# Research on Protection of Japanese Traditional Culture and its Enlightenment to the Protection of Chinese Cultural Heritage

# -- Take Kimono as an Example

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## Abstract

Japan attaches great importance to the protection of traditional culture. Whether it is traditional buildings, documents, or utensils, the Japanese take great care of them. They put their love for kimonos into the production of kimonos, so that kimonos can be preserved in a better way. In China, the protection of traditional culture is still very serious. Some grassroots governments lack relevant experience, and their understanding of cultural protection is not comprehensive enough; they lack planning, and their actions are not active enough. They often choose the former between economic development and cultural protection. Cultural heritage can only be better preserved if the relationship between immediate interests and long-term development is properly handled and rationally protected and utilized.

# Keywords

Kimono Culture; Cultural Heritage Protection; Cultural Protection Awareness; Inspiration.

# 1. Introduction

Under the influence of economic globalization, cultures of various countries have accelerated the process of integration and interaction. Since ancient times, there have been many facts and possibilities for mutual reference and influence between China and Japan. Japan's emphasis on and protection of traditional culture has a long history and has been widely recognized and appreciated on the international stage. Representative cultural elements from Japan have successfully established a reputation worldwide.

For the inheritance of culture, clothing culture is an important carrier of national culture. The importance of reviving traditional clothing is self-evident. Japan has many successful experiences in the protection and development of traditional culture. Kimono is a representative traditional clothing. It has been handed down very well. Now in China, traditional clothing is declining and has been gradually replaced by modern clothing. Undoubtedly, studying Japan's protection of kimono culture directly contributes to the inheritance and development of our country's traditional clothing culture. A glimpse to see the whole leopard, this kind of research also has the effect of reexamining the cognition of the value and protection of China's traditional culture.

# 2. The Evolution and Development of Japanese Kimono Culture

## 2.1. Japanese Kimono Culture in Modern Times and Before

The kimono, which is the traditional clothing of Japan, represents the unique aesthetic consciousness of the Yamato nation. The name of the kimono comes from the concept of "harmony" in the culture and the "Yamato" ethnic group that accounts for more than 90% of

the total population. There are many types of kimonos, with various textures and colors. As far as the most representative female kimono is concerned, the more formal one will wear a wide belt, and the overall look is upright and delicate, which fits the temperament of Japanese women very well. Kiyuki Higuchi believes that due to the characteristics of the island country, Japan can only create a culture that suits itself by choosing foreign cultures. In the Tang Dynasty, Japan sent envoys to China on a large scale three times. China gave Japan a large number of Han and Wu woven fabrics, and even some craftsmen who were good at weaving and sewing techniques. These actions led to the introduction of Chinese clothing styles. In Japan, we can see the shadow of ancient Chinese traditional costumes reflected in modern Japanese kimonos.

As Mori Ogai said: "The era requires two developments, one facing Eastern culture and the other facing Western culture." Under the rule of the Kamakura and Muromachi shogunates, political power is in the hands of the samurai class. It is abbreviated to one piece, which enhances the practicality of the kimono. In the Meiji period, the founding policy allowed the introduction of culture from other countries and kimono infiltrated the lives of ordinary people. At this time, kimono in the modern sense had been finalized.

#### 2.2. New Era Development of Japanese Kimono Culture

As a modern developed country, Japan has always been at the forefront of the world in the development of fashion apparel. But Japanese traditions and obedience have not been forgotten. Kimono does not only exist in history textbooks, but is still widely used in social life.

The most important reason why it is difficult for a thing to continue to be popular in modern society and slowly disappear from the public eye is that it is no longer suitable for the development of modern society. During World War II, kimono was troublesome to wear and take off, and it was uncomfortable to move after wearing it. It was not suitable for the chaotic social life situation under the background of war. In addition, kimonos slowly disappeared from people's lives during the period of World War II because of their high cost, various fabrics, and tailor-made clothes. The whole process consumes a lot of time.

After World War II, with the emergence of advanced textile technology, factories were able to produce comfortable, exquisite and affordable kimono fabrics. The shop selling kimono not only sells ready-made kimonos, but also sells a variety of different fabrics; not only sets of hair accessories to choose from, but also lined up with very complete sets from kimonos to clogs; inspired by Western countries, Japan People also learn to put kimonos on static models for people to appreciate and buy.

As everyone knows, Japan is more sophisticated and sophisticated in packaging. Japanese women in ancient times gave people the feeling of thick waist and short legs, short stature, but wearing a kimono gives a new look. It can well cover up the defects of women's appearance and make women look full of style. The kimono is designed in the form of one hidden and one exposed, which not only makes up for the shortcomings of Japanese women's figure, but also highlights the unique charm of Japanese women.

