

# Application of Gan Embroidery (Yuzhang Embroidery) in Neo-Chinese-style Woolen Clothing with the Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage

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## Abstract

This paper investigates the emergence of Neo-Chinese-style clothing and the integration of Gan Embroidery techniques in the design of Neo-Chinese-style woolen clothing in the context of intangible cultural heritage. Neo-Chinese-style clothing represents a contemporary evolution of traditional Chinese attire, amalgamating elements of Chinese traditional dress culture and making a notable presence in the modern fashion industry. This study initiates by presenting the current status of Neo-Chinese-style clothing, encompassing its styles, patterns, techniques, and its influence on the international fashion stage. Subsequently, this research places a significant emphasis on the embroidery craftsmanship within the design of Neo-Chinese-style woolen clothing, emphasizing the importance of embroidery in conferring distinctive three-dimensionality and cultural aesthetics to the clothing. Through the synthesis and analysis of design cases from both domestic and international brands, this study illustrates the application of Gan Embroidery in Neo-Chinese-style clothing design. Finally, this research summarizes the primary contributions of the study, including an enhanced comprehension of the development of Neo-Chinese-style clothing and the burgeoning role of embroidery craftsmanship in the international fashion industry. Additionally, this research explores potential future research directions to deepen our understanding of Neo-Chinese-style clothing and traditional craftsmanship.

## Keywords

Neo-Chinese-style, woolen clothing, Gan embroidery, fashion design

## 1. Introduction

With the rapid development of society and the demand for convenience, coarse aesthetic values have spread through industrialization, mass production, and profit motives. Faced with conflicts between tradition and modernity, ethnicity and the world, smart technology and craftsmanship, and especially challenges such as the loss of traditional crafts, aging artisans, limited inheritance methods, a decreasing workforce, and the crisis brought about by machine innovations, the protection, inheritance, revival, and application of embroidery skills have become hot topics for contemporary discussions. Traditional embroidery, whether from any country or ethnic group, contains rich cultural connotations and aesthetic pleasures, and Gan embroidery is no exception. In March 2017, the State Council of China forwarded the “Revitalization Plan for Traditional Chinese National Crafts,” which deployed efforts to promote the inheritance and revival of

traditional Chinese national crafts. This plan is beneficial for the inheritance and development of the excellent traditional embroidery culture of Yuzhang. It also aims to promote and enhance the spirit of striving for excellence in Chinese craftsmanship and strengthen cultural self-confidence. As a fashion designer, the responsibility and mission are to promote Chinese traditional culture and inherit traditional Chinese craftsmanship.

## 2. Literature Review

Chinese embroidery has a long and rich history. Yuzhang embroidery (Gan embroidery), as a unique craft from Nanchang, Jiangxi, differs from other renowned embroidery styles like Su embroidery. It mainly uses pure cotton cloth and cotton threads, retaining more of the authentic essence of folk culture [1]. Yuzhang embroidery is deeply influenced by ink painting. It uses needlework with

nine different shades and thicknesses of ink threads to depict the rich variations of ink colors, resulting in a unique artistic effect [2].

The history of Gan embroidery can be traced back to the early Qing dynasty. It was established by Xiong Yueying, and has been passed down through nine generations. In 2010, the “Yuzhang Gan Embroidery Workshop” was established, offering free embroidery instruction to students [3]. In 2014, the “Gan Embroidery Master Studio” was established, providing free training to laid-off workers and individuals with disabilities, actively participating in various community activities to promote Gan embroidery [4]. In 2016, Gan embroidery began to extend its reach beyond Jiangxi, engaging in cultural exchanges and being listed in the Intangible Cultural Heritage directory. In 2018, the School of Fine Arts at Jiangxi Normal University established the “Gan Embroidery (Yuzhang Embroidery)

Intangible Cultural Heritage Research Base” to further research and preserve the art of Gan embroidery and promote its innovation [5]. In 2021, the Jiangxi Fashion Institute collaborated with enterprises to establish an interest class, nurturing and creating a new generation of inheritors who can pass down traditional embroidery techniques. This integrates the unique embroidery techniques of Gan embroidery (Yuzhang embroidery) into clothing design, promoting its innovation and development [6].

From a theoretical background, cultural heritage protection theory posits that cultural heritage is a crucial component of national memory and identity [7]. In the context of globalization, cultural diversity is under threat, making the preservation and transmission of traditional crafts an essential means of maintaining cultural diversity [8]. Cultural economics theory indicates that traditional crafts possess not only cultural value but also economic value, and industrialized operations can achieve a win-win situation for culture and economy [9].

In recent years, research on the preservation and transmission of traditional embroidery techniques has been increasing. The protection of embroidery techniques requires the joint efforts of the government, academia, and industry, through policy support, academic research, and market operations, to achieve sustainable development. Current protection measures rely more on government policy support and lack effective market mechanisms, resulting in less-than-ideal protection outcomes. The cultivation of inheritors and the innovation of transmission methods are crucial for the protection of embroidery techniques. Modern technological means can achieve digital preservation and transmission of embroidery techniques, improving transmission efficiency and scope. The application of modern technology in the transmission of traditional crafts needs to be approached with caution to avoid over-reliance on technological means while neglecting the cultural connotation and aesthetic value of the techniques themselves [10].

