

# Research on Cultural Characteristics Contained in Chinese Traditional Interior Furnishing

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**Abstract**—From the perspective of cultural analysis, this paper studies the cultural attributes of the traditional Chinese interior furnishings in the form, color and decorative patterns. And from the function of space furnishings, further expounds the cultural implication. To continue the traditional design culture for the future interior decoration art, and Show the essence of Chinese traditional culture is of far-reaching significance.

**Key words**—*Traditional Indoor Space, Furnishings, Cultural Traits*

## I. INTRODUCTION

China has a long history and profound culture. In the process of creating human living environment, it has formed a unique style of interior furnishings. The furnishings of the interior space of the building satisfy the normal life needs of the people, and they also serve as an embellishment and an atmosphere, creating a strong cultural atmosphere for the space and embodying the cultural tastes of the owners of the room.

## II. THE CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES OF FORMAL ELEMENTS OF TRADITIONAL FURNISHINGS

### A. Development and Categories of Traditional Furnishings

Chinese traditional interior furnishings refer to the comprehensive planning and design arrangement of functions and aesthetics for furniture, living appliances, reels, decoration fabrics, furnishings, greenery and bonsai on the basis of interior decoration.

The evolution of the use of furniture began with the emergence of beds, screens, and screens during the Spring, Autumn and Warring States period of the Xia-Shang-Zhou period, gradually enriching and improving. During the period of the Qin and Han dynasties, there appeared bedding, hangers, cabinets, and cases. During the period of the Wei, Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties, high sitting furniture was introduced, such as armchairs, benches, stools, and cinched waists; during the Song, Yuan and Qing Dynasties, furniture was furnished with tables and chairs. Cases, beds, cabinets, stools, and platform screens, shelves, partitions, etc. tend to be perfect and mature, and the covers, screens, shelves, and partitions have become the main furnishings of the partitioning space. There are two kinds of symmetrical and asymmetrical styles for interior furniture. Halls are used as the key points of residential space. Symmetrical furnishings are used. The study generally adopts asymmetrical layout.

Living appliances, furnishings and decoration to the Ming and Qing Dynasties With the development of arts and crafts has reached a mature stage, categories gradually clear, such as porcelain, jade, lacquer, metal, textiles, embroidery, etc..

The couplets are derived from paintings. The paintings were clearly defined in the period of the Sui, Tang, and Five Dynasties and their techniques were mature. Later, in the Song Dynasty, literati paintings were formed. From the Ming and Qing Dynasties, paintings and hanging screens began to become the main decorations on the walls. In the middle of the common hall, halls are hung with paintings and paintings on the left and right sides, with screens on both sides, pairs of wooden panels on the columns; asymmetric arrangement of hanging halls or paintings in the flower halls or the study rooms; wooden boards and boards are used in the halls and gardens. ; The amount of scars is mostly used for palaces, government buildings or gardens [1].

### B. Cultural Expression of Traditional Furnishings

The shape of form will adjust the feeling of space, the circle will feel soft, and the polygonal shape will give people oppression and danger. The tall things will feel solemn and tall, and the short things will be more approachable.

The ancient Chinese aesthetics thought that "the heaven and the earth" was a perfect state. Therefore, the shape of the circle and the square covered most of the traditional designs. In the interior design, circular or round curves are mostly reflected in the doors and windows, partitions and decorative components, such as the circular wood carving cover cut off in Figure 1, to form the interior frame, increasing the sense of space, and the shape of the sculpture Contains auspicious meaning. Furniture furnishings such as cases, tables, chairs and other overall shape mostly square, strict Founder, in the local decorative details carved patterns. The more unique crescent table, also known as the half table, is beautiful in shape. There are generally two on both sides of the hall. Usually, it can be used as a side table. There are seats on both sides. If necessary,

they can be made into a round table, which is very functional. At the same time adjust the seriousness of indoor furnishings, as shown in Figure 2.



Figure1CircularWood carvingspartition①Figure2Hall furnishings②

“Lines” have absolute advantages in flexibly expressing image features, vividly and generally representing the artistic life of objects and traditional verve. At the same time, "line" has a special culture in our national art. Taking the official hat chair in Ming and Qing Dynasties as an example, the four-headed official hat chair is based on the morphological lines of the official hat, with a straight contrast, a soft middle and a solid, and an imaginary view, with a combination of hardness and softness,as shown in Figure3.



