

Research on the Cultural Thoughts of Ancient Chinese Chairs

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Abstract

Chairs are an important part of furniture and the material carrier of Chinese national culture. Facing the impact of western modernity, especially the application of western modern aesthetics in modern furniture, exploring the cultural essence of Chinese classical creation is worthy of attention and research. Direction. On this basis, I have studied the design style of ancient Chinese furniture. From the development of Chinese furniture, I shed some light on the evolution of the cultural thoughts of ancient Chinese chairs. From the perspectives of aesthetics, sociology and philosophy, this article analyzes the profound cultural connotations behind the development of ancient Chinese chairs, combined with contemporary reality, and promotes traditional Chinese furniture art forms in a broad perspective of globalization.

Keywords

Ancient Chair; Style Evolution; Seat; Aesthetics; Traditional Culture.

1. Introduction

The production of ancient furniture is a material connection, which depends on demand and production methods. Furniture has the material and social attributes of general products. It reflects the social life style, social civilization and historical and cultural characteristics of a certain country or region in a certain historical period. At the same time, the design style of the chair also reflects the development of the level of social productivity in a specific historical period, and the evolution of the chair reflects the rich and profound sociality.

2. The Evolution of Ancient Chinese Seats

The history of Chinese furniture is if that of China. For thousands of years, this basic form has maintained a consistent style. After a long period of reform and development, it has formed its own system in terms of material, technology, and thought, which embodies the creativity and wisdom of the Chinese ancestors. The formation of Chinese traditional furniture is closely related to the life style of the Chinese nation. It is an organic part of ancient material civilization that grew on Chinese soil. Its appearance contains noble and practical national consciousness.

2.1. An Overview of the Semantics of Ancient Chinese Furniture

China has a vast territory, a long history, and the continuity and stability of time and space, creating diversity in a unified cultural environment. The furniture also shows the cultural life of different races in a specific historical period. Therefore, in addition to satisfying the practical functions of daily life, traditional furniture also plays the role of a carrier of social significance and a reflector of social status, that is, furniture has a social status recognized by society. Therefore, what kind of furniture to own and use is also a concrete manifestation of social identity and social status. Furniture is a product formed by the interaction between human consciousness and practice, and is the result of spontaneous creation of human needs. Furniture has gone through a long and complicated process of evolution. It has generally gone from sitting

on the floor to low-type furniture, from the coexistence of low-type and high-type to high-type furniture, and finally reached a mature level.

2.2. The Representative of the Seat: The Evolution and Maturity of the Chair Seat

Chinese furniture art has a long history. In the evolution of chair styles, in the Peiligang cultural relics in the early Neolithic period, it has been found that the branches and leaves of plants or the fur of animals have been found on the ground in housing construction, which served as the predecessor of sitting and bedding. Sitting on the ground is a kind of intangible furniture. It has the sensory characteristics of modern chairs. It is an existence of objects that change the way people behave, which also reflects the effect of external things on people. The life style of the Chinese people can be divided into two stages: sitting on the table and sitting down. For the sitting age, the most standard posture for Chinese people to sit on his knees on the ground, buttocks on the heels. This is a conscious sitting, and the sitting is restricted by etiquette. Beds, couches, and seats are the main seating tools of the Chinese era, and they have built the core of Chinese living culture. Due to the appearance of "Hu Bed", the parallel era of sitting on knees and sitting with feet down was started.

As a kind of basic cultural dissemination, living customs are derived from many cultures. It should be emphasized that in the Tang Dynasty, sitting for hanging feet gradually replaced kneeling sitting. Lightweight sitting tools such as crescent tarts, drum piers, and stools quietly emerged in this era. Gradually, chairs with backrests appeared, and the way of sitting with feet down gradually appeared. The center of gravity of the human body has been changed. In order to enhance the stability of the sitting posture, designs such as backrests and armrests have been designed. This marks a major change in the daily life of the Chinese people and even the entire cultural category.

From the Five Dynasties to the Song Dynasty, it was the change of Chinese furniture, and finally the period of maturity and stability, the development and change of the seat always played a role in leading the change. As a result, China has completely bid farewell to sitting on the ground and entering the era of sitting down. Mr. Chen Yinke once said that Chinese culture was "made in the Zhao and Song dynasties." In the Song Dynasty, the culture of advocating literature and suppressing martial arts was unprecedentedly prosperous. The ancient Chinese seat system and classical furniture system that we are familiar with have matured day by day under this historical background.

3. The Evolution of the Design Style of Ancient Chinese Chairs

3.1. Chair Development and Design Style Staging

Ancient Chinese seats have gone through six stages of development and change in different periods.

The first stage is Xia, Shang and Zhou, the budding stage of early Chinese seating. The first piece of furniture was named "Couch" (from prehistory to 476 BC). From the traces and colored skins of artifacts in the Neolithic Age, it is confirmed that the funerary objects have rectangular plates and colored skins, which also shows that in the 21st century BC, China invented the bronze casting technology. According to the handed down "Book of Songs", "Book of Rites" and "Zuo Zhuan", the wooden furniture of this period included beds, tables, screens, boxes, etc., and bronze furniture appeared. From the cultural relics, you can see the bronze crow's feet of the Shang Dynasty, which shows that the bronze furniture has reached a very high level in casting technology, practicality and decoration.

The second stage is the Spring, Autumn and Warring States period, the pre-Qin and Han dynasties. In this stage, relatively low seats appeared (475 BC to 211 BC). During the Warring

States period, lacquered wood furniture was in the development stage, and bronze furniture also made considerable progress. Wooden furniture was mostly framed and connected by tenon and tenon joints. The continuous improvement and development of these structures has formed an important feature of traditional Chinese furniture, and it has been used today.

The third stage is the Gaowei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties. The emergence of high-rise buildings and the early use of chairs (220~581). The Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties were a period of national integration in Chinese history. Cultural and economic exchanges between different nationalities promoted the development of furniture. At this stage, the new furniture mainly includes chairs, square stools, round tables, benches, cabinets, as well as bamboo and wheel-shaped furniture. There are more and more types of seats, reflecting the gradual popularity of seat legs, which is conducive to the development of high-end furniture. develop.

The fourth stage is the Sui, Tang and Five Dynasties (589-960). The development of Chinese chairs in the Tang Dynasty has entered a new period, changing the appearance of furniture before the Six Dynasties and forming a smooth, soft and elegant chair style in the Tang Dynasty. The chair shape of the Five Dynasties advocated simplicity and generosity, which replaced the Tang Dynasty furniture's tendency to pursue decoration and established the Song-style furniture model.

The fifth stage of the Song and Yuan Dynasties (960-1279) was an important period for the development of