From the above, it can be seen that the protection and transmission of Gan embroidery require not only cultural and economic support but also innovative transmission methods and effective market mechanisms. This study aims to explore the innovative application of Gan embroidery in modern clothing design through practical design and application, providing new ideas for its protection and transmission.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Observation Method

This study employs the observation method to systematically observe the production process and finished products of Yuzhang embroidery (Gan embroidery), recording its unique artistic characteristics and techniques in detail. Specific observation subjects include representative Gan embroidery works, such as celebrity calligraphy and paintings, photographs, and self-created paintings. The study meticulously records the specific needle techniques and innovations used in the works, analyzes their application characteristics in different subjects, and assesses the vivid and realistic visual effects and artistic expressiveness of the works.

#### 3.2. Technique Analysis Method

The technique analysis method is used to systematically reveal the common needle techniques of Yuzhang embroidery and their artistic expressiveness. Sample objects include flat stitch, long stitch, short stitch, satin stitch, seed stitch, floating stitch, straight stitch, twisted stitch, and more. The study focuses on providing detailed descriptions and classifications of the techniques and operational steps of each needle technique, drawing diagrams to visually demonstrate each needle technique’s operational steps, such as diagrams of the straight stitch, random stitch, and seed stitch, thus providing empirical evidence for the protection and inheritance of Yuzhang embroidery techniques.

### 3.3. Design Experiment Method

The design experiment method involves the actual design of new Chinese-style woolen garments to explore the application effects of Gan embroidery on various parts of the clothing. This includes applying various needle techniques of Gan embroidery to multiple clothing design examples, such as collars, sleeves, plackets, pockets, hems, and backs. By combining applications, the study examines the coordination and overall decorative effects of Gan embroidery in the overall design, drawing corresponding diagrams to provide empirical evidence for the innovative application of Gan embroidery in new Chinese-style woolen garment design.

## 4. Characteristics and Common Needle Techniques of Gan Embroidery (Yuzhang Embroidery)

### 4.1. Characteristics of Gan Embroidery (Yuzhang Embroidery)




Gan embroidery, also known as Yuzhang embroidery, stands out with its distinctive and captivating characteristics, including the following:

#### 4.1.1. Diverse Subjects

Gan embroidery pieces feature a wide range of subjects, including famous calligraphy and painting, photographs, self-paintings, landscapes, flora and fauna, and portraits. Particularly, the rich variety of famous calligraphy and painting subjects enhances the expressive power and cultural significance of Gan embroidery.

#### 4.1.2. Needlework as Painting

Gan embroidery uses needlework as a medium, viewing threads as ink and employing stitching techniques as brushwork, skillfully concealing each thread and technique within the

Name	Bada Shanren Ink Painting (Deer Picture)	Representative Work "The Horse and the Rider"	Representative Work "Eagle in an Empty Valley"
<b>Artwork</b>			
<b>Description</b>	Primarily employs floating stitches and flat stitches, using dozens of colors of ink silk threads with various thickness and shades. The artwork displays distinct layers, replicating the nuances of color and the profound artistic conception found in the original painting, enhancing its three-dimensionality.	Utilizes hairpin and scattered overlay stitches, employing silk threads to create a second reworking of the artwork, resulting in a simple and bold composition.	Utilizes the unique Gan Embroidery stitching techniques, along with dozens of silk thread colors with varying thickness and shades for a second reworking of the artwork. The artwork exhibits clear layers and accurately conveys color variations, evoking a natural and deep artistic ambiance. It possesses a natural, elegant, and refreshing aesthetic.

1 [http://www.360doc.com/content/16/0422/22/26078834\\_552973065.shtml](http://www.360doc.com/content/16/0422/22/26078834_552973065.shtml), 2024-06-29

2 [https://m.sohu.com/a/233002827\\_99912040?010004\\_wapwxflj=](https://m.sohu.com/a/233002827_99912040?010004_wapwxflj=), 2024-06-29

3 [http://www.360doc.com/content/16/0422/22/26078834\\_552973065.shtml](http://www.360doc.com/content/16/0422/22/26078834_552973065.shtml), 2024-06-29

Table 1. Typical Gan Embroidery Techniques

patterns. This unique feature allows Gan embroidery to rival traditional painting art, creating a distinctive mode of expression. Innovations in Gan embroidery stitching techniques include floating stitches, flat stitches, overlay stitches, and hairpin stitches, giving the artwork depth and intricacy. Additionally, the meticulous work in Gongbi-style embroidery, such as Fan Jinyong's butterfly patterns, presents the texture of mineral pigments in the thread, as shown in Table 1.

#### 4.1.3. Realism and Vividness

The creation of Gan embroidery strictly follows the growth patterns of flora and fauna, resulting in a strikingly realistic and vivid effect. When viewed from a distance, Gan embroidery pieces resemble traditional Chinese paintings, creating a visual impact. Close inspection reveals

the fine lines and painting techniques of Gan embroidery, seamlessly blending to create a strong three-dimensional effect [11]. For instance, the series depicting Tao Yuanming and poetic landscape embroidery use the contrast between near and far perspectives and small scenes to present a vast world, conveying a dialogue between humans and nature, and portraying the natural life that modern people aspire to, as shown in Table 1.

