

“Fast” or “Slow”: Chinese Clothing Comparison between Commercialization Promotion and Archaeological Inheritance

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Abstract. The research background of this paper is based on the proposal of the 14th Five Year Plan for Cultural Development, mainly discussing whether the current Chinese clothing culture needs more commercial promotion of fast fashion or slow paced and refined research on clothing archaeology inheritance. “Fast” refers to the commercial promotion of fast fashion, and “slow” refers to the fine research of clothing archaeology. The paper discusses the advantages and disadvantages of Chinese culture in commercial promotion and clothing archaeology research by using two research methods: literature review and practical investigation. These two perspectives are compared, and feasible suggestions are proposed. This study argues that the commercialization of fast fashion and slow-paced archaeological research on clothing have their own advantages and disadvantages. How to combine and improve optimization has become a key issue. The entire paper’s discussion has profound significance for the inheritance and dissemination of clothing to the public.

Keywords: Traditional culture; Silk Road; archaeological research; Hanfu Experience Hall.

1. Introduction

With the 14th Five Year Plan’s emphasis on the comprehensive revitalization of traditional culture, society’s attention and development of Chinese traditional culture have greatly increased [1]. The report points out that it is necessary to improve the intangible cultural heritage system, consolidate the achievements of exploring the origins of Chinese civilization, correctly reflect the history of Chinese civilization, and innovate ways of cultural exchange to achieve the integration of economy and culture. Thus, for the inheritance and promotion of traditional Chinese culture, “fast” refers to the commercial promotion of fast fashion, and “slow” refers to the fine research of clothing archaeology. Although the two may seem to conflict with each other due to their speed, they are not mutually exclusive, but rather complementary and mutually reinforcing aspects. Both approaches have played important roles in protecting and promoting traditional Chinese culture at different levels.

This paper mainly discusses the commercial promotion of fast fashion and the archaeological inheritance of slow-paced refined research in the field of clothing. It analyzes the models and advantages and disadvantages of both approaches and summarizes the two methods through literature review and on-site experience. Finally, this paper draws conclusions and proposes feasible suggestions on how to improve slow paced archaeological research and reach the public through commercial promotion.

2. Commercial Promotion of Traditional Culture

Currently, China adopts the fast fashion model in promoting culture, such as the Hanfu Experience Hall, which provides services such as taking photos and applying makeup while wearing Hanfu, allowing more people to experience and understand Hanfu culture firsthand. This experience not only increases people’s sense of identity with traditional culture, but also promotes cultural and tourism consumption. The Xi’an Big Wild Goose Pagoda Scenic Area has increased the check-in rate of tourists and increased the exposure of the scenic area on social media platforms by arranging suitable locations for taking photos in Hanfu, thereby attracting more tourists to come and experience it [2].

In today's society, with the advancement of science and technology, the era of new media has arrived. The rapidly developing digital technology not only plays a crucial role in information dissemination, but also provides new ideas and paths for the dissemination of intangible cultural heritage [3]. In the digital age, Hanfu Cultural Experience Center fully utilizes modern technological means, such as cross-border integration with animation, gaming, film and television art, live streaming, and other fields, breaking down the barriers of Hanfu culture in terms of time, space, and generation. This integration not only enhances the popularity of Hanfu culture and promotes its widespread dissemination, but also opens up the development of Hanfu cultural industry, making Hanfu culture vibrant in the digital age.

Therefore, besides the Hanfu Experience Hall, how can Chinese society spread Chinese culture to the outside world? This inevitably brings up a "Silk Road" that runs through history. Looking back at ancient times, it was this Silk Road that made Chinese style popular in Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries. The Silk Road originated in the 11th century with the strong support of adventurers and missionaries such as Marco Polo and Saint Eudoric who traveled to China. After centuries of development, with the opening of more shipping routes from Europe to the East, Chinese items such as porcelain, tea, silk, etc. have captivated European nobles, and the Chinese style has become increasingly strong. Porcelain, silk, lacquerware, and other fashionable goods imported from China are deeply loved by European people, which has led many European designers and craftsmen to imitate Chinese design [4]. The European longing and curiosity for the mysterious East have spread and developed the Chinese style and culture, as well as the economy, which is worth learning from in today's society.

3. Specialized Clothing Archaeology Inherits Traditional Culture

The contemporary research methods for clothing archaeology mainly include archaeological typology, zoning, and comparative classification methods, as well as a combination of physical objects, images, and literature research methods. For example, when studying the underwear clothing unearthed from ancient tombs in the Ming Dynasty, a research method that combines physical objects, images, and literary contributions was mainly adopted. That is, a comprehensive and in-depth study of ancient clothing was conducted by comprehensively using archaeological artifacts, historical image records, and literature materials. This research method can provide precise measurement and study of clothing, from the excavation, cleaning, and analysis of cultural relics to the measurement, drawing, and typesetting of cultural relics, and then to digital restoration and garment verification. Fine research is helpful for the inheritance of traditional culture and exploration of history.

