

Listening to the Voice of Our Ancestors:  
a Tin Embroidery Cultural Study by Teachers and Students  
in an Ethnic Miao Area in China

聆听先民的声音－贵州苗乡师生的锡绣文化追寻之旅

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Evergreen Education Foundation



# Evergreen Education Foundation (EEF)

★ Mission: to improve education opportunities for children and young adults in rural China

- Sponsors 45 schools and libraries in Beijing and 7 provinces: provides books, computers, equipment, supplies, workshops, seminars
- Funds innovative projects to enhance student learning and academic advancement



★ Oral History & Local Cultural Study Initiative



- Pilot project: Tianzhu Oral History Project, 2009
- Knowledge & Resources Platform
- Training & Discussion
- 2014 ITIE Conference: Local Culture & Oral History



EEF's Outreach in China  
青树教育基金会资助地区

Interview Locations  
访谈地点

# Oral History Project: Tin Embroidery Cultural Study

口述历史项目: 锡绣文化探寻

## ★ Project Goal 项目目标

- Engage students in collaborate efforts using discovery and research activities

增强学生研究能力

- Enhance awareness and knowledge of the ethnic communities around them

增加对少数民族传统文化的了解



## ✿ Methodology 过程

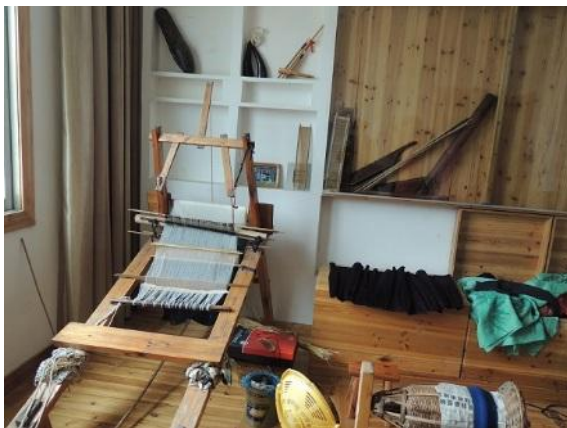
- ★ Choose interviewees 访谈对象
- ★ Prepare & Training 准备和培训
- ★ Equipment 设备
- ★ Choose Interview Locations 访谈地点





# Summary of Interviews - Tin Embroidery Culture

访谈总结: 锡绣文化



★ Miao people make & dye their dresses with self-grown cottons

苗族自己种棉, 织布做衣



★ Metal tin embroidered on the indigo cloths

藏青色布绣上白色的锡





# Tin Embroidery - Social Value

## 锡绣的社会价值

### ★ Indicator of female industriousness and virtuosity

衡量女性勤劳贤淑的指标

### ★Interviewee: Dragon Lady Sanjiu 被访谈者: 龙女三九

- Q: Would a young man prefer a mate with embroidery skills?
- A: Yes, Usually girls who do better embroidery are more popular and attractive for young men.
- 问: 村里的男人是否把绣花的好坏作为选择对象的因素考虑?
- 答: 是的, 通常绣花好的姑娘, 会成为男人喜欢的主要对象。





# Tin Embroidery - Historical and Cultural Values

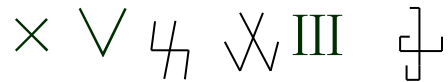
## 锡绣的历史和文化价值

### ★ Carriers of Miao History and Culture

苗族历史文化的载体

### ★ Features 锡绣图案特点 [Video](#) 录像

#### ○ Abstract designs and signs 抽象符号



#### ○ Delicate Layout 布局精妙

- Symbolizes Miao people live in harmony as a big family
- 构图寓意苗族和谐相处如一家人







# Tin Embroidery – Inheritance

## 锡绣的传承

### ★Inheritance 传承

- Passed down by family members or groups

家庭、群体互学是锡绣传承的主要方式



- [Video](#): embroidery group 录像

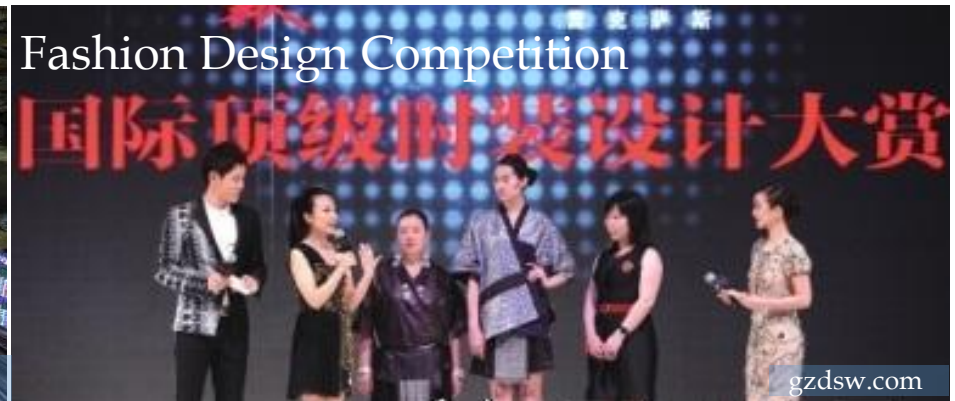


# Tin Embroidery – Challenges & Opportunities

## 锡绣的挑战和机遇

### ★ Challenges 挑战

- Impact of Modern civilization 现代文明的冲击
- Impact of Modern Education System 现代教育体系的冲击



### ★ Opportunities 机遇

- National Cultural Heritage Protection Mechanism 国家文化遗产保护体系
- Miao people: studios, arts & crafts competitions, orders from tourists & businessmen 工作室, 民间工艺比赛, 游客和商家订单



## Reflection: Role of Oral History Projects in Secondary Education 反思: 口述历史在中学教育中的作用

★ Help students connect with the culture and history of their own communities 帮助学生探索 and 了解当地的历史文化

★ Engage students in social interactions: positive impact on their social and emotional life

让学生参与更多的社交活动  
积极影响其社会和情感生活

★ Expand students' vision

扩展学生的视野





# Reflection: Role of Oral History Projects in Secondary Education

## 反思: 口述历史在中学教育中的作用

### ★ Students: Acquired Practical Skills

提高学生技能

- Teamwork 团队合作能力
- Communication skill 沟通技巧
- Research skill 研究能力
- Analytical skill 分析能力
- IT skill IT技能



### ★ Teachers: enhanced abilities in designing & organizing teaching process

提升教师作为引导者的能力

## 🎵 Epilogue 结语

- ★ During the project, we have trodden the very path where villagers and their ancestors have walked on for thousands of years.



在追寻锡绣文化的过程中，访谈小组的师生们沿着千百年来村民们走过的山道进入村子，而从书籍文献的字里行间，到去亲身感受、理解、观察这一文化，我们走过了更长的路。



- ★ We have travelled an even longer path from the text in books, to truly open our hearts to feel, to understand, and to observe the culture around us.

## 🎵 Epilogue 结语



- ★ Between the lines of embroidery, the Miao ancestors are crooning, and the Miao women sewing their lives into tin embroidery works are singing along with them.



在锡绣的简与繁之间，苗族的先民们在低吟也在高歌，而苗族女子们将她们的生命缝进了绣片里，为祖先们应和。

- ★ The young generation of the village heard it, so did the students from Kaili City. They are listening attentively, with eyes becoming brighter.



这歌声展留的学生娃听到了，凯里的学生娃如今也听到了。她们凝神静听，目光澄澈。





# Thanks!



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