#### 4.1.4. Exquisite Depiction of Ink Landscapes

Gan embroidery excels in portraying ink landscapes in the style of the renowned painter Bada Shanren. It highlights the characteristics of ink painting by skillfully transitioning ink shades, including intense ink, dark ink, heavy ink, light ink, and clear ink. Although

Gan embroidery typically uses a black-and-white palette, it manages to create a sense of color through various stitching techniques and thread application, creating visual illusions.

Gan embroidery combines painting art with embroidery to create stunning artistic works, making it a brilliant gem in the realm of Chinese embroidery art. Its uniqueness, featuring diverse subjects, needlework as painting, and realistic and vivid representation, continues to captivate the attention of art enthusiasts and viewers, as shown in Table 1.

## 4.2. Common Stitching Techniques of Yuzhang Embroidery

Yuzhang embroidery's distinctive stitching techniques, rooted in authentic

folk artistic expressions, often employ a range of techniques, including flat stitches, long stitches, short stitches, overlay stitches, hairpin stitches, floating stitches, even stitches, twisting stitches, darning stitches, joining stitches, grabbing stitches, hidden stitches, laying stitches, inserting stitches, counting stitches, void stitches, gold-thread embroidery, and locking stitches, among others. These techniques are used interchangeably to create artistic pieces with simplicity, grandeur, elegance, and charm. Here are descriptions of a few developed stitching techniques.

#### 4.2.1. *Even Stitch (Flat Stitch)*

The even stitch results in neatly aligned stitches at the edge of the thread, with uniform spacing and tension. Stitches are close but not overlapping. The upward stitch should be to the left of the downward stitch, both positioned at the pattern's outer edge. The second stitch follows the first one in parallel. Each subsequent stitch should be parallel to the previous one. For instance, when using even stitches to embroider a chrysanthemum, start by drawing a chrysanthemum pattern on the fabric. Even stitches are usually monochromatic, without the need for color transitions. The upward and downward stitches are both on the outline of the pattern. While embroidering, pay attention to capturing the form of the flower, using different shades to embroider different petals and portraying the layers of the chrysanthemum according to the pattern. Even stitches can also be used to depict the fluffy texture of animal feathers, incorporating the growth pattern of bird feathers into the stitching technique, conveying a sense of fluffiness and layering.

#### 4.2.2. *Luan Zhen (Random Stitch)*

Luan Zhen random stitch mainly employs intersecting lines of varying lengths and layered coloring techniques to depict the image. During the creative process, techniques such as Luan Zhen

cross stitch, Luan Zhen well stitch, and Luan Zhen triangle stitch may be used. Luan Zhen cross stitch is a single stitch combination formed by the crossing of two stitches, and it is arranged according to the pattern. This technique is flexible and results in highly dynamic embroidery works. Luan Zhen well stitch is used based on specific embroidery patterns, creating a well shape on the fabric and then layering it in a way that achieves natural color transitions and a rich texture. Luan Zhen triangle stitch begins by embroidering an unequal-sided triangle and then extending another thread from one corner of this triangle. The resulting pattern is intricate and exhibits a mosaic-like texture, with multiple layers of color transitions, as shown in Table 2. Luan Zhen technique is lively, with smooth lines, rich colors, strong layering, and a unique style.

#### 4.2.3. *Seed Stitch*

After exiting the embroidery area, grasp the thread with one hand and wrap the needle at the end of the line close to the embroidery area (it can be wrapped multiple times). Insert the needle approximately one or two threads away from the original eyelet. Then, tightly pull the thread, forming a seed stitch. When embroidering a petal using seed stitches, first draw a petal pattern on the fabric. Starting from the outermost edge of the petal, follow the outline of the petal. Begin with a light color, then fill the center progressively according to the pattern's requirements. For finer details, choose a fine thread to wrap once, or for a fuller three-dimensional effect, wrap multiple times. Follow the pattern to fill the petal completely. As you progress, gradually deepen the color to create a soft and natural color transition, as shown in Table 2.

#### 4.2.4. *Lock Stitch*

Lock stitch is an ancient technique characterized by thread loops formed by connecting each stitch with the previous one. Lock stitches have a history of over two thousand years and are commonly

used for decorative motifs on clothing due to their practicality and aesthetic appeal. However, they are rarely used today due to their time-consuming nature and skill requirements, as shown in Table 2.

#### 4.2.5. *Overlay Stitch*

Overlay stitches can be single or double, with double overlay stitches being one of the most commonly used and versatile techniques in embroidery. In single overlay stitches, the stitches are short, while in double overlay stitches, the stitches are longer. An illustration of the overlay stitching technique is provided in Table 3.

