

Analysis on the Contemporary Emotional Design of Chinese Traditional Furniture

Qi Liu
Sanda University
Shanghai, China

Abstract—This paper discusses the inheritance and innovation of Chinese furniture design. On the basis of understanding the connotation of Chinese contemporary culture and emotional appeal, the author deeply examines the contemporary issue of traditional furniture, further explains the three levels of the contemporary emotional connotation of traditional Chinese furniture, and then sorts out the contemporary emotional design perspective of traditional Chinese furniture. Furthermore, it establishes a theoretical framework for the emotional design of traditional furniture and provides a design idea for designers to carry out emotional innovative design.

Keywords: *tradition, furniture, modernization, emotion*

I. INTRODUCTION

Economic globalization and cultural diversification are the theme and trend of the world development. In the context of multicultural integration and experience economy, the contemporary transformation of traditional design is both a theoretical and a practical problem. With the change of people's consumption culture, emotional factors, as one of the inherent characteristics of furniture culture inheritance, have become an inevitable choice for people to seek spiritual ballast. As the carrier of condensing the connotation of Chinese culture, it is particularly important to infuse emotional factors into furniture and realize the communication with human heart and emotion.

II. A CONTEMPORARY REVIEW OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL FURNITURE

The core of design is the inheritance and transcendence of culture. "The contemporary transformation of traditional design is not only the innovation in style, the nostalgia in thinking or the pure research on design methodology, but also the reflection of the era of "re-construction" and "re-development" in the field of Chinese design." Chinese contemporary furniture design is based on the needs of contemporary lifestyle, respect and pursuit of humanized life, to achieve the contemporary transformation of the core ideas in traditional furniture design, and it is also a creative design based on the existing lifestyle. The main focus is as follows:

A. The highlight of humanistic spirit and cultural connotation

There are infinite cultural appeals in Chinese traditional furniture — it connects with the history, conveys the ideal and presents the irresistible charm. All these make the traditional furniture cultural, poetic, historical, national, open and inclusive ... Chinese culture values spirit over substance. "Metaphysical refers to Taoism, the way of heaven, the most abstract and essential philosophical problem, or the deepest and most fundamental problem that all scientific knowledge cannot reach and does not directly serve the society, while shape refers to appliance, and specific and useful knowledge." (*I Ching*). That is, the Tao appears first, then the appliance. The Tao here is the presentation of thoughts and spiritual appeals supported by emotions. This is not scientific in the eyes of westerners, which is the fundamental cause of the collision between east and west. It is the opposite of this humanistic spirit created the unique cultural temperament of Chinese furniture, making it unique in the global design trend. Therefore, in the context of multicultural integration, the inheritance and innovation of humanistic spirit and cultural connotation is still one of the choices for the modernization of Chinese traditional furniture. For example, the "eight masters" presented by the *Landbond Company* based on the foundation of the original design of Chinese style furniture represents the life culture and lifestyle of eight different regions, incorporating the cultural elements of local characteristics, and promoting the innovation and development of household life culture with the unique regional culture.

B. Innovations in materials, processes and technologies

The innovation of material, craft and technology broke through the traditional temperament and presented the furniture experience with a sense of the times. The collision of traditional furniture technology and intelligent high technology has produced the striking effect of avant-garde and boldness. For example, laser engraving, printing, corrosion, indentation and hollowing controlled by computer software technology are carried out on the wood, metal, glass and plastic furniture modeling, which precisely expresses the strong visual effect that the designer wants to express, showing the trend that "digital high technology" replaces "traditional processing technology". Furniture pays more

attention to highlight the visibility of different material and texture. It breaks through the conventional composition design to show the beauty of different materials texture and endow contemporary furniture more cultural affection and adornment detail with the aid of different advanced processing technology and painting technology. On the other hand, the "new taste of traditional culture", which is innovated by traditional material and traditional craft, makes the exploration of contemporary traditional furniture more human, and emotionally balances the application of new and high materials and new technology. The innovation of traditional crafts is not the reproduction or revival of handicrafts, but the re-development of traditional crafts based on the needs of contemporary people.

