

# The Integration of Dunhuang Murals from The Tang Dynasty and Modern Clothing Design

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**Abstract:** Dunhuang murals are an artistic treasure of world cultural heritage. Dunhuang murals were in their heyday during the Tang Dynasty. The murals of this period were extremely artistic and representative. Integrating them with modern clothing design has great cultural significance and room for development. This article explores the integration of Dunhuang murals in the Tang Dynasty and modern clothing design, introduces the brief history and development of Dunhuang murals in the Tang Dynasty, summarizes the design principles and practices for research, and provides theoretical basis and design reference for other related theme costume designs. In inheriting ancient Chinese At the same time, it injects more cultural atmosphere and artistic charm into modern clothing design to meet people's needs for diversified and personalized clothing. It also makes a positive contribution to the inheritance and promotion of Dunhuang culture.

**Keywords:** Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty, clothing design, design integration, cultural inheritance.

## 1. Introduction

In fashion design, it is necessary to draw inspiration from various interdisciplinary disciplines to broaden the designer's horizons and create works that are in line with the trends of the times. Dunhuang murals contain rich visual and cultural connotations, providing important background support for modern clothing design. In particular, the unique characteristics and gorgeous beauty of the Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty highlight the economic prosperity, social openness and frequent cultural exchanges of the Tang Dynasty, making it the heyday of cultural development[1].

Therefore, integrating Dunhuang murals from the Tang Dynasty with modern clothing design, and exploring the integration of its form and content with contemporary art can make Dunhuang culture more likely to attract the attention of modern people and inspire strong resonance. The purpose of this article's exploration is to extract elements from Dunhuang in the Tang Dynasty and apply them to modern clothing design to create clothing works that contain the cultural connotations of Dunhuang. In this way, ancient Chinese culture and art will be presented in new forms in modern people's lives, injecting new cultural vitality and life into artistic treasures.

## 2. Dunhuang Murals and Modern Clothing Design in the Tang Dynasty

### 2.1. A brief history of the development of Dunhuang murals in the Tang Dynasty

Dunhuang murals have experienced thousands of years of emergence, development, prosperity and decline. Due to the unique geographical location of Dunhuang, it has become a link between various ethnic groups. It is not only the gateway to the introduction of Buddhism, but also an important outlet for the rich materials of the Central Plains. In terms of religious culture, Dunhuang is a place where Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism blend together, bringing together the culmination of each school of thought. In the collision of different cultural ideas, Dunhuang culture has developed comprehensively [2].

During the Tang Dynasty, Dunhuang murals reached their peak, and a large number of murals depicting social life, historical events, characters, etc. emerged. The painting style of Dunhuang murals has also continued to evolve with the changes of the times. The early Dunhuang murals were deeply influenced by the culture of the Western Regions, showing a strong exotic style. Over time, the style of Dunhuang murals gradually incorporated traditional Chinese elements, forming Buddhist art with distinctive Chinese characteristics.

### 2.2. The current situation of the combination of Dunhuang murals in the Tang Dynasty and modern clothing design

Although there are many cases of clothing design inspired by traditional Chinese paintings, there is a relative lack of Dunhuang-themed clothing series. A more common situation is that designers directly extract the pattern designs from Dunhuang murals and apply them to clothing such as short-sleeves. This method is too simple and direct, and tends to be biased toward national characteristics, and is somewhat different from modern aesthetics. .

Today, with the rapid development of the cultural industry, there is an urgent need for innovative breakthroughs in design. In recent years, designers at home and abroad have created works inspired by Dunhuang murals, trying different design styles to show the unique charm of Dunhuang murals. The Dunhuang Museum has also begun to cooperate with various companies, including Chinese sportswear brand Li Ning. The clothing series developed in cooperation with the Dunhuang Museum are themed on landforms and journeys, showing the unique charm of the "Silk Road" [3].

## 3. Characteristics of Dunhuang Murals in The Tang Dynasty and Principles of Modern Clothing Design

### 3.1. Characteristics of Dunhuang murals in the Tang Dynasty

#### 3.1.1. Pattern characteristics

In the Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty, there are

many types and forms of patterns, which are mainly divided into several categories such as figure patterns, plant patterns, animal patterns and geometric patterns. Plant patterns were extremely common in the Dunhuang caves of the Tang Dynasty, reflecting the economy and customs of the time, such as bead patterns, curly grass patterns, honeysuckle patterns, etc., showing the characteristics of grandeur and prosperity[4]. Animal patterns are mainly birds and beasts, often combined with plant patterns, showing the breath of life and the beauty of complementary movement and stillness.