Figure3 Official's hat armchair③

### C. The Cultural Expression of the Color of Traditional Furnishings

Color acts on the mind through the visual and influences people's emotions. In the traditional style of interior design, the tradition and psychologyof color deeply influence the evolution and development of Chinese style. China has a vast territory and many ethnic groups. The concept of color has different and concrete manifestations in different places and historical periods, such as the concept of color hierarchy, the symbolism and meaning of color, and the philosophical concept of unity between man and nature.

The use of color in Chinese traditional interior spaces has a deep national cultural characteristic. This characteristic is reflected in the symbolism of color, the style of living advocating simplicity and frugality, and the principle of doctrine of the golden mean. The symbol of color is based on the Five Elements color system formed in the Han dynasty. It integrates social hierarchy concepts and folk culture, being applied in the furniture, walls, ceilings, beams and columns, sparrow, lattice fans, shelves, ornaments and patterns of interior space.

The use of Chinese room color is linked to self-cultivation and life ambition. The color of the traditional bedroom wall is dominated by white, and the plain white achieves the desire for temperate desire and peace of mind. It embodies the Chinese people's pursuit of harmony and stability in the inner spiritual world; traditional architecture and interior design of decorative bricks, stone carvings and The colorless wood carving interface mostly uses black, white, gray and other achromatic colors as the main color, admires the color of the material itself, respects the word “natural”, and embodies the unity of “man, nature, and nature”. The important idea of the Red Gate symbolizes the richness and joy of the ancient high gates, and the red color of the Taishi Chair shows the solemnity and dignity of the elite[2].

In general, the color of Chinese traditional residential interior spaces is subtle, dignified, elegant and simple, low-grade dark gray tone, and low-purity mahogany furniture, natural color and natural texture, bright colors are mostly in the form of plants or textiles. The colors of ornaments and paintings are mainly black and white gray or blue, as shown in Figure 4.



Figure4 Color matching in traditional living space②

#### D. The Cultural Expression of Decorative Patterns of Traditional Furnishings

Judging from the image and content of the decoration, China's traditional patterns can be divided into animal prints, wild birds, animal prints, plant prints, utensils, children's prints, figure prints, Kyrgyz text prints, and auspicious combinations composed of several patterns[3]. Generally used in building components, furniture, dyed fabrics, ceramics, jade, lacquerware and other artifacts.

In the traditional interior space, decoration patterns of furnishings are mostly used for furniture, hanging screens (paintings), and crafts ornaments. Most of the carving patterns are plant patterns, animal patterns, and artifact patterns. Such as magpies, cranes, storks, peacocks, chickens, sheep, bats, turtles, butterflies and other symbols of good luck. The bird and animal pattern is based on the decorative image created by the auspicious culture. It is represented by dragons, sisters, and unicorns. It is a collection of animal images. There are many kinds of plant patterns, various forms, rich ten changes, but also due to the characteristics of the plant itself has been given a variety of quality, integrity and morality, loved by people, such as pine bamboo plum, plum orchid bamboo and chrysanthemum, Baoxiang flower, wrapped branches, Roll grass pattern, narcissus, persimmon pattern, three more bergamot, pomegranate, peach, periwinkle and so on. The artifact patterns are mostly composed of artifacts and auspicious clouds. These artifacts are mostly related to Taoism and Buddhism, such as "Taiji diagram," "Eight trigrams," "Eight treasures," "Eight auspicious," "Eight yin," and "wishful." Therefore, people use these artifacts as a symbol of the deities, thinking that they have the effect of warding off evil, preventing disasters, and turning evil into evil spirits [4].

### III. THE CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE SPATIAL ARRANGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL INDOOR OBJECTS

The indoor furnishings not only require the exquisite quaint furnishings of a single piece, but also pay attention to the harmony between multiple furnishings, paying attention to the harmony between the antique calligraphy and painting and furniture, the space and even the shape of the courtyard, and the arrangement and layout of furnishings. In order to complement each other and cooperate[8], we can see the ancient people's interest and cultural connotation.

#### A. Ethical Culture of Traditional Indoor Furnishings

Under the influence of China's ancient hierarchy, the layout from the architectural plane to the furnishings of interior furniture strictly abides by the concept of hierarchy. This concept has evolved into the main purpose of creating a space environment and the aesthetic value standard [5].



Figure 5 Traditional living room furnishings<sup>[9]</sup>

The traditional living space hall is the main place for heaven and earth, ancestors, ghosts, and social networking. The layout of the hall is symmetrical to the central axis of the building, embodying the majesty of the hierarchy and highlighting the elegance and elegance of the owner. The front main wall is the place where the main facilities are placed. The antique calligraphy and painting are symmetrical and balanced. The selection and display of the furniture shows the features of being central, spacious, tall and bright. This is not only the requirement of traditional aesthetics but also the moral pursuit of man. The layout of the main hall is symmetrically arranged in the middle axis, as shown in Figure 5.

