

# Intangible Cultural Heritage Revitalization Strategies Through Integration of Li-Miao Embroidery Techniques with Contemporary Aesthetics

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**Abstract:** Li-Miao embroidery, as a brilliant gem in the treasure trove of ICH of the Chinese nation, embodies the historical memory, cultural beliefs and ancestral wisdom of the Li-Miao ethnic group. Its unique pattern system, embroidery techniques and color expressions are the living carriers of ethnic culture. In the era of diversified aesthetics and personalized consumption demands, pure technique transmission has failed to keep up with the development of the times. The revitalization of ICH has become the key pathway to safeguarding this traditional technique. This article anchor in the core traits of Li-Miao embroidery techniques to analyze the problems such as the transmission challenges and aesthetic disconnection during the its integration with contemporary aesthetics. Grounded in dimensions such as technique innovation, carrier expansion, and dissemination upgrade, it explores ICH revitalization strategies through integration of Li-Miao embroidery techniques with contemporary aesthetics to achieve the living heritage transmission of Li-Miao embroidery techniques and the demonstration of their contemporary value, and enable traditional techniques to be integrated into daily living contexts and revitalize the vitality in the times, while aligning with contemporary aesthetics.

**Keywords:** Li-Miao Embroidery; Contemporary Aesthetics; Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Revitalization; Technique Convergence; Cultural Transmission

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## 1.Introduction

The core of ICH revitalization lies in enabling traditional craftsmanship to leave the museum, escape from the peril of extinction, and find space for survival and development in contemporary life. And aesthetic integration serves as an important bridge to achieve this objective. Li-Miao embroidery has accumulated over a thousand years and has developed into an art style with unique ethnic characteristics. Its patterns embody ethnic totem worship, production and life scenes, as well as auspicious meanings. The techniques are exquisite and full of humanistic warmth. However, with the acceleration of urbanization and the continuous evolution of aesthetics, Li-Miao embroidery is facing problems such as generational discontinuity, disconnection between products and contemporary aesthetics, and insufficient market recognition, gradually being marginalized. It has become the core issue driving the revitalization of these techniques how to break down the barrier between traditional craftsmanship and contemporary life, achieve the deep integration of Li-Miao embroidery with contemporary aesthetics, and enable ICH techniques to both retain their ethnic authenticity and meet the aesthetic needs and lifestyle of contemporary people. This paper focuses on the key challenges in the integration of the two dimensions, explores actionable revitalization strategies, and provides insights and reference for the transmission of Li-Miao embroidery.

## 2.The Core Traits of Li-Miao Embroidery Techniques and the Current Challenges in Their Transmission

The uniqueness of Li-Miao embroidery techniques serves as the foundation for their integration with contemporary aesthetics and equally the core resource for the revitalization of ICH. The Li-Miao ethnic groups have no written language. Embroidery has thus become an important means for them to record history and transmit culture. Each embroidery piece is a concentrated expression of their ethnic culture. In terms of pattern design, Li-Miao embroidery often draws inspiration from natural elements and ethnic life. It includes totem patterns symbolizing ancestral worship and auspicious blessings, as well as life patterns depicting farming, hunting, and

festival scenes. The lines are simple, unsophisticated and fluent, the composition is full and symmetrical, demonstrating the ethnic ideology of harmonious coexistence between human and nature. In terms of technique application, Li-Miao embroidery integrates various workmanships such as weaving, embroidery, and dyeing. The needlework is delicate and diverse, emphasizing the contrast and coordination of colors. Based on natural plant dyes, it has developed a rich and unrestrained color style with rich layers, integrating practicality and artistry <sup>[1]</sup>.