#### 4.2.6. *Twisting Stitch*

The twisting stitch technique involves drawing a straight line on the fabric. Insert the needle at the line and create a small stitch to secure the thread end. Start the stitch to the left of the thread, ending to the right of the thread. The first stitch is approximately 3-4 mm long. The second stitch starts at the left side of the second one, then folds back at the middle of the second stitch. The third stitch begins at the left side of the third one and folds back to the point where it connects to the starting point of the first stitch.

#### 4.2.7. *Hidden Stitch (Locking Stitch)*

Embroidering radiating or winding patterns often incorporates short hidden stitches, referred to as 'hidden stitches.' This technique uses two different colors for embroidery. The first stitch is created using red embroidery thread, starting from the edge of the embroidery piece. The second stitch uses yellow embroidery thread, slightly shorter than the first stitch. Embroider a radial pattern with a few extra hidden stitches, such as three stitches. The fourth stitch is created using red embroidery thread, covering the corners of the yellow thread, giving it the name 'hidden stitches.'

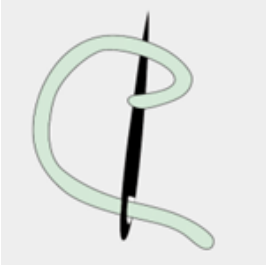
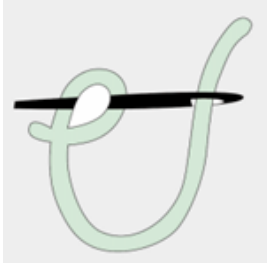
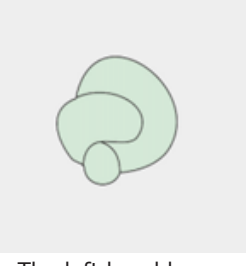
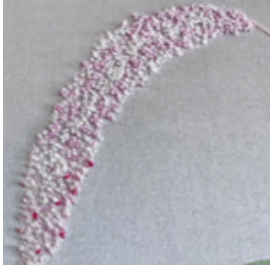
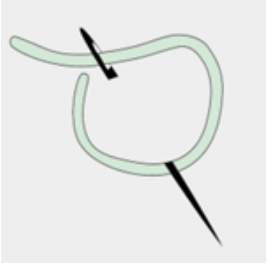
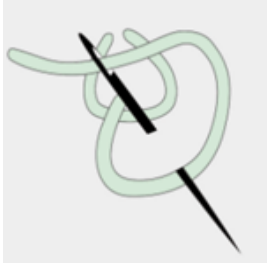


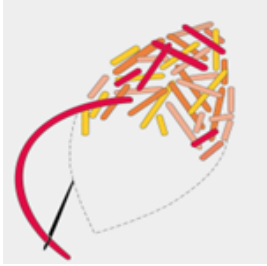

Type	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Example
Seed Stitch	 <p>First, start the needle, hold the thread with the left hand, and wrap the thread around the needle a couple of times.</p>	 <p>Insert the needle beside the starting point, on the right side of the upward thread.</p>	 <p>The left hand keeps the thread tight against the fabric, then pull out the needle to create a small dot.</p>	
Lock Stitch	 <p>Start the needle at any point, beside the starting point, and create a thread loop on the fabric's surface. Then, start the needle, securing the loop.</p>	 <p>Drop the needle at the starting point of the second stitch to form a second ring, then start the needle to fasten the second ring; and so on. Embroider according to the pattern.</p>	N/A	
Random Stitch	 <p>Arrange the specific stitches according to the shape of the embroidery pattern, and complete the first layer of stitches.</p>	 <p>On the basis of the first layer, use different colors of thread to perform overlapping stitches.</p>	N/A	

Table 2. Illustrations of Seed Stitch, Lock Stitch, and Random Stitch Techniques  
Source: Drawn by the Author

#### 4.2.8. Grabbing Stitch (Taking Stitch)

Grabbing stitches can be classified into regular grabbing and reverse grabbing. Regular grabbing begins from the outermost layer, starting from the center and working inwards. The second batch is started from the center's empty space, falling on top of the stitches from the first batch. The technique continues layer by layer until the pattern is

filled completely. Reverse grabbing starts from the bottommost layer. For the second batch, a needle is inserted horizontally into the stitches from the first batch. Afterward, start a new stitch in the empty space and grasp the horizontal stitch, forming a zigzag stitch. Each stitch must grasp the previous horizontal stitch. The process is repeated to fill the entire pattern. Grabbing stitches result in clear layers, enhanced decorative effects, and a unique style.

## 5. Neo-Chinese Clothing and Embroidery

### 5.1. Current Status of Neo-Chinese Clothing

Neo-Chinese clothing, as an evolution of traditional Chinese attire, inherits and innovates elements of Chinese traditional clothing culture. The term 'Chinese' represents China's traditional

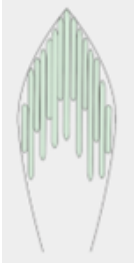
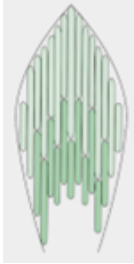
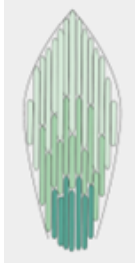


