

## On The Beauty Of Baima Tibetan Costume

Meidi Gong, Bingying Tian

Mianyang Teachers College, Mianyang SiChuan, 621000, China

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**Abstract:** Clothing is the cultural symbol of a nation and the aesthetic expression of a group of ethnic groups. The Baima people living in the border area of Sichuan and Gansu have completely preserved their original ecological folk culture, especially clothing. This article attempts to highlight the unique costume beauty of Baima Tibetan from three aspects of body beauty, color beauty and natural beauty from the perspective of costume aesthetics. With this article, I hope that more scholars will participate in the Baima Tibetan costume aesthetic research.

### Introduction

The Baima Tibetans, commonly known as the "Baima People", are a minority with a long history and unique humane customs. After thousands of years of wind and rain, the folk culture of this ethnic group still retains the original features of simplicity. Since the 1980s, many domestic scholars have done a lot of research on the Baima people's geography, language, history, culture, customs and other aspects. In order to inherit and develop this rare culture, the People's Government of Mianyang City also issued a notice on "Special Action Plan for the Inheritance and Development of Baima Culture (2020-2025)" on March 16, 2020, which further clarified that "mainly protection, rescue The ideological line of "first, reasonable use, inheritance and development" also mentioned that it will be committed to building a "Baima Xiqiang · national customs" cultural and tourist boutique line construction, and increase the promotion of Baima culture to the outside. In the current "non-legacy protection" context, ethnic minority clothing culture with Chinese characteristics has increasingly attracted more people's attention. With this article, I hope that more scholars will participate in the Baima Tibetan clothing aesthetic research.

Today, there are more than 10,000 "Bai Ma people" living in the border area of Han, Tibet and Qiang in the northwest of the Sichuan Basin (Mr. Fei Xiaotong mentioned "Pingwu Tibetans" in the article "Identification of Nationalities in China", namely " Baima people"<sup>[1]</sup>), mainly distributed in the Baishui River and Boyu River Basin at the border of Sichuan and Gansu, bordering the Qinling Mountains in the north, Hengduan Mountains in the southwest, and Micang Mountain in the east, on the edge of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, at an altitude of 1,000 to 3,000 meters On the mountainside. It is precisely because of the special geographical environment in the past that the ethnic survivors of this ancient nation have remained relatively intact. As the most direct visual carrier of Baima Tibetan folk culture, clothing has distinct personality characteristics from the surrounding ethnic groups such as Qiang and Jiarong Tibetan. It contains deep aesthetic interest and artistic value, and is the most delicate aesthetic expression of the national spirit. This article attempts to highlight the unique costume beauty of Baima Tibetan from three aspects of body beauty, color beauty and natural beauty from the perspective of costume aesthetics.

### 1. Baima Tibetan Costume Development Stage

Due to the particularity of the long-term preservation of clothing objects and some holders' weak views on the protection of traditional clothing (including historical documents), the earliest Baima Tibetan clothing can be traced back to the late Qing Dynasty. According to the Emperor Qing Gong Gongtu compiled in the Qianlong period of the Qing Dynasty, Fanmin of Wenxian County "Men wore felt hats and put chickens on them; women wiped their foreheads, embellished with pearl stones, and clothed them in five-colored clothes." <sup>[2]</sup> It can be seen from the description that the

current Baima people's clothing still maintains the basic style consistent since the Qing Dynasty. Since the late period, the existing Baima Tibetan clothing can be roughly divided into three development stages: the first stage, from the late Qing Dynasty to 1949, at this time, the Baima people's clothing basically retains the ancient style of their national clothing, the fabric is Burlap or brown (a kind of wool fabric), with a small amount of embroidery and silk as a partial pattern decoration, the craft is simple and delicate, the pattern content and format are relatively fixed; the second stage, from 1949 to the late 1970s, due to the special influence of special social politics and era factors, the Baima people's traditional clothing ecology has quietly changed. On the basis of maintaining the basic standard of national costumes, the fabrics are produced in large quantities using cotton cloth produced by modern machines. At the same time, the patterns of various cotton cloths are applied to the pattern decoration of the clothing, and a unique visual effect is obtained; the third stage, the 20th century from the end of the 1970s to the present, with the long-term ethnic integration and the influence of modern scientific and technological civilization, the Baima people's clothing has undergone tremendous changes on the basis of maintaining its basic structure. For example, the fabrics began to use more gorgeous modern Nizi and silk. Mechanized production also covers more abundant content such as basic decorative components. The aesthetics of clothing that has entered this stage has already joined the atmosphere of the times in a modern environment.