Although Li-Miao embroidery possesses a profound cultural heritage and unique artistic value, during its contemporary transmission process, its disconnection from contemporary aesthetics has led to numerous difficulties in its revitalization. On the one hand, the transmission models are relatively monotonous. Most inheritors still uphold traditional techniques and expression modalities, failing to innovate in accordance with contemporary aesthetic demands. As a result, the embroidery works struggle to align with the contemporary people's living contexts and aesthetic preferences in terms of shape, function, and style. They remain mostly confined to niche categories such as traditional clothing and accessories, failing to integrate into contemporary daily living contexts. On the other hand, aesthetic expressions have disconnected from the times. The traditional Li-Miao embroidery patterns are heavy and complicated and have intense colors. Although they have strong ethnic characteristics, they do not align with contemporary aesthetic demands for minimalist, fashion, and individuality, and lack consideration for the contemporary emotional value and function needs, resulting in low acceptance among young people, potentially inducing risk of generational discontinuity. Furthermore, the methods of technique dissemination are relatively traditional, mostly relying on oral instruction and hands-on teaching, as well as offline exhibition. They have failed to leverage contemporary communication means to expand their influence, making the cultural and artistic value of Li and Miao embroidery struggle to be widely recognized. This further restricts their revitalization and development.

### **3.The Core Logic and Realistic Foundation for Integrating Li-Miao Embroidery with Contemporary Aesthetics**

The integration of Li-Miao embroidery with contemporary aesthetics does not mean to negate or overthrow traditional techniques, yet preserve their cultural core and technical essence, and achieve contemporary transformation in terms of aesthetic expressions, functional positioning, and dissemination methods. The core logic is the principle of “Upholding Fundamentals While Pursuing Innovation”—upholding the roots of traditional techniques, transmitting the soul of the culture, creating the shape of contemporary aesthetics, and adapting to the needs of daily life. This integration is not merely a simple combination of elements, but rather an alignment between the ethnic characteristics of Li-Miao embroidery with the mainstream demands of contemporary aesthetics, achieving an organic symbiosis of tradition and modernity, and ensuring that ICH skills possess both ethnic identity and contemporary vitality.

The realistic foundation for the integration of the two dimensions is becoming increasingly mature, providing favorable conditions for the revitalization of ICH. From a cultural perspective, contemporary people's cultural confidence is constantly increasing, and their attention and identity with traditional culture are also growing day by day. Minimalist, individuality, and culturalization have become the mainstream trends in contemporary aesthetics. The ethnic cultural connotations and handmade warmth contained in Li-Miao embroidery precisely align with contemporary people's pursuit of traditional culture return and individual expressions. This provides cultural soil for the integration of the two dimensions. From a practice perspective, some inheritors and designers have begun to explore the pathways for integrating Li-Miao embroidery with contemporary aesthetics. They streamline and restructure the embroidery patterns, optimize and adjust the colors, and apply them to contemporary clothing, cultural and creative products, interior decorations, etc. They have produced works that integrate ethnic characteristics with contemporary aesthetics, and those products have gained market recognition <sup>[2]</sup>. Meanwhile, the relevant departments have increasingly emphasized the protection of ICH, and have provided safeguards for the integration of Li-Miao embroidery with contemporary aesthetics through measures such as policy support and

platform establishment, accelerating the transformation of traditional techniques from being “protected” to “proactive revitalization”. Furthermore, young inheritors have injected fresh energy into the integration of techniques. Their acute perception of contemporary aesthetics can better bridge the gap between traditional craftsmanship and contemporary life, and promote the contemporary upgrade of the aesthetic expressions of Li-Miao embroidery.

## **4. ICH Revitalization Strategies Through Integration of Li-Miao Embroidery Techniques with Contemporary**

### **4.1 Safeguarding Cultural DNA While Adapting to Contemporary Aesthetic Expressions**

Technique innovation is the core for the integration of Li-Miao embroidery with contemporary aesthetics. It requires optimizing the aesthetic expressions and technique application in the contemporary contexts while preserving the essence and cultural DNA of the traditional techniques. In terms of pattern design, it is necessary to abandon the heavy and complicated stuffing of traditional patterns, refine, restructure and innovate the traditional patterns based on the contemporary aesthetic requirements of minimalist and individuality, retaining the core elements and cultural connotations, while simplifying the lines and composition, making them align more with the design needs of contemporary products. For instance, the core motifs such as the frog patterns and the Gangong bird patterns in Li-Miao embroidery can be extracted and transformed into minimalist designs, which are then integrated into the product designs of contemporary clothing, bags, and accessories, thus preserving the ethnic characteristics while meeting contemporary aesthetic preferences [3].