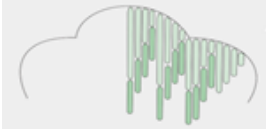

Type	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Example
Single Overlay Stitch	 <p>Begin by embroidering the center of the pattern. Proceed with the right half, alternating between long and short stitches, embroidering the right side. Once the right half is complete, embroider the left half.</p>	 <p>After completing the outermost layer, add a second layer with different color threads. Each stitch should align with the previous layer's long and short stitches.</p>	 <p>Create a third layer in a similar fashion using alternating long and short stitches to fill the pattern.</p>	
Double Overlay Stitch	 <p>In the first batch, start the needle from the center and ensure even stitches on the pattern's edge. Maintain straight stitches with no slanting. The thickness of the stitches should be consistent, and the texture should be uniform.</p>	 <p>In the second batch, use a darker color than the first batch. Start the needle at the location where the first batch's stitches fall. The distance between stitches should match the thickness of the lines.</p>	 <p>In the third batch, start the needle at the location where the second batch's stitches fall. Alternate between long and short stitches and use even thicker thread to completely fill the pattern.</p>	

Table 3. Illustration of Overlay Stitch Techniques  
Source: Drawn by the Author

clothing culture, including its styles, patterns, traditional techniques, and other distinctive features. In terms of style, Neo-Chinese clothing draws inspiration and incorporates structural characteristics from traditional attire. It includes iconic styles such as the 'horse-face skirt' and specific design elements like a cross-collar, right-over-left closure, a stand-up collar with pipa-shaped lapels, front openings, and attached sleeves. Regarding patterns, Neo-Chinese clothing incorporates themes and forms from traditional clothing. Common auspicious patterns include dragons, waves, peonies, and cranes. Furthermore, Neo-Chinese clothing inherits traditional techniques such as Song dynasty button loops, Qing dynasty filigree, and silk embroidery.

The 'neo' in Neo-Chinese clothing signifies innovation built upon the foundation of tradition. This innovation

primarily focuses on the clothing structure, with an emphasis on functionality. For example, increasing the waist circumference and removing constraints on the lower hem to make the clothing more suitable for modern-day wear without hindering work and daily life activities. Despite these functional improvements, the final product still preserves the characteristics of traditional Chinese attire, resulting in what we call 'Neo-Chinese clothing.'

In the past two years, the concept of "Neo-Chinese aesthetics" has become popular worldwide. On social media platforms such as Xiaohongshu and INS, young people share their experiences in wearing Neo-Chinese-style clothing, resulting in a significant increase in search volume and page views. Data from fashion trend platforms also show that "Neo-Chinese" elements have taken an

important position in the fashion industry. For example, in the fashion shows of spring/summer 2022 and spring/summer 2023, the application of "Neo-Chinese national style patterns" increased significantly, indicating that Chinese-style elements have taken up a larger share in the fashion industry. In addition, some popular brands' Neo-Chinese-style shirt styles have been highly welcomed, with traditional elements integrated into the design details, such as the coed shirt's buttons and standing collar shown in Figure 1.

The Chinese Neo-Chinese clothing market exhibits diverse brand styles, with each brand showcasing unique characteristics in their design philosophy and style, providing consumers with a wide range of choices. These brands have various styles, encompassing different aesthetics and cultural elements.



Fig. 1. M essential's Shirt'  
[http://www.360doc.com/content/23/0115/22/49854881\\_1063813878.shtml](http://www.360doc.com/content/23/0115/22/49854881_1063813878.shtml), 2024-06-29



Fig. 3. Gaiya Legend 2022 Spring/Summer Collection "Qiankun Fangyi"  
[https://m.hnmdtv.com/sy/092021\\_86644.html](https://m.hnmdtv.com/sy/092021_86644.html), 2024-06-29



Fig. 2. 2021 Chu Heting Xiang "Wenchat" Series  
<https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1695369526300962631&wfr=spider&for=pc>, 2024-06-29

'Chu Heting Xiang' focuses on 'costume restoration' as its primary concept, pursuing a classical style with a meticulous and refined design that exudes a sense of rigor, elegance, calmness, and modesty, as shown in Figure 2. 'Gaiya Legend' has an ethereal character, emphasizing intricate design and a delicate feel, with a more feminine-leaning decoration. It presents an elegant style, as shown in Figure 3. The brand 'Wu Yong,' on the other hand, is dedicated

to embracing a natural, unadorned, and rustic beauty, emphasizing a pastoral style and the beauty of simplicity. 'Mi Shan' exhibits a typical romantic style, focusing on the clothing's softness and emotional expression. In addition to the above brands, there is a range of others such as Liebo, Sulo, Yunsimuxiang, Liangsan Shi, and Chong Hui Hantang, each presenting different design styles and cultural connotations.

On the international fashion stage, as early as 1910, designer Paul Poiret was the first to use embroidery techniques on a Mandarin-style jacket, delicately delineating patterns of traditional Chinese ornaments. Subsequently, an increasing number of international brands have joined the ranks in incorporating Chinese elements. For example, in 2004, YVES SAINT LAURENT introduced traditional Chinese patterns like dragons, phoenixes, and clouds into their designs and combined them with qipao styles to create a unique fashion statement. In the spring/summer season of 2017, PRADA incorporated Chinese-style toggle buttons into its collection, adding a distinctive touch. In the spring/summer season of 2021, LANVIN drew inspiration from folding screens to create a unique design collection. Furthermore, in recent years, numerous international brands have launched Chinese New Year collections, including brands like Givenchy, KENZO,

Balenciaga, GUCCI, and Louis Vuitton. They have all imitated Chinese cultural elements to infuse Chinese sentiment and characteristics into their clothing.