C. Fashion and crossover design

As society booms, fashion has become an important aesthetic dimension of contemporary design. The integration between tradition and fashion can endow furniture with wowing temperament and charm, which can reflect extraordinary life taste and reveal personality. Tradition is the basis of fashion. In a dynamic process, tradition supports fashion and fashion makes tradition brilliant. Tradition focuses on accumulation and inheritance, while fashion highlights breakthroughs and innovations. In fact, the coincidence and transformation of fashion and tradition is nothing new. Tradition was the fashion of the past, and today's fashion may be the tradition of the future. From the perspective of fashion, tradition is a blend of classic and conservative. From the traditional point of view, fashion is the unity of individuality and avant-garde. With the intensification of globalization and the rise of consumerism, crossover design provides new thinking and design solutions for the transformation of Chinese national furniture from tradition to fashion. The integration of cross-field and cross-culture represents a new lifestyle and design aesthetics, whose essence is cultural creativity. The key to get aesthetic feeling and new stimulation in the fusion of different elements lies in the new understanding and interpretation of traditional furniture culture and fashion culture. For example, the fashion of furniture has become one of the conceptual trends in recent years. Just like the subtext of fashion, furniture has also become a kind of symbol for people to express their life attitude, to show their cultivation and taste, and to look for the same kind.

III. THE CONTEMPORARY EMOTIONAL CONNOTATION OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL FURNITURE

With the change of consumer culture, the economic system has changed from producer-oriented to consumer-oriented. While satisfying material needs, people increasingly pursue "a kind of aimless, unpredictable and unmeasured lyric value" and "a variety of items that can arouse poetic response". This means that consumers' consumption of furniture has changed from functional satisfaction to psychological satisfaction of furniture image, valuing style differences and spiritual enjoyment. The emotional significance of furniture has never been more in

focus. Furniture also pays more and more attention to the function of dialogue — namely the communication of human heart and emotion. Emotional significance is the internal expression of the humanistic spirit of Chinese traditional furniture. The docking between the traditional and the contemporary emotional connotation and the exploration of the humanistic spirit of Chinese traditional furniture have become one of the important factors of the modernization of Chinese furniture. The grasp of contemporary emotional connotation can be considered from the following three aspects:

A. Personal level: emotional experience — instrumental meaning

The emotional experience at the personal level is mainly based on the communication of the form and meaning of the furniture. It is the design aesthetics of the furniture that triggers people's positive emotional experience and psychological feeling, and reflects the internal relationship between people and things. In the era of experience economy, people increasingly pursue a pleasant lifestyle. With the rise of postmodernism, consumers begin to reflect on the emotional experience of traditional furniture. Should consumers be given a more unique experience? Gamification, entertainment, interactivity, fashion and other characteristics have begun to penetrate into the emotional experience of furniture, and psychological elements and gender elements in design have been more and more widely mentioned. Ming-style furniture serves as the peak of Chinese traditional furniture. The simple, harmonious, natural, implicit and ethereal traditional emotional experience contained in the furniture can only be interpreted from a new perspective so as to trigger the emotional experience that meets the inner demands of contemporary people. It needs to be emphasized that the expression of personal emotions should be based on the common emotions generated by people's common visual experience, rather than the one-sided pursuit of "individuation".

B. Social level: emotional belonging — identity

Emotional belonging is embodied in the relationship between people, things and society. It expresses the status, class symbol, life taste and unique lifestyle of the furniture owner, which is a deeper perceptual cognitive result. It is the characteristic in the social meaning implied in the design, as well as the specific meaning generated in the relationship with related objects and environment. Chinese traditional furniture has always existed not only as a kind of utensil culture, but also as an embodiment of the etiquette norms, class consciousness, hierarchy and other institutional culture of specific historical stages. For example, the importance of traditional furniture to etiquette, rules and hierarchy is due to the influence of the relationship between "emperor and minister, father and son, husband and wife" in the traditional society. Such institutional culture has been gradually weakened in the contemporary development of traditional furniture. The meaning and ethics of the elements of furniture have also changed. When mass consumers use furniture, they increasingly pursue a kind of democratic

humanistic care in order to obtain sufficient humanized experience value. Obviously, the existence of this kind of emotional belonging is more universal, which is also a breakthrough in the emotional consciousness of Chinese traditional furniture. However, niche consumer will choose the furniture that reflects its individual character, lifestyle, social status to obtain emotion of belonging.