In terms of color application, it is necessary to optimize the traditional color matching methods, balance ethnic characteristics and contemporary aesthetics, abandon overly intense and glaring color combinations, adopt low-saturation and softened color combinations, while preserving the tactile warmth and organic mellowness of natural plant-based dyes. This not only manifests the traditional characteristics of Li-Miao embroidery, but also aligns with contemporary people’s pursuit of minimalist and high-end aesthetics. In terms of technique application, the core stitches of Li-Miao embroidery must be retained, while integrating with contemporary embroidery techniques and materials to enrich the expression modalities and enhance the practicality and endurance of the works. For instance, traditional embroidery can be combined with contemporary machine embroidery and applique embroidery to enhance production efficiency, reduce cost, while maintaining the warmth of hand embroidery. New contemporary fabrics can be introduced to expand the application scenarios of embroidery works, enabling Li-Miao embroidery to extend from traditional clothing to multiple sectors such as contemporary home furnishings and cultural & creative products.

### **4.2 Anchoring Heritage in Daily Living Contexts to Diversify Integrated Application Scenarios**

The key to ICH revitalization lies in integrating traditional craftsmanship into daily living contexts. Therefore, it is necessary to expand the application carriers of Li-Miao embroidery, break through the limitations of traditional application scenarios, and achieve their deep integration with contemporary life. Traditional Li-Miao embroidery is mostly used in sectors such as ethnic costumes and sacrificial items. Its application scope is narrow, failing to meet the demands of contemporary consumers. To address these problems, it is necessary to promote the cross-domain integration of Li-Miao embroidery with various sectors based on contemporary life scenarios, thereby enriching the product forms. In clothing sector, Li-Miao embroidery elements can be integrated with contemporary fashionable dress, casual wear, and accessories to design products such as clothing, scarves, and hats that integrate ethnic characteristics with fashion sense, transcending the constraints of traditional ethnic clothing and enabling the embroidery works to be integrated into daily outfits [4].

In the sector of cultural and creative products, it is necessary to explore the cultural connotations of Li-Miao embroidery, and develop products such as embroidery bookmarks, notebooks, table lamps, and decorative paintings based on function needs of contemporary cultural and creative products, transforming Li-Miao embroidery from “artworks” into “daily necessities”, thereby enhancing its popularization. In the sector of interior decoration, Li-Miao

embroidery can be applied to the design of home furnishings such as curtains, throw pillows, wall hangings and carpets, creating a contemporary home style with ethnic characteristics, which meets the pursuit of contemporary people for personalized and Culturally-oriented home environment. Meanwhile, it is essential to combine Li-Miao embroidery with rural tourism and cultural exhibition and performances to create embroidery experience workshops and cultural display platforms grounded in the trend of culture-tourism integration, enabling tourists to experience the embroidery techniques and taste the ethnic culture, thereby promoting the dissemination and revitalization of Li-Miao embroidery, and achieving a win-win situation of cultural value and economic benefits.

#### **4.3 Constructing Multidimensional Systems to Consolidate Revitalization Foundations**

Talents are the core support for the revitalization of Li-Miao embroidery. A diversified talent system featuring “traditional inheritors, contemporary designers, and young practitioners” needs to be established to resolve generational discontinuity and promote the deep integration of techniques with contemporary aesthetics. On the one hand, efforts should be made to strengthen the support and cultivation of traditional inheritors, encouraging them to uphold traditional craftsmanship, and guiding them to proactively understand contemporary aesthetic trends, and learn contemporary design philosophy and dissemination methods, promoting the innovation and transformation of traditional craftsmanship. Establishing exchange platforms for inheritors can facilitate mutual learning among Li-Miao embroidery inheritors from different regions and different schools of art, enabling them to learn from each other and improve upon their own techniques, and enrich their expression modalities.

