

Research on the Revival of Chinese Fashion from a Sociological Perspective

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Abstract: Fashion is a complex social phenomenon. It not only reflects the conventional group aesthetic concept but also demonstrates the unique aesthetic view of individuals, embodying the collision and integration of cultural and artistic concepts between individuals and groups, thus becoming a distinctive social trend. Fashion involves culture, economy, society, and psychology, and has become a hot topic in sociological research. This article deeply analyzes the essence of fashion phenomena using sociological theories, expounds on the connotation of Chinese fashion, looks ahead to the path of the revival of Chinese fashion, and proposes that it is necessary to deeply explore the leading role of the media in fashion, enhance the credibility of the media, use self-media to awaken the public's attention to Chinese fashion, and deeply tap the potential customers for the revival of fashion, so that China can regain its voice in the fashion field and promote social and economic development.

Keywords: Sociology; Chinese fashion; Connotation interpretation; Revival path

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1. Introduction

The Silk Road, established thousands of years ago, built a “bridge” for cultural, economic, and political exchanges between China and the world. Our traditional Chinese clothing, accessories, porcelain, and tea conquered Western aesthetics, reached the commanding heights of global fashion, and brought considerable economic benefits. However, with the changes of history and the rapid rise of modern art, the dissemination and inheritance of traditional culture face many challenges, which also pose a significant challenge to the cultural confidence of the Chinese people and the inheritance of traditional culture. In order to regain the voice for traditional Chinese fashion, we need to recognize the beauty of Chinese fashion, promote the intersection and integration of traditional culture and modern fashion, and rejuvenate Chinese fashion.

2. Analysis of fashion phenomena from a sociological perspective

2.1. A unique social phenomenon

From a sociological perspective, fashion is the prevalence of a certain phenomenon within society, manifested in clothing, accessories, ideas, and behaviors, gradually becoming various models or templates, which in turn trigger group imitation and pursuit. At the same time, fashion is also regarded as a special social phenomenon and symbol, as well as a special

social institution, reflecting an individual's social status, identity, cultural identity, and values from the side. For example, people showcase their social status, cultural taste, and aesthetic style by wearing fashionable clothes, accessories, and precious jewels, thus gaining recognition and respect in social interactions. American sociologist Herbert Blumer believed that fashion is a popular and widely-accepted style that reflects the values and aesthetic views of an individual or a certain group, subtly influencing the value-judgment process of others.

2.2. Being consumed as a symbol

From a sociological perspective, the reason why fashion has become a special commodity does not lie in its practical value or necessity, but in people's pursuit of fashion. More importantly, it is the symbolic meaning behind the fashion symbol, which means that fashion is consumed as a symbol. People choose to consume fashion products because they identify with the culture and values contained in these products. They hope to obtain the recognition and praise of others and join certain specific circles by wearing fashion products and imitating fashion behaviors, thus obtaining more resources. For example, many young consumers like to buy luxury brands such as Dior, LV, and Coach to express their success, unique taste, and values, so as to receive more preferential treatment in social interactions. This not only satisfies their personal consumption needs but also meets their psychological and spiritual needs.

2.3. The emergence of consumption-level differences

The famous sociologist Georg Simmel believed that fashion is the product of a highly prosperous social economy. From initially meeting the needs of daily life to now reflecting an individual's social status and aesthetic value, it reflects the differences among groups with different economic levels, thus forming social fashion^[1]. With the increase in economic income, more and more people hope to show their income level and social status through clothing, jewelry, and other items. They subtly imitate the outfits of celebrities and well-known entrepreneurs, inadvertently spreading the concept of fashion, which has become a common social phenomenon. To a certain extent, fashion is a luxurious consumption that prevails among the upper class and gradually evolves into a form of social communication. The lower class hardly has the ability to enjoy this kind of fashion. Through fashion consumption, the class differentiation behind it can be seen.