C. Cultural level: zeitgeist — historical culture

The emotional significance is embodied in the human-object-culture relationship. It includes symbolic significance, historical significance, cultural significance, social significance, etc. Combined with their own experience and background, consumers summon specific emotions, cultural feelings, social significance, historical significance, beliefs, rituals, customs and other profound meanings from the deep perception of the work, showing a natural, historical and cultural memory context. Qian Mu, master of Chinese culture, takes that "In Chinese culture, the unity of man and nature is the destination of the whole Chinese traditional culture." Such core culture has been interpreted and developed into the spirit of "harmonious coexistence". Therefore, the emotional significance of contemporary Chinese furniture should reflect the value of contemporary Chinese people's life, and the design philosophy emphasizes the harmonious coexistence of human-furniture-society-natural system.

IV. PERSPECTIVE OF CONTEMPORARY EMOTIONAL DESIGN OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL FURNITURE

A. Taking the national spirit as the root

National spirit is the highest level of national character and the core and essence of national culture. In furniture design, the national spirit is always latent in the design. Only when the heterogeneous culture is compared, people can experience the role of national spirit in the design, can feel the quality of furniture endowed with the vast and profound culture of the Chinese nation. In the west, the style of Chinese traditional furniture is known as "Chinese doctrine". It can be seen that the design spirit of Chinese furniture is the spiritual function of Chinese national culture. Kandinsky said: "Just as every artist must make his language known, every nation must make its voice heard by others, and the nation to which the artist belongs is no exception. This internal connection is reflected in the form, which constitutes the national element of the work." Only when the exploration of Chinese furniture emotion is based on the value orientation of national design spirit can excellent design works with vitality emerge.

B. Taking the emotional appeals as motivation

"Products are endowed with emotional characteristics due to their special experiences, relationships and events with human beings, which contain rich and unique individual

feelings." ¹ Furniture is the carrier of emotion. Chinese traditional furniture is full of profound cultural deposits and distinct emotional appeals, which reflects people's value orientation under specific historical conditions. With the advent of post-industrial society, the transformation of economic form and consumer culture increasingly highlights the emotional value of furniture, which is an inevitable choice for people to seek spiritual support and emotional identity. Taking emotional appeal as motivation is not the same as taking emotional design as principle. Firstly, it is necessary to clarify the level of emotional connotation conveyed by furniture, which is the basis of emotional design. Secondly, the contemporary transformation of the emotional appeal of traditional furniture must find a reasonable connection to integrate the national and contemporary characteristics of emotion. Finally, it's the unity of the use situation and the emotional appeal of the consumer group.

C. Taking the symbiotic aesthetics as guideline

The traditional aesthetics of Chinese furniture has its original cultural characteristics, and it is a self-sufficient completion state. The conflict, collision and fusion of multi-cultures break this unique discourse system. Chinese modern aesthetics is the result of the rupture with the original culture and the product of western academic and cultural thoughts. Symbiosis aesthetics advocates symbiosis of inheritance and innovation, symbiosis of science and art, symbiosis of history and modernity, symbiosis of human and nature, and symbiosis of different cultures and aesthetics, which enables the development of traditional Chinese furniture in a broader and inclusive system. The emotional design under symbiosis aesthetics can break through the fetters of traditional Chinese furniture aesthetics, present a high degree of openness, and satisfy multi-level emotional appeals.

V. CONCLUSION

With the change of social and economic form and consumption culture, the orientation of design has shifted from the previous technical production and market to the current consumer, and the focus of design has also changed correspondingly. What consumers pursue is not the product itself in the original sense, but the so-called "satisfaction and fulfillment of the heart". The emotional meaning of furniture has become the new appeal point of consumers. The change of consumer culture makes people pay more and more attention to the emotional value and humanistic connotation of design while satisfying the material needs. As the carrier of condensing the connotation of Chinese culture, furniture also attaches more and more importance to the function of dialogue — that is, the communication between human heart and emotion. Based on the contemporary emotional appeal of traditional furniture, this paper explores the new humanistic spirit of traditional furniture in the new historical context, explores the contemporary significance of traditional culture, and provides a new humanistic

¹ Jing Nan, Fang Hai. Summary of Contemporary Chinese Furniture Design [J]. Journal of Nanjing Arts Institute Fine Arts & Design. 2012 (1): 152.

perspective for the contemporary design of traditional Chinese furniture.

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