot of inspiration and influences to modern clothing design. An in-depth understanding of the changes and cultural connotations of Qiang costumes will help designers integrate ethnic elements into modern fashion, thus promoting the inheritance and development of Qiang costume culture.
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статті можуть бути використані у іноваційних методах дизайну одягу з успадкуванням елементів національної спадщини, які є втіленням традицій китайської культури.

**Ключові слова:** китайський костюм, культурна спадщина, етнічна принадлежність, дизайн одягу, культура Китаю, національний костюм.

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