As the rise of Chinese fashion influences the international fashion world, Chinese traditional clothing elements are gradually being incorporated into modern clothing designs. This fusion not only represents the intertwining of tradition and modernity but also combines retro and contemporary styles, creating 'Neo-Chinese clothing' that is highly sought after by enthusiasts of the Chinese fashion trend. The emergence of Neo-Chinese clothing signifies the preservation and innovation of Chinese clothing culture, reflecting people's keen interest and pursuit of traditional culture.

## 5.2. Embroidery in Woolen Neo-Chinese Clothing Design

In recent years, Chinese elements and craftsmanship have received considerable attention in the international fashion industry. Chinese embroidery techniques, ink landscape painting, Chinese clothing structures, ethnic patterns, and more have become sources of inspiration for designers. The elegance, serenity, subtlety, mystique, dignity, and beauty unique to traditional Chinese attire have transformed into an international fashion style. In this context, embroidery, as a traditional handicraft, has become particularly significant in the design of Neo-Chinese clothing.

Exquisite embroidery craftsmanship gives clothing a unique three-dimensional feel and, by skillfully using various colored threads, produces patterns filled with the charm of Chinese style. The fabrics used in embroidery are usually soft and wrinkle-resistant, making them highly suitable for making Chinese-style clothing. The color combinations of embroidered patterns are often gentle, emphasizing the cultural connotation of Chinese tradition.

A typical example is the appearance of China's First Lady, Peng Liyuan, in



Fig. 5. Stand-up Collar Cape and Modified Horse-Face Skirt  
[http://china.cnr.cn/xwwgf/201403/t20140323\\_515138885.shtml](http://china.cnr.cn/xwwgf/201403/t20140323_515138885.shtml), 2024-06-29

traditional Chinese attire with exquisite peony flower embroidery during an international event in 2014, shown in Figure 5. This outfit not only showcased the splendor of the Chinese nation but also conveyed confidence in Chinese culture. It is worth mentioning that this outfit featured intricate peony flower embroidery on the hem, demonstrating the exquisite art of embroidery.

Today, more and more clothing companies are developing Neo-Chinese-style clothing. These brands include Liebo, Sulo, Yunsimuxiang, Yaojing de Koudai, and others. At the same time, some e-commerce brands have also joined this trend, such as Shenyi Pinpai's 2020 new autumn and winter woolen embroidered modified qipao-style thick winter coat, shown in Figure 6, and Moyu Brand's 2020 winter Neo-Chinese-style retro fox fur embroidered Chinese-style mid-length woolen coat for women, shown in Figure 7.

Embroidery plays a crucial role in Neo-Chinese clothing design, providing



Fig. 6. Shenyi New Neo-Chinese Woolen Coat  
<https://mms2.baidu.com/it/u=344190897,1878927431&fm=253&app=138&f=JPEGw=500&h=672>, 2024-06-29

unique visual and tactile effects, and emphasizing the essence of Chinese traditional culture, making it one of the most eye-catching elements in the international fashion scene.

## 6. Summary of the Application of Gan Embroidery in Neo-Chinese-style Woolen Clothing

### 6.1. Individual Part Applications

#### 6.1.1. Application on Collar Sections

In the design of Neo-Chinese-style woolen clothing, the collar, as one of the key components, plays a prominent role. Gan embroidery, as a significant traditional craft, provides designers with a wealth of decorative choices. Applying Gan embroidery to different parts of the collar can bestow the clothing with unique artistic appeal.

(1) Application on Collar Corners: The corners of the collar are often overlooked details, yet appropriate Gan embroidery



Fig. 7. Moyu New Neo-Chinese Woolen Coat  
<https://mms0.baidu.com/it/u=2379786576,2897283807&fm=253&app=138&f=JPEGw=500&h=500>, 2024-06-29

decorations can make them a focal point. Here, delicate and simple Gan embroidery patterns, such as small flowers, leaves, or geometric elements, are chosen. Stitching methods like straight stitches can be used to ensure neat lines, embellishing the collar corners and adding finesse.

(2) Design Along the Collar Edge: The collar edge is one of the primary areas for Gan embroidery application. Here, designers can choose intricate patterns like traditional Gan embroidery flowers, cloud motifs, or phoenix designs. In terms of stitching methods, using straight stitches helps maintain clean, uniform lines. Alternatively, overlay or seed stitches can be applied for increased decoration, making the collar more attractive.

(3) Hidden Beauty on the Collar's Interior: Gan embroidery is used on the collar's interior to make it a discreet decorative element, revealed only when the collar is flipped up. Delicate Gan embroidery patterns, such as abstract designs or small natural elements like birds or petals, are chosen for this area. Common stitching



methods include overlay or seed stitches to maintain smooth lines and enhance the interior's decoration.