3. Interpretation of the connotation of Chinese fashion from a sociological perspective

3.1. Ensuring that cultural confidence is not constrained by fashion

Fashion is not only a product of the development of human society and the evolution of ideological understanding but also a carrier for demonstrating human nature and expressing thoughts. From a sociological perspective, asset owners can use fashion to show their social status and personal preferences and transform it into a tool for guiding value consciousness, subtly changing people's values. In the context of economic globalization, we should not only promote the integration of modern art with traditional culture and intangible cultural heritage skills, create a "Chinese fashion style," and promote the innovation of Chinese fashion. We should also promote Chinese culture and convey Chinese fashion concepts through Chinese clothing, handicrafts, and cultural and creative products. Chinese fashion advocates the concept that "beauty is a kind of power," promoting the idea that one can obtain strength from external beauty and tending towards the beauty of subtlety, restraint, and harmony. By transmitting the core values of traditional culture through Chinese fashion, we can further expand the international influence of Chinese culture.

3.2. Inheriting and promoting Chinese color aesthetics

Chinese-style colors emphasize an appropriate balance between richness and simplicity, presenting an elegant and refined oriental beauty. From a sociological perspective, we should inherit and carry forward Chinese color aesthetics, study and promote traditional Chinese painting, ceramic coloring and sculpture, and embroidery, understand the wisdom of the ancients in color use, and apply it to advertising design, fashion design, cultural and creative product design, and landscape

design. This allows traditional colors to go global with the trend of fashion, enabling the world to understand Chinese fashion and Chinese colors^[2]. For example, in the 2022 Spring Festival Gala of China Media Group, the dance drama program “Only This Green” was launched. It tells the story of a young researcher at the Palace Museum “traveling back” to the Northern Song Dynasty. From the perspective of the “scroll unfold,” the dance interprets the famous painting “A Panorama of Rivers and Mountains.” The unique “green” color was rendered through the costumes of the dancers and the stage scenery, shocking the world with the unique Chinese color aesthetics and better promoting Chinese fashion.

3.3. Seeking a dynamic balance between adherence and change

The revival of the Chinese market from a sociological perspective is by no means a mechanical application of traditional cultural elements. Instead, it is necessary to endow fashion with new values by using traditional culture. On the one hand, we should adhere to excellent traditional Chinese culture and cultural values, promote the integration of traditional culture and modern fashion, and create a unique Chinese fashion style. On the other hand, we should keep pace with the times, combine with the background of economic globalization, seize the opportunity of the “Internet +” era, reinterpret Chinese fashion, and use new technologies to promote traditional culture. We should achieve a dynamic balance between adherence and change to promote the revival of Chinese fashion.

4. The path to the revival of Chinese fashion from a sociological perspective

4.1. Deeply exploring the guiding role of the media in fashion

In the “Internet +” era, the media plays an important role in fashion dissemination and consumption. It has given rise to fashion media, fashion magazines, and short-video platforms, becoming the “barometer” of fashion. From a sociological perspective, we should build our own fashion media platforms to better spread traditional Chinese culture, stimulate the public’s love for Chinese fashion, guide the public to establish correct values, guide fashion consumption, and further promote the rise of Chinese fashion. First of all, domestic fashion magazines should fulfill their social responsibilities. Through text, pictures, and videos, they should promote traditional clothing, accessories, and handicrafts, and turn traditional clothing and handicrafts into unique Chinese luxury goods. This will enable more people to understand Chinese double-sided embroidery, fragrant cloud gauze, and other handicrafts, guide more consumers to buy Chinese fashion brand products and traditional handicrafts, and enhance the voice of Chinese fashion^[3]. For example, Guo Pei, the only domestic designer invited to participate in the Paris Haute Couture Week, founded her own brand. She integrated traditional Chinese embroidery, auspicious patterns, and totems into the design of gowns, bringing Chinese fashion to the international fashion stage, presenting the beauty of the East to the world, attracting the attention of major fashion media, promoting Chinese culture, and inadvertently setting off a trend of Chinese fashion, laying a good foundation for the revival of Chinese fashion.