Geometric patterns have always played an important role in traditional Chinese decoration, and their highly general expression techniques give geometric patterns unique formal beauty. In the Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty,

geometric patterns were mainly used for composition segmentation or decorative filling. For example, in story paintings or sutra paintings, geometric patterns are often used to segment the content so that readers can more easily understand the meaning conveyed by the painting.

Figure patterns occupy an important position in the Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty and are numerous in number. In addition to the main Buddha statues, it also includes images of flying gods, story characters and other figures. The characters in the Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty present unique modeling characteristics, which are rich, luxurious, dynamic and elegant, in line with the aesthetic standards of the time (Figure 3.1).



Figure 3.1. Dunhuang Mural Cave 112 of the Tang Dynasty

### 3.1.2. Color characteristics

Dunhuang murals show unique color characteristics in different historical periods. Compared with the richness of the Northern Wei Dynasty and the delicateness of the Wei and Jin Dynasties, the colors of Dunhuang murals in the Tang Dynasty are more bright and bold. The color contrast is sharp, with strong visual impact and unique recognition.

Due to the economic prosperity of the Tang Dynasty, there was sufficient financial resources to support the use of rich and colorful pigments. Compared with previous dynasties, Dunhuang murals in the Tang Dynasty used richer colors, such as azurite, stone green, cinnabar, etc. The contrasting use of these colors made the pictures vivid and lively[5].

At the same time, murals in the Tang Dynasty began to adopt a multi-layered coloring method to give the images a more three-dimensional and fuller effect. In terms of the outline method, color lines are used instead of ink lines, that is, colors similar to the main pattern are used for outline during the painting process. After the pattern is drawn, the edges are hidden, so that the overall picture presents a harmonious and unified effect.

## 3.2. Principles of the integration of Tang Dynasty Dunhuang murals and modern clothing design

### 3.2.1. Innovate clothing fabrics and technology to highlight contemporary aesthetics

When applying Dunhuang mural patterns to modern clothing design, it is necessary to choose patterns that are coordinated with the clothing style and theme. In order to adapt to modern aesthetics, the patterns need to be appropriately simplified and deformed; innovative materials and techniques such as embroidery, printing, and weaving can also be combined etc., giving Dunhuang mural patterns a different texture and emphasizing aesthetic value [6].

For example, the Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty contain rich patterns. In addition to the character patterns in story paintings and sutra paintings, they also contain rich animal patterns, plant patterns, and architectural patterns. In the Dunhuang Grottoes of the Tang Dynasty, different patterns represent The meanings and functions of the patterns are different, and the patterns of different dynasties show different characteristics. When extracting the Dunhuang patterns, analyzing their characteristics and formal beauty, it is necessary to summarize and sort out their laws, and use

fabric reconstruction and process innovation to transform the patterns. and innovation, highlighting modern aesthetic taste.

The Dunhuang Grottoes murals in various historical periods have their own unique patterns. Applying different patterns to modern clothing design can show different design concepts and tastes. While integrating Dunhuang patterns with modern clothing design, using innovative materials and techniques, and more importantly, it must conform to contemporary aesthetic values in order to arouse the appreciation of modern people.

### **3.2.2. Emphasize the emotional value of Dunhuang murals in the Tang Dynasty and highlight the cultural connotation**

The Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty have extremely high cultural connotations. The patterns and patterns as well as the characters of the Tang Dynasty have a certain sense of mystery. Their emotional value is emphasized by integrating them with modern clothing design. The colors, lines, patterns and other elements of the Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty are used in the design to create a classical and mysterious atmosphere, enhance the audience's perception and understanding of the Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty, reflect the cultural heritage, and resonate with contemporary people. and emotional resonance.

When designing clothing, it is not only the provision and application of elements, but more importantly the inheritance of spiritual and cultural connotations. The historical and cultural background represented by the Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty can trigger people's thinking and exploration of history. When integrated with modern clothing design, it can convey a cultural symbol, allowing contemporary people to understand the cultural connotation expressed by Dunhuang patterns when appreciating and wearing them. The Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty represent not only an aesthetic image, but also A kind of cultural connotation and spiritual pursuit.

### **3.2.3. Pay attention to the color reproduction and inheritance of Dunhuang murals and enhance the expressiveness**

The colors used in Dunhuang murals are rich and diverse, including red, yellow, blue, green, white, black and other colors. There are both strong contrasting colors and harmonious neutral colors. These colors not only have distinctive visual effects, but also contain profound meanings. cultural connotation[7].