(4) **Smooth Transition Below the Collar:** Applying Gan embroidery where the collar meets the garment body can create a seamless transition. The choice of flowing water or water grass patterns enhances the fluidity below the collar. Stitching techniques such as ladder and straight stitches produce gentle lines and color transitions, harmonizing the collar with the garment body.

(5) **Highlighting the Collar's Lapel:** The lapel part of a stand-up collar is the highlight of Gan embroidery decoration. Here, highly decorative Gan embroidery patterns like phoenix or dragon motifs are chosen. Double overlay stitches, as a stitching technique, accentuate the unique and exquisite nature of the stand-up collar.

(6) **Elaborate Coverage of the Entire Collar Panel:** The entire collar, such as a stand-up collar, offers more extensive decorative space. Here, large-scale Gan embroidery patterns like big flowers or intricate cloud motifs can be chosen. A variety of stitching techniques like double overlay, random stitches, or seed stitches are used to fill the entire collar, increasing decoration and artistic appeal.

The application of Gan embroidery in different collar sections enriches the decoration and uniqueness of Neo-Chinese-style woolen clothing. By selecting suitable patterns and stitching methods, Gan embroidery breathes artistic life into the collar, making it an indispensable element in clothing design.

### 6.1.2. Application on Sleeve Sections

Sleeve caps, sleeve bodies, and cuffs are essential areas for Gan embroidery (Yuzhang embroidery) in clothing design, providing ample design space to bestow the clothing with unique artistry and aesthetics.

(1) **Gan Embroidery Design on Sleeve Caps:** Sleeve caps, also known as

sleeve heads, are an important canvas for Gan embroidery. In Gan embroidery designs on the sleeve caps, various heights and lines can be used to create visual effects. This can be achieved by selecting traditional Gan embroidery patterns or patterns with specific themes, such as flowers, birds, landscapes, or calligraphy. The application of stitching techniques, such as floating stitches, flat stitches, or overlay stitches unique to Gan embroidery, is particularly important in sleeve cap design, creating layers and three-dimensionality.

(2) **Gan Embroidery Design on Sleeve Bodies:** The sleeve body, as an extension of the garment, provides more creative space. The density of embroidery, color choices, and style can be flexibly applied to the sleeve body. Depending on the design requirements, the embroidery density on the sleeve body can be adjusted. Some areas can be more densely embroidered, while others can be sparser. In the choice of colors, coordination with the overall color scheme of the clothing should be considered to ensure that the embroidery blends into the overall design. Additionally, the unique stitching techniques and line representations of Gan embroidery can be applied to create different texture effects on the sleeve body.

(3) **Gan Embroidery Design on Cuffs:** The cuff is another key area for Gan embroidery, allowing exquisite embroidery along the edge. Embroidery along the cuff's edge enhances its decorativeness, providing a unique charm. Moreover, contrasting-colored embroidery can be chosen to attract attention and highlight the cuff's decoration.

By skillfully applying Gan embroidery to the design of sleeve caps, sleeve bodies, and cuffs, rich cultural connotations and unique artistic value are injected into the clothing, making it more attractive and distinctive.

### 6.1.3. Other Sections

In Gan embroidery (Yuzhang embroidery) clothing design, apart from sleeve caps,

sleeve bodies, and cuffs, embroidery can be applied to other key areas to enhance the clothing's aesthetics and cultural significance. The following are examples of Gan embroidery applications in various areas, including the front closure, pockets, hem, and back, expressed in academic terminology:

(1) **Front Closure Decoration:** In the front closure section of clothing, Gan embroidery techniques can be applied to create unique decorative effects. This includes embroidering traditional patterns, floral motifs, or other culturally meaningful patterns in the front closure area of the garment. Embroidering the front closure can make the entire clothing more visually appealing and unique.

(2) **Pocket Decoration:** Pockets offer another creative canvas for Gan embroidery. Delicate embroidery on pockets can add uniqueness to clothing. Pocket embroidery design should not only consider aesthetics but also practicality, ensuring that the pockets are both attractive and functional.

(3) **Hem Decoration:** The hem is an important part of clothing and an ideal location for Gan embroidery. Applying embroidery to the hem can enhance the overall design of the clothing through elements such as patterns, lines, or motifs. The choice of hem embroidery design can be tailored to the style and theme of the clothing to achieve visual harmony.

(4) **Back Decoration:** The back of the garment is another key area to showcase Gan embroidery techniques. Embroidery designs in the back area can highlight the clothing's uniqueness and artistic value. This may include large patterns, thematic designs, or cultural elements to capture people's attention and convey specific messages or emotions.

By flexibly applying Gan embroidery techniques in areas such as the front closure, pockets, hem, and back, creative and cultural connotations are infused into Gan embroidery clothing. This design approach not only reflects the inheritance of Chinese traditional culture but also















Sleeve Sections	 right lower sleeve and left sleeve cap	 sleeve elbow	 sleeve cap and sleeve bottom	 cuff
Collar Sections	 collar facing (lapel)	 collar body (lapel)	 collar body (stand collar)	
Garment Body Sections	 right front chest	 left and right front chests	 waist	
Lower hem placket parts	 lower right hem	 left and right lower hem	 upper right end placket	 right placket

Table 4. Examples of Individual Part Applications in this Study  
Source: Drawn by the Author

injects unique artistic charm into fashion. Examples of individual part applications from this study are presented in Table 4.