### *B. Aesthetic Culture Created by Traditional Indoor Furnishings*

In the traditional living room, apart from the living room or layout of the garden building, the form, color, style and other appearances of the furnishings are flexible and diverse. The main features of life style are the basis, and the aesthetic styles are diverse, reflecting a certain social fashion aesthetic culture.

#### *(1) Advocating natural aesthetic taste*

In the traditional Chinese living space, in order to add vitality to the interior, people often use scene-shifting techniques to arrange flowers, birds, insects, bonsai, and rocks in the interior space, and then use various partitions, doors, covers, screens, etc. It is used to divide indoor space and make people create a spatial distance, and to form a space art effect with virtual reality, internal and external transparency, and vitality [6].

At the same time, through the doors and windows, the outdoor landscape is “borrowed” into the interior, expresses the inner demands of nature and returns to nature. The characteristics of the ethereal beauty coincide with the traditions of the literati in pursuit of inner peace, emptiness, and quietness. Indoor and outdoor bonsai, Chinese painting, stone and other furnishings are arranged in a small apartment, harmonious and distant, harmonious movement, co-existence and reality, artistic conception, in the middle, make people get in the natural environment, enjoy the aesthetic enjoyment [5].

#### *(2) Poetic life aesthetics*

The architects of the Ming Dynasty said that “the things are funny, the goals are sent out, and the intentions are in the pen.” It is the situation where the viewer and the aesthetic object meet and the scenes blend. Traditional interior furnishings, through the modeling and decoration design to express a specific emotional mood. Different furnishings, such as paintings, paintings, couplets, sashes, etc., pursue poetic and artistic tastes based on decorative functions and convey the owner's spiritual and emotional pursuits [6].

In our traditional indoor furnishings, there are many hanging halls and halls on the front of the hall, with couplets on both sides. Some halls are centered on screens, written or engraved poetry and patterns, and a few cases are decorated with a large number of handicrafts. Its decorative language is a kind of dignified and generous charm, full of gorgeous literary talent. The arrangement of furniture, the arrangement of ornamentation, and the hanging of the calligraphy and painting antiques all strive to create an artistic atmosphere of gentleness and temperament. In addition, clever using of inscriptions, paintings, antiques, gardens, landscapes and other furnishings and furnishings methods to create a subtle, elegant, bookish realm, to reflect the owner's aesthetic pursuit.

### *C. Analysis of the Auspicious Folklore Culture of Traditional Indoor Furnishings*

The auspicious meaning refers to the good signs. It is not a component of traditional Chinese mainstream culture. It has been evolving and developing in the private sector. It is more of a folk lifestyle and reflects the people's simple desire for a happy life. It is reflected in such things as folk art, folk-like images, residential buildings, and indoor structures. For example, the door covers of ancient houses in Huizhou are mostly ingot-shaped, symbolizing “finance and wealth;” Jiangcun Jiang's ancestral doors have wood carvings representing 24 solar terms per year. The vases and flowers in each wood carving are never identical. Seasonal peace shines. WangZhongyi has carved 12 months of flowers and seasonal fruits on residential windows, meaning peace all year round and four seasons thriving [7].

In traditional residential rooms, the space layout and furnishings have shown a yearning for a better life. For example, the layout of tables, chairs, cases, tables, and other furniture in the exhibition hall reflects the Confucian's golden mean. There are many changes in the indoor furnishings, such as the wooden stone slabs or paintings on the wall. The theme is mostly landscape or Birds and flowers reflect the owner's leisure and entertainment, or ideals of life. The mirror table and ceramic utensils placed on the case mean peace and good fortune. In the middle of the front section of the Cheng Chi Church in Hongcun Village, there is a bell ring in the middle of the case, with a cap tube on both sides of the bell, an ancient porcelain vase on the east side of the cap tube, and an exquisite wooden base mirror on the west, meaning “a lifetime of peace”, as shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6The lobby of Hongcun Cheng  
Zhi Tang<sup>②</sup>

#### IV. THE CONCLUSION

As a part of the Chinese design culture, traditional living space furnishings are worth inheriting, developing, blending and sublimating. Only by digging deep into the cultural connotation behind it, can we deduce a living space with Chinese excellent cultural traditions and modern living habits and aesthetic demands in order to shape our current life culture and enhance the aesthetic taste of space.

#### V. NOTE:

- ①Image Source: <http://blog.sina.com.cn/tranquilitysmiles>
- ②Image Source: Guiputang Art Appreciation and Collection
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