Therefore, using the colors of Dunhuang murals in modern clothing design can not only enrich the visual effects of clothing, but also show profound cultural connotations. When applying Dunhuang murals in clothing design, attention should be paid to color matching and coordination to avoid color conflicts and confusion. In addition, the color elements of Dunhuang murals are the essence of Chinese culture, and their use in design should pay attention to cultural inheritance.

In addition to directly applying the color elements of Dunhuang murals to clothing design, it is also necessary to explore how to combine the colors of Dunhuang murals with other clothing design elements to enhance their expressive power. For example, Professor Wu Haiyan, a famous fashion designer at the China Academy of Art, tends to use a variety of methods to reproduce the colors of Dunhuang murals. She uses plain crepe and satin fabrics to show the luxurious and solemn texture of Dunhuang mural colors, and combines the colors of Dunhuang murals with patterns that express the life of residents in the prosperous Tang Dynasty. It has a strong

visual impact and provides important inspiration for the integration of Dunhuang mural color elements and costume design art.

### **3.2.4. Emphasize innovation in design forms and enhance the artistry and appreciation of clothing**

The application of the artistic elements of Dunhuang murals in the field of clothing design reflects the multicultural integration of art design in the context of globalization. Combined with modern art concepts, Dunhuang murals provide rich creative sources and design inspiration for clothing design, making design works more National characteristics and artistic value[8]. Currently, the global interest in traditional Chinese culture is increasing, and the market demand for clothing products that incorporate oriental cultural elements is also expanding, providing development opportunities for the application of Dunhuang murals in clothing design.

In this process, it is necessary to strengthen global thinking, widely absorb the nutrients of the excellent culture of other nations, in-depth study and transformation of the artistic elements of Dunhuang murals, and innovate its expression in clothing design. On the one hand, clothing styles with the characteristics of Dunhuang murals can be designed, and the colors, patterns, shapes and other elements can be deeply explored and recreated, so that the works have both traditional cultural charm and meet modern aesthetic needs. On the other hand, we can use the decorative techniques of Dunhuang murals and learn from their line drawing and color matching skills to enrich the expression methods of clothing and increase its artistry and appreciation.

## **4. The Application Practice of Integrating Dunhuang Murals of The Tang Dynasty with Modern Clothing Design**

### **4.1. Shape concept design**

In the three-dimensional modeling of clothing design, unique works can be created by combining the storylines and myths and legends in the Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty with clothing modeling. Through the three-dimensional processing of patterns, the clothing works show a very futuristic visual effect.

Select representative storylines or myths and legends from the Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty as design inspiration, and transform these storylines into pattern elements for clothing design. Through three-dimensional processing, they will appear three-dimensional and layered on the clothing, adding to the Three-dimensional modeling effect of clothing[9]. 3D materials and technologies can be used, such as three-dimensional embroidery, three-dimensional printing, three-dimensional patches, etc., to make the pattern more vivid and three-dimensional and echo the overall shape of the clothing. By using modern scientific and technological means, we combine traditional cultural elements with fashion design to create futuristic clothing works, showing unique artistic charm and fashion taste.

In the three-dimensional modeling design of clothing, you can also pay attention to the selection and matching of materials, and choose materials with a sense of technology and futurity, such as metal fibers, transparent plastics, fiber optic fabrics, etc., to give the clothing a high-tech and fashionable avant-garde atmosphere.

## 4.2. Design expression of color elements

The cultural elements of Dunhuang murals in the Tang Dynasty are integrated into modern clothing design. The expression of color elements is crucial to convey the theme and cultural connotation of the product. During the design process, the Dunhuang Grottoes of the Tang Dynasty used many bright colors, such as blue, Yellow, red, etc[10]. When designing clothing, use these colors to express the theme and cultural connotation of the product.

To combine modern elements, in order to give the Dunhuang cultural and creative design a more modern feel, you can combine the colors in the Dunhuang Grottoes with modern elements, such as neutral colors such as gray or black, or some popular bright colors. This can increase the fashion and appeal of the product.

Based on the expression of cultural connotation, the cultural connotation and theme of clothing design should be considered during the design process, and color elements should be used to express these characteristics. By combining bright colors with dark or contrasting colors, the design can be made more vivid and interesting. Pay attention to the balance of colors and avoid using too many or too few colors to maintain the coordination and beauty of the overall design.