4.2. Enhancing the credibility of fashion media

From the perspective of social psychology, the public often has a herd mentality and is more likely to choose their clothing, jewelry, and behaviors according to fashion trends. Therefore, we should attach importance to the credibility of fashion media, be vigilant against the influence of traffic, and lead the public’s pursuit of a better life with high-quality fashion information, laying a good foundation for the development of the cultural industry and the clothing industry. Short-video platforms should attach importance to the revival of Chinese fashion, shoulder the responsibility of guiding social trends, carefully produce short-videos, promote traditional culture, and enhance their own credibility. For example, Li Ziqi, an online influencer who appeared on the 2025 CCTV Spring Festival Gala, performed the opening visual show “Welcome Good Fortune” in a magnificent traditional Chinese costume, showcasing the essence of 13 intangible cultural heritage skills, from Nanjing brocade to Weifang kites, and then to Yangzhou velvet flowers. Each element was a loving tribute to China’s intangible cultural heritage. It quickly topped the short-video hot search lists on Douyin, Weibo, and CCTV,

and through global broadcasts, it reached the world, bringing a shock to the world. Douyin, Weibo, and CCTV promoted intangible cultural heritage through short-videos, awakening people's attention to traditional handicrafts, making intangible cultural heritage a new fashion, thus creating new opportunities for the cultural and creative industry and contributing to the revival of Chinese fashion.

4.3. Using self-media to awaken the public's fashion self-awareness

From a sociological perspective, self-media is a product of social development. It has continuously narrowed the gap in fashion aesthetics between the fashion circle and the public, giving rise to the term "universal fashion" and making fashion a hot topic on the Internet again. It has also given rise to new occupations such as fashion bloggers and beauty bloggers, and these self-media have become the "barometers" of fashion. Based on this, we should use self-media to awaken the public's attention to Chinese fashion, promote Hanfu culture and traditional jewelry through self-media, attract more consumers to buy traditional handicrafts, promote their self-awareness, and thus encourage them to take the initiative to promote traditional culture and inherit Chinese fashion. In 2023, a short video titled "Escape from the British Museum" became popular quickly. It not only introduced Chinese culture but also made more people aware of fashionable items with a Chinese style, such as Hanfu and jade accessories^[4]. Fashion media platforms such as Douyin and Bilibili strongly recommended this short video. It not only made people in China notice the beauty of the traditional clothing and head ornaments of the little jade pot in the video but also made them pay attention to Chinese cultural relics lost overseas, presenting the oriental aesthetics of Chinese cultural relics, calling on people in China to remember history, and encouraging overseas students to actively spread Chinese culture. The popularity of this short video has led more young people to wear Hanfu and traditional hair ornaments, making Hanfu a new fashion, giving play to the educational role of fashion, and enabling the public to establish correct cultural values and enhance their cultural confidence.

4.4. Deeply tapping the potential customers for the revival of fashion

With the further deepening of reform and opening-up, China's national economy has developed rapidly, and its comprehensive national strength has been significantly enhanced. Young people have received a better education and have become the most powerful supporters and participants in the revival of Chinese fashion. More and more overseas students are wearing Tang suits, Hanfu, and ethnic minority costumes on the streets, allowing foreigners to have a more intuitive understanding of Chinese culture, bringing them a visual shock, and actively spreading Chinese culture, enabling Chinese fashion to reach a broader international stage. In 2025, the animated film "Ne Zha: The Rebirth of the Demon Child" was released, quickly topping the domestic box-office chart and becoming the first Asian film to enter the top ten of the global film rankings. It was also screened in countries such as the United States and Canada, not only setting off a movie-watching craze among overseas Chinese and overseas students but also attracting many foreigners to watch. This film not only demonstrated unique Chinese totems, ancient architecture, porcelain, and other traditional cultures but also made more people understand the humorous Sichuan dialect. It promoted the Chinese national spirit of mastering one's own fate and striving for self-improvement, becoming a representative work of the revival of Chinese fashion, better spreading traditional Chinese culture, and laying a solid foundation for the revival of Chinese fashion.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the revival of Chinese fashion cannot be achieved without the inheritance and promotion of the younger generation. It is also an important guarantee for enhancing the influence of Chinese culture. The younger generation should shoulder the responsibility of inheriting and promoting excellent traditional Chinese culture, use social media to promote Chinese embroidery, porcelain, and ethnic minority costumes, promote the spread of Chinese fashion, enable Chinese fashion to be appreciated by the world, and make Chinese fashion return to the top of the world fashion stage, contributing to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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