For example, Shen Congwen successfully applied this method in his pioneering research on ancient Chinese clothing, overcoming difficulties such as insufficient data and summarizing the development clues of ancient Chinese clothing [5]. The book describes clothing, but it cannot be solely based on clothing. From the carrier of clothing, it is not difficult to glimpse the trajectory of political, military, economic, cultural, folk, philosophical, ethical, and many other changes in the past dynasties of China. It can be seen that clothing archaeology has played a significant role in exploring history.

At the same time, the clothing relics unearthed from clothing archaeology can provide good evidence of history and serve as excellent evidence for cultural tracing. For example, Japan and South Korea's reference to Chinese clothing can be confirmed by archaeological excavations, proving that Chinese clothing culture predates them and is its origin. Meanwhile, clothing archaeology can also avoid the problem of cultural appropriation. Cultural appropriation refers to the inappropriate and inaccurate use of elements from minority or disadvantaged cultures by dominant cultures in order to gain economic benefits, as demonstrated in the Dior horse face dress incident.

In recent years, Dior's new skirt is similar to China's "horse face skirt". The shape of a skirt launched by Dior is almost the same as that of China's horse face skirt, and the selling price is up to 29000 yuan. Dior's "original dresses" have relatively few original elements. The statement it

mentioned was inspired by Korean clothing. This requires a comparison between the Western misled traditional Korean clothing “shang” and the Chinese Ming Dynasty “horse faced skirt” from both historical and contemporary perspectives. This comparison can deny that the inspiration comes from traditional Korean clothing. In terms of style, the two seem to have similarities.

However, restoring history, the origin of “shang” can be explained as follows: “shang” was introduced to the Korean Peninsula through “gifting clothing”, forming the prototype of traditional clothing today [6]. This cultural appropriation for economic benefits has led Hanfu enthusiasts to protest at Dior stores wearing horse faced skirts. In the end, Dior was forced by public opinion to remove the dress. Clothing archaeology avoids cultural appropriation, prevents economic exploitation, and continues the excellent traditional Chinese culture.

4. Comparative Analysis of “Fast” and “Slow”

There are the following drawbacks to the commercial promotion of “fast” culture, such as the Hanfu Experience Hall. The Hanfu Experience Hall did not follow the cultural development trajectory in its process. Firstly, clothing is not classified according to dynasties or ethnic groups, and the styles available for selection are different from those in historical clothing, mostly simplified; Then try on the makeup, the complete internet celebrity makeup assembly line operation cannot reflect the subtle and elegant beauty of ancient Chinese willow leaf eyebrows. Although similar cultural experiences can generate economic benefits through traditional clothing, the production of popular products on assembly lines limits the audience. Furthermore, the lack of clothing inheritance makes it an obvious disadvantage.

There are also the following drawbacks to archaeological research on “slow” clothing. Archaeology of clothing requires a significant amount of manpower and resources, and has a very long cycle, but the economic benefits gained are minimal. The process of clothing archaeology research includes archaeological excavation, application of natural science and technology, literature research, and research results obtained through these methods. In archaeological excavations, a professional archaeological team is required to carry out excavation work and clean up the cultural relics after excavation to ensure that they are well preserved.

Ancient clothing, including clothing, shoes, socks, accessories, etc., can be identified as physical materials. After obtaining physical data, it is necessary to use natural science and technology, such as infrared spectroscopy analysis, to accurately determine the age and composition of ancient clothing, providing objective time and material basis for research. In the writing of the excavation briefing, literature research is essential. By studying ancient literature, information on the use of ancient costumes, traditional etiquette, and the social class of tomb owners can be obtained. The above complex and detailed process is required to produce research results [7].

5. Conclusion

In summary, the commercialization of fast fashion and the slow-paced archaeological research on clothing have their own advantages and disadvantages. How to combine and improve optimization has become a key issue. This article believes that on the one hand, it is possible to record and produce variety shows during the process of clothing archaeology, allowing viewers to learn about Chinese culture while watching and spreading it. In addition, cultural and creative products with a wide audience and the needs of the people can be launched through cooperation between clothing archaeology and local cultural tourism, increasing economic benefits.

Finally, the promotion of traditional culture can be combined with modern film and television dramas, adapting the plot of different eras to the costumes of different eras and standardizing the output. Only by attaching importance to clothing archaeology and cultural tracing, while also considering commercial dissemination, can the world understand traditional Chinese culture. Only

fast fashion developed on this basis can achieve long-term economic benefits and development prospects.

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