## 4.3. Graphic element design expression

In the process of clothing design, the design of graphic elements that express Dunhuang culture is crucial. In terms of the expression of graphic elements, it is necessary to combine the essence of Dunhuang graphic culture with modern aesthetics to create design works that both inherit tradition and have a modern feel. Patterns and patterns are very colorful in Dunhuang murals and are important elements in the design. Draw on patterns and patterns from murals and incorporate them into your designs to add to the artistry and uniqueness of your work.

Text and symbols also play an important role in Dunhuang murals and are an important means of conveying stories and information. Similar fonts and symbols are used to convey



Figure 4.1. Cave 79 of Dunhuang Mural of

corresponding meanings, making the works more culturally connotative and story-telling.

In the process of extracting and transforming graphic elements, the unique and representative Feitian image from the Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty was used as the theme for innovative transformation, while retaining the characteristics and beauty of Dunhuang culture, making the work both traditional and rich. Modern vibe.

## 4.4. Contemporary design expression of “Buddha nature” in Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty

There are many contents about Buddhism in Dunhuang murals of the Tang Dynasty, including jataka stories, karma stories and Buddhist biographies. Dunhuang story paintings are one of the most fascinating parts of the murals, with unique features from story content to composition. The viewer seems to be in a static cartoon. The painters use vivid painting language to depict those obscure Buddhist concepts, so that ordinary people can easily understand the connotation conveyed by the murals[11].

Dunhuang Jataka paintings are an extremely important part of the story paintings, describing the story of Sakyamuni before he became a Buddha. In these paintings, there is a word "人" to the left of the word "Buddha", which means that people are originally Buddhas, and Buddhas are also people. Buddhas are just human beings after enlightenment. The word "Buddha-nature" is also commonly used in life to describe people with Buddha nature. Tolerate people with a calm personality; Buddha is a human being, and humans can also become "Buddhas" [12].

Therefore, the idea of creating this pattern is to find the commonality of "Buddha" from the painting language of Buddhist statues in the Tang Dynasty, and create characters with "Buddha" temperament, especially in the contrasting fashion trends of clothing design, aiming to express The life wisdom of contemporary Buddhist youth.



Figure 4.2. YUYUE clothing brand design works the Tang Dynasty

#### 4.5. Challenges faced by this paper and future development directions

At present, there are not many Dunhuang-themed clothing series creations. Especially in modern clothing design, Chinese clothing brands still imitate Western design styles too much and lack local cultural characteristics of clothing design. Therefore, they are not continuously concerned by today's young people. and love, more fashion brands still need to pay attention to the cultural characteristics of China's own nation. This article explores innovative design solutions to solve today's problems, bringing unique design and new vitality to the fusion of ancient culture and modern clothing.

The integration of culture and clothing in the fashion industry is also a source of inspiration that many designers like to use. Combining the traditional aesthetics of Dunhuang murals and the concept of sustainable fashion, we design clothing that is in line with modern aesthetics and that people can continue to appreciate, rather than the flash in the pan of many brands, thus promoting the development of the fashion industry in a more sustainable direction. This article conducts an in-depth study of clothing design that is in line with contemporary people's aesthetics, combines elements of Dunhuang murals from the Tang Dynasty, and explores new design methods and trends to adapt to changing social trends and needs. By overcoming these challenges and grasping the direction of future development, this article contributes to ancient Chinese culture. The inheritance and innovation have injected new impetus.

In today's society, people's aesthetic concepts are constantly improving, and the field of clothing design is also looking for unique and innovative elements in order to stand out in the fiercely competitive market. This article explores how to integrate the artistic elements of Dunhuang murals into modern clothing design, subtly integrate them into modern fashion, and promote the design results to the market widely so that they can be appreciated by more contemporary people and bring new vitality to the fashion industry. and creativity, and promote the inheritance and development of Dunhuang mural art to the world.

#### 5. Conclusions

With the continuous development of today's society, people's living habits, aesthetic concepts and values are constantly changing, which poses new challenges and opportunities to clothing design. Integrating the artistic elements of Dunhuang murals into clothing design requires a deeper understanding of its characteristics, and continuous improvement of the design level through continuous attempts,

summarization and reflection.

Therefore, in the process of creation, new design concepts and methods should be actively explored and tried. In future development, continuous exploration and innovation are needed to better integrate the artistic elements of Dunhuang murals with modern clothing design art, and create new opportunities for modern clothing. The design injects more cultural flavor and artistic charm to meet people's needs for diversified and personalized clothing, while also making a positive contribution to the inheritance and promotion of Dunhuang culture.

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