# 3. Japan's Protection of Kimono Culture

#### **Japanese Society's Protection of Kimono Culture** 3.1.

### (1) Traditional clothing education

Japan, which is at the forefront of the development of the clothing industry, is also quite developed in clothing culture education. Japan is very concerned about the inheritance education of traditional clothing. In order to better promote the traditional clothing culture, many public and private colleges were gradually established, such as the Kansai Kimono Academy and the Japanese Kimono Academy. There are many clothing-related courses in the school, and each course is conducted in the operating room. The school has established many

courses related to kimonos, and trained designers with keen observation skills, strong practical skills, and strong grasp of kimono making.

Many Bunka Women's universities in Japan have museums, which preserve a large number of historical materials and traditional folk costumes for students to visit, and display various collections of traditional costumes, which are of precious historical and cultural significance. Students learn about kimono culture and history through the sightseeing museum. Inside the Nishijin Weaving and Painting Museum, there are the most primitive looms, weaving technology and craftsmanship. The staff wore kimonos and demonstrated the process of weaving cotton through practice. This kind of image method makes it easier to know how to make a kimono.

#### (2) Modernization of kimono styles

In ancient times, people reflected their social symbols through the clothes they wore. For example, through clothing to reflect social status, age, marital status, and so on. In modern times, the social definition of kimono has changed, and the reasons for wearing kimono have gradually become diversified. In order to adapt to the fast-paced life, people are more willing to choose Western-style clothing instead of kimono. Western-style clothing is known for its comfort and simplicity, and can fit different people's body types, so western-style clothing has become an indispensable clothing in people's lives. However, with the prominence of self-awareness, people began to pay attention to factors such as their own preferences, national characteristics and so on. So I put on the kimono again and emphasized my individuality in this way, reflecting my own uniqueness.

In order to be able to adapt to the aesthetic vision of Japanese young people, the style and pattern of the kimono have been changed. The preservation of the yukata is the result of continuous adaptation to the progress of the new society. As a men's yukata, it is different from the previous dark colors, but adds a variety of bright colors. Yukatas of different colors provide many fashionable men with choices. Designers try to incorporate Western-style clothing colors into kimonos, thereby designing novel styles, such as matching lace skirts under traditional kimono styles. For some Japanese who prefer traditional kimono styles, they will focus on new designs on kimono patterns.

#### The Japanese Government's Protection of Kimono Culture 3.2.

### (1) Preferential policies

Kyoto, the ancient city of Japan, has introduced a policy that as long as women travel in kimonos, they can get a 10% discount on taxis; shopping malls can get 5% off; and places where tickets are collected can enter for free. We often see women wearing colorful kimonos walking on the streets. Japan has always insisted on reducing residential demolitions and reducing the construction of high-rise buildings. Provide government assistance to people who have difficulties in old houses. Many temples in Japan, in order to prevent damage caused by birds flying in, so many nets are installed between the eaves and the girders. Some temples are not allowed to wear shoes. For cultural heritage that is easily damaged, it will be copied and stored indoors for careful maintenance. The "Kimono Promotion Council of Members" of the Japanese Diet must wear a kimono when participating in activities. They use the kimono as a symbol of solidarity with the outside world.

### (2) Legal protection

In some cities in Japan, kimono is included as a tangible cultural property. The protection of cultural heritage began in the nineteenth century. With the development of the economy, the government has not neglected the emphasis on the protection and inheritance of cultural heritage. The country has entered a period of civilization and enlightenment, and people have begun to despise traditional culture. Faced with this crisis, Japan promulgated the "Law on Preservation of Ancient Artifacts." The fire at the Golden Hall of Horyu-ji Temple in Nara burnt

down many precious murals. This incident aroused people's awareness of the protection of cultural heritage, and the "Cultural Heritage Protection Issue" was promulgated and realized. In 1956, a major revision was made, and the category of intangible cultural heritage regulated by law appeared, and the kimono ranked second. This law is based on a variety of other laws and has been continuously revised and developed, making it more comprehensive and systematic. The promulgation of this law shows that the protection of cultural heritage requires the coordinated management of the state and local governments. The promulgation of many laws shows that Japan attaches great importance to the transformation of traditional culture, and these actions have contributed to the complete preservation of Japanese cultural heritage. (3) Application for World Cultural Heritage

The Japanese government further regards cultural heritage as the country's soft power, first applying for world cultural heritage, and then carrying out related international cooperation to enhance its status in human culture. The value of culture has a process from "local culture" to "national culture" to "international culture". According to news reports, Japan has launched an event called "National Conference to Make Kimono a World Heritage Site." It is organized by organizations and the general public who love kimono. This event is based on the successful application of the 2013 "Washish". The goal of the event is to spread the kimono culture to the world.