## **2. Beauty Of Baima Tibetan Dress**

"The moon in the sky is bright, the girl in the village is so beautiful, the boy who loves to dance comes to dance, the girl who can sing comes to sing. What to wear on the boy's head, what to wear on the girl's head, shaga on the boy's head, the girls had fish steaks on their heads. What was inserted on the top of the shaga, what was attached to the fish steak, and feathers were inserted on the top of the shaga, and pearls were attached to the fish steak. The feathers fluttered in the wind, and the pearls of the fish steak shined. Baima Shanzhai is boundless." This folk song that has been handed down to this day vividly shows the passionate ethnic personality of the Baima people, and also simply records the traditional collocation of the clothing between men and women of this ethnic group. The culture of a nation itself is constantly evolving, but in this long process, there are always some fundamental and unchanging things that use multiple forms as carriers, showing their traditional and unique aesthetic taste.

### **2.1. Beauty of the human body**

The Baima Tibetans have language but no text, and people keep their accounts by word of mouth. The national aesthetic consciousness is passed down in exquisite and colorful traditional costumes. Baima people's clothing can be divided into men's clothing and women's clothing. In daily life, white horse males often wear the shag hat, wearing a denim shirt, wide waist and large crotch pants, wearing a black belt, leggings, and wearing shoes. Men's overall is simple and bright, with few accessories. In comparison, the white horse women's clothing is more complex and has a variety of dress types. In addition to the basic pleated gown, it also includes a shag hat, fish bone headgear, fish bone brand chest ornament, waistcoat, short shirt, belt, Embroidered shoes and other accessories such as purses and jewelry. Although there have been more than three hundred years of historical evolution since the Qing Dynasty, the body structure of the Baima Tibetan clothing has remained unchanged regardless of men's or women's clothing, and even some patterns have been followed to this day.

The main dress of the Baima people is a top and bottom gown, the women's dress is a pleated dress, called "Xiangma", and the men's dress is a jumpsuit, called "Chunna". Both men's and women's gowns adopt a straight plane structure, symmetrical cutting, no buckle, tied with a rope, there is no strict limit on the body shape and size of the human body. Take the autumn and winter gowns (figure 1) as an example, the shape is large, symmetrical straight, and the collar is right, you can see that the Baima people value the smoothness of the lines in their clothes, plus some are used to embellish the three-dimensional craftsmanship. The overall beauty of the appearance plays a vital

role. The women's "Xiangma" is long at the ankles and is tightened with a hand-knitted colored wool geometric pattern belt. The belt is positioned higher, which makes the lower skirt occupy the majority, visually stretching the lower body, reflecting the female image solemnity and elegance of the woman can better reflect the curvaceous beauty of the woman from the side or the back. The hem length of the men's "chunna" is usually as long as the ankle. When working, the man will pull up the robe and tie it up with a belt to form a loose upper body, the hem becomes the length of the knee, and put the trousers in the ankle-to-knee leg is tightly bound with hemp leggings (Hakuba is called "Siliyeji"), giving the whole a sense of movement, but also a neat beauty. The dress form is the same as the upper and lower dress, but why does the dress of men and women give people different aesthetics? There is a visual center issue here: the women's wide belt is tied to the upper middle waist (belt width can reach 22cm), the upper edge of the belt directly reaches the lower bust line, and the white fish domino on the chest is in obvious contrast with the colored clothing and naturally formed The center of the focus attracts people's attention, coupled with the simple and smooth lines of the hem of the clothing, the contrast is staggered, the overall image gives people a small and large, and it looks unusually dignified under the background of a large bottom. The men's belt is generally tied to the lower middle waist, which basically divides the human body up and down, giving the overall a "T" shape, especially when working attire, visually enhances the male's sense of calmness and strength. It is not difficult to see that the functional aesthetic that focuses on the beautification of the human body is one of the key elements of the aesthetics of the national costume, showing a simple and practical design aesthetic. With the development of modern clothing aesthetics, the national wisdom and aesthetic value contained in this element will become more and more important.

## **2.2. Beautiful colors**

Arnheim said: Color can express feelings, and can make people have different associations and feelings.<sup>[3]</sup> Everything in the world, people and nature are mutually decorated and interdependent. As the saying goes, "Look at the color in the distance and look at the flower closer", the color of the Baima people's clothing is very high, close to the original color, and the color matching also likes to use contrasting colors. The bright and colorful saturated colors are closely related to their living environment. The monotonous and lonely mountain life needs these Decorate with fresh colors. Color is the most sensitive tangible element, especially the beautiful and harmonious color matching of Baima people. Their bold and clever combination of clothing colors form their own unique national personality. In summary, the color matching of Baima people's clothing has the following characteristics: First, the color matching is rich, and the main colors are prominent. The ethnic group advocates green, white, and red. The main color of women's clothing is red, and it is complemented by snow white fish bone neck ornaments and shaga hats. Men's clothing is mainly dark in autumn and winter, and light colors such as beige in spring and summer are the main parts, and then matched with the long red belt which is decorated with colors, and it is also matched with accessories such as copper belts and purses, which not only enriches the overall color level, but also meets the practical needs of the daily life of mountain people. The second is the orderly arrangement of color blocks, which forms the beauty of rhythm and rhythm. This feature is particularly evident in women's clothing. The colors of the white horse women's clothing are mainly arranged in contrasting colors, and they will also assist in the arrangement of multi-color systems and the same color system. This form is somewhat similar to the ancient "paddy field clothing", which is most obviously reflected in the clothing sleeves, collars, pleated clothes and other parts. The third is to use strong contrasting colors, and to reconcile with the neutral color of black and white. The overall color feels vivid and harmonious. For example, red and green stripes are used on the pleated clothes, and black and white wave pattern fabrics are used on the collar. It reveals the unique understanding and flexible use of colors by Baima people.