## 6.2. Combination of Specific Parts

In the design of Gan embroidery (Yuzhang embroidery) clothing, the combination of specific parts is a vibrant design strategy that can be used to create unique clothing

effects by combining embroidery from different areas.

### 6.2.1. Two-Part Combinations

Two-part combinations primarily involve pairing collars with other sections such as sleeves, front closures, pockets, back, and more. This method fully utilizes the prominent position of the collars in clothing and can imbue the attire

with a different ambiance and style. Combinations include collars with sleeves, front closures, pockets, back, and more. The clever fusion of collars with different sections enhances the clothing's visual allure. This combination method can create collars of varying shapes, sizes, and patterns, making the clothing more creative and personalized. There are also combinations of sleeves, pockets, and other sections. These two-part combination approaches highlight



















Two-Part Combinations						
	Sleeve and Garment Body	Sleeve and Cuff	Sleeve and Hem	Front Closure and Cuff	Front Closure and Sleeve	Front Closure and Collar
Multiple-Part Combinations						
	Garment Body and Hem	Garment Body and Cuff	Garment Body and Hem			
Multiple-Part Combinations						
	Collar, Sleeve, and Hem	Collar, Garment Body, and Cuff	Collar, Front Closure, and Cuff	Front Closure, Cuff, and Sleeve	Front Closure, Sleeve, and Collar	Front Closure, Cuff, and Hem

Table 5. Examples of Multiple-Part Combinations in this Study  
Source: Drawn by the Author

the diversity and innovation of Gan embroidery in clothing design, infusing rich cultural and artistic atmospheres into the attire.

### 6.2.2. Multiple-Part Combinations

Multiple-part combinations include the pairing of collars, sleeves, and front closures, creating layered and visually impactful clothing effects. For example, combining exquisite Gan embroidered collars with sleeves and front closures can make the overall attire more luxurious and distinctive. There are also combinations of hems, sleeves, and front closures suitable for emphasizing clothing styles focused on lines and fluidity. Additionally, combining pockets,

sleeves, and front closures, among other sections, can add practicality and decoration to the clothing. It's essential to note that when implementing multiple-part combinations, the selection of embroidery patterns is crucial. Overly complex or ornate patterns may lead to visual clutter, so patterns must be chosen carefully to ensure coordination and achieve a perfect effect. Examples of multiple-part combinations in this study are presented in Table 5.

When implementing these combinations, several factors must be considered. First, pattern consistency: the selected Gan embroidery patterns should be consistent across different sections to ensure overall cohesion. Second, color coordination: in color choices the overall color palette should be considered to avoid conflicts

or overly complex effects. Third, the selection of stitching techniques and threads: the precise selection of stitching techniques and threads can affect the texture and layering of Gan embroidery and should be adjusted based on design requirements. By cleverly combining collars with other clothing sections, designers can create unique, sophisticated, and harmonious clothing effects, enhancing the overall design's quality and appeal.

## 7. Conclusion and Discussion

The research results show that Gan embroidery, with its rich subjects, diverse needle techniques, and vivid artistic expressiveness, injects profound cultural

connotations and unique artistic charm into new Chinese-style woolen garments. The application of Gan embroidery in new Chinese-style clothing design not only enriches the design elements of the garments but also enhances their cultural connotation and artistic value. Through the observation and analysis of different design examples, the study proves the decorative effects of Gan embroidery on collars, sleeves, plackets, pockets, hems, and backs, as well as its overall coordination in design. These findings provide new perspectives and methods for the innovative design of new Chinese-style clothing.

This study, by exploring the application of Gan embroidery in new Chinese-style woolen clothing design, reveals its significance and uniqueness in the modern fashion world. Compared with other traditional embroidery techniques (such as Su embroidery and Yue embroidery), Gan embroidery has unique advantages in needle techniques and artistic expressiveness, especially in depicting ink landscapes and flower-and-bird subjects. However, the promotion

and application of Gan embroidery still face some challenges, such as high production costs, complex production processes, and a declining number of inheritors.

Existing research and the results of this study both indicate that the protection and transmission of Gan embroidery require not only cultural and economic support but also innovative transmission methods and effective market mechanisms. Future research should further explore the following aspects: first, how to use modern technological means (such as digital technology and automated equipment) to improve the production efficiency of Gan embroidery, reduce costs, and enable its wider application in modern fashion design; second, through education and training programs, to cultivate more inheritors of Gan embroidery, ensuring the sustainable development of this traditional craft; third, to study the application of Gan embroidery in different types of clothing and other fashion products, further expanding its market influence.

Through these measures, the wide application of Gan embroidery in modern clothing design can be promoted, achieving the protection and development of traditional crafts and providing unique cultural resources and design inspiration for the global fashion industry.

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