# 4. The Enlightenment of Japanese Kimono Culture on the Protection and **Development of China's Cultural Heritage**

(1) The status quo of the protection and development of cultural heritage in China

In recent years, China has made considerable achievements in the protection of cultural heritage. Protection does not exist independently. It is closely related to economic and social development and people's understanding. It requires the participation of governments at all levels and the media, and requires a conscious attitude of human beings.

After the World Heritage Committee was held in China in 2001, the domestic interest in cultural heritage continued to rise. After China promulgated the revised "Cultural Protection Law" in 2002, it also enacted an "Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Law" in 2004. Subsequently, the policy of "Opinions on Further Promoting the Protection of Ethnic Minority Culture" was promulgated, and the protection of ethnic minority culture has attracted attention.

In recent years, China's intangible culture has suffered more and more losses. Many traditional skills continue to disappear, and some cultural relics and materials have been damaged or lost overseas. Due to the non-renewable cultural heritage, we have to strengthen construction in this area.

The domestic "cultural heritage fever" has continued to heat up, resulting in excessive and deteriorating tourism development. Excessive development has destroyed and lost some precious resources. As the concept of cultural heritage gradually penetrates into places, many governments realize the commercial value brought by cultural heritage, so they all focus on cultural heritage. Cultural heritage has been transformed into tourist attractions for tourists to enjoy. In some attractions, visitors can see traditional cultural performances, hand-made, etc. In order to cater to the tastes of tourists, these traditional skills are often over-packaged, and some are even disassembled and reorganized.

Some local governments have also begun to invest manpower and material resources to support the application. In many places, there has been a phenomenon of valuing declaration and ignoring management. They improved their political performance through "application for heritage", but they did not consider how to protect them more effectively. Some cultural

heritages recorded in the "World Heritage List" have caused a warning crisis due to excessive commercial development.

(2) The Enlightenment of Japan's Practice on the Protection of China's Cultural Heritage

Comparing the attitudes of China and Japan towards cultural heritage, we can see that Japan is more mature in this regard. In terms of kimono protection, Japan has made changes without affecting the original ecological aesthetics of the kimono so that its culture can be better inherited. The protection of kimonos does not only stop at placing kimonos in museums, libraries, and media promotion, but to make kimonos truly exist and integrate into social life. These aspects correspond exactly to what the Japanese historian Yuan Yuan said: "Japanese people are not good at imagining certain abstract existences, and are more keen to combine with natural objects and pay attention to the character of objective practice." They value the practical application of cultural heritage, There is not only protection, but also an attempt to fully demonstrate the role of cultural heritage.

The same is true for kimonos. While allowing kimonos to penetrate into social life, Japan also emphasizes the protection of kimonos. They do not inherit kimonos for the sake of "profit", but to pass them on. In this cultural heritage boom, we can see this phenomenon, that is, because of the economic benefits that cultural heritage can generate, there has been an excessive "materialization" utilitarian tendency, which is worthy of vigilance. Some local governments have invested a lot of energy, but have not received the desired results. The reason is that the purpose is not pure.

To protect the integrity of cultural heritage, it must not be commercialized excessively. However, commercial penetration is inevitable. For the protection of cultural heritage, the infiltration of commercial means is a "double-sided mirror", and can even play a role in propaganda for the protection. The pros and cons of commercialization cannot be generalized, and it is necessary to analyze specific situations.

## 5. Conclusion

In China, the situation of cultural heritage protection is very severe. The long history has brought us a wealth of material and intangible cultural heritage. Cultural heritage represents the unique spiritual value of the Chinese nation and embodies the vitality and creativity of the Chinese people. While attaching importance to the protection of traditional cultural heritage, people should also increase their sense of identity with intangible cultural heritage. With the acceleration of the pace of modernization, driven by interests, more and more treacherous "cultural heritage" preparatory projects have entered the public eye. The overcommercialization of cultural heritage has completely neglected its original meaning and good value. These are just the immature manifestations of China's cultural heritage protection. With reference to Japan's experience in the protection of cultural heritage, we can learn from it and learn from it. For the people, the consciousness of conscious protection of cultural heritage is an important part. While establishing a conscious sense of protection, do not blindly follow the trend. While formulating policies to protect culture, the government must implement it to localities so that localities can correctly implement cultural protection measures. Culture is part of the comprehensive national strength. It is not allowed to over-utilize and destructively develop cultural heritage for economic benefits, or even arbitrarily alter it in the name of inheritance, to destroy the originality of cultural heritage. Only by properly handling the development of short-term benefits and long-term benefits, and appropriately exploiting cultural heritage can we promote the integration of outstanding ethnic and folk culture into modern life.

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