On the other hand, it is necessary to strengthen cooperation with universities and design institutions, and launch courses on Li-Miao embroidery, and cultivate professional talents with traditional techniques and contemporary design capabilities, enabling the younger generation to understand and master the Li-Miao embroidery techniques, while equally endowing them with contemporary aesthetic perspectives and innovation capabilities. This will promote aesthetic upgrade and carrier innovation of embroidery works. In addition, it is essential to increase support for young practitioners, encouraging young people to participate in the creation and dissemination of Li-Miao embroidery, and attract young people to engage in the transmission of ICH through measures such as policy support, financial support, and platform establishment, enabling the younger generation to become the main force in technique convergence and revitalization, thereby achieving the intergenerational transmission of Li-Miao embroidery techniques.

#### **4.4 Leveraging Contemporary Communication Channels to Amplify Cultural Resonance**

Contemporary communication media are important means to promote the integration of Li-Miao embroidery with contemporary aesthetics and to realize the revitalization of ICH. It is essential to break through the limitations of traditional dissemination models and leverage new media platforms to amplify cultural resonance of Li-Miao embroidery and enhance its market recognition. On the one hand, new media platforms such as short videos, live streaming, and Rednote, can be leveraged to show the techniques, creation process, and cultural connotations of Li-Miao embroidery. Through vivid and intuitive content, more people can understand the artistic value and cultural charm of Li-Miao embroidery, and the younger generation will pay attention to the techniques. For instance, network anchors can demonstrate the embroidery techniques, explain the cultural connotations of the patterns through live broadcasts, enabling viewers to have an intuitive understanding of the charm of traditional craftsmanship, and present the case studies on the integration of Li-Miao embroidery with contemporary products through short-form videos, guiding consumers to learn about and purchase related products.

On the other hand, it is necessary to create a culture IP for Li-Miao embroidery, exploring the ethnic stories and cultural connotations behind it, and amplifying cultural resonance through means such as IP licensing and cross-domain collaboration, and grounded in contemporary aesthetic demands, create an IP image with ethnic characteristics and contemporary aesthetics, applying it to cultural and creative products, clothing, film and television programs, etc., so as to integrate Li-Miao embroidery culture into contemporary popular culture, and

enhance its popularity and influence. At the same time, it is essential to enhance offline dissemination by organizing exhibitions of Li-Miao embroidery works, technique exhibitions and performances, and cultural forums, etc., and building display and communication platforms to enable more people to experience the charm of Li-Miao embroidery up close, promote the extensive dissemination of traditional techniques, and create a favorable social climate for the revitalization of ICH.

## 5. Conclusion

The integration of Li-Miao embroidery techniques with contemporary aesthetics is the inevitable pathway to realizing the revitalization of their ICH, and equally an important initiative for transmitting ethnic culture and demonstrating cultural confidence. Li-Miao embroidery, as a living carrier of the cultural heritage of the Li-Miao ethnic group, its unique techniques and cultural connotations are the core advantages that can be integrated with contemporary aesthetics. Meanwhile, the demands of contemporary aesthetics provide an opportunity and space for its revitalization in the era. During the process of integration of the two dimensions, it is necessary to uphold the core principle of “Upholding Fundamentals While Pursuing Innovation”, and achieve the living heritage transmission of Li-Miao embroidery techniques and the demonstration of their contemporary value through technique innovation to adapt to contemporary aesthetic expressions, through carrier expansion to anchor heritage in daily living contexts, through talent cultivation to consolidate transmission foundations, and through dissemination upgrades to amplify cultural resonance. Only by ensuring that Li-Miao embroidery not only retains its ethnic authenticity but also meets contemporary aesthetics and living demands, can this thousand-year-old ICH technique escape from the endangered dilemma, regain new vitality in contemporary life, and become an important carrier bridging tradition and modernity, demonstrating the charm of national culture, providing actionable insights for the creative transformation and innovative development of excellent traditional Chinese culture.

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