Human social practice has proven that wherever someone lives, there will be creative activities for beauty. Color is an important medium for humans to perceive the world and beauty. The use of colorful colors in Baima Tibetan costumes is the result of the creative activities of Baima people in

the past to practice the beauty of life, showing the self-feeling and pursuit of life of Baima Tibetan people.

### **2.3. Natural beauty**

The awe of nature is the core aesthetic consciousness of the Baima Tibetan primitive beliefs. The images of worship such as heaven, earth, sun, moon, mountains, rivers and trees are finally materialized in the patterns and accessories of the Baima Tibetan national costume. The theme of the pattern is mostly to express people's hope for a better life and respect for nature. The composition of the pattern also reveals the aesthetic concept of modern patterns. The analysis of its traditional patterns focuses on: the organic combination of abstraction and figurativeness. The abstract features are more obvious. Taking the waistcoat outside the women's gown (Figure 2) as an example, the patterns on the back of the clothing are interspersed with dots, lines, and surfaces, resulting in a rich and contrasting and harmonious form, with a distinctive composition. These abstract geometric patterns use traditional embroidery techniques to decorate images of animals, plants and flowers, and make an ingenious collage and texture comparison of inorganic geometric figures and organic patterns, which not only enriches the decorativeness of the overall picture. It also enhances the layering of the pattern itself. On the other hand, the accessories of the Hakuba people are unique in style, with a wide variety, mostly made of natural materials. For example, the white horse is regarded as the most sacred shag hat, which is made from wool, soybean powder and white chicken tail feathers; there are chest ornaments, headdresses, earrings made of shellfish, etc.; and the fire sickle, copper belt and other ornaments in the waist of men. The carvings are also very delicate, and some are even decorated with red coral beads. Another feature of clothing accessories is the unity of various collocations. The common jewelry shapes are mostly round or square. For example, the round shape of the Shaga hat; the main accessory of the white horse woman, the fish bones, will be polished into a circle when used as a headdress or earrings, and then cut into a rectangle when worn on the chest; in addition, the men's copper belts are also in square units orderly arrangement. The author believes that it is related to the primitive worship of the natural gods by the Baima Tibetans, and is a simple interpretation of the heavenly place.

It is worth mentioning that even with the infiltration of the Han nationality and other national cultures, traditional hand-sewing is slowly replaced by machinery, but traditional accessories such as shaga hats and women's hand-woven belts still use the oldest manufacturing method is quite complicated. Some accessories are even handed down from generation to generation. For example, the old copper belt and fire sickle shown by Tian Xu Shixiu in Baimazhai Paixa has a history of hundreds of years (Figure 3). The inherent vitality of natural aesthetics makes the decoration of its clothing full of poetry. This not only reflects the high maturity of the decorative elements of the national costume, but also bears the deep ecological awareness and original beauty of this nation to varying degrees.

From the above three levels, the beauty of the Baima Tibetans is the beauty of the human body combined with structural lines; the beauty of the color of the collision between the warm and cold blocks; the natural beauty of the sun and moon star precipitation. The beauty of the Baima Tibetan costume lies in the Baima women who create and make costumes. They do not understand philosophy and aesthetics, but express their sincere and deep national feelings with their own perception and understanding of life.

### **Conclusion**

Clothing is the most traditional and stable cultural symbol of a nation. The beauty of traditional Chinese costumes in the long historical development process, the integration of social factors and the collision of aesthetics of the times, will eventually nurture and develop into a broad and profound national costume culture aesthetic system. As Mr. Fei Xiaotong's unique insight into national costumes: "Clothes have become part of social systems such as relatives, power, and religion. They have also developed into works of art that show beauty, and show the creativity of the national spirit."<sup>[4]</sup> This article focuses on the analysis of the aesthetic value of Baima people's

clothing from the three levels of human body beauty, color beauty and natural beauty, hoping to bring some inspiration to modern clothing design. As ethnic costumes continue to be impacted by the tide of comprehensive social modernization and the mutual influence and assimilation of neighboring ethnic groups, some traditional costumes are also quietly changing, coupled with the characteristics of costumes that are not easy to preserve and some ethnic costume holders' traditional costumes. The concept of preservation is weak, and many cultural relics are slowly being lost. Therefore, the research on Baima needs to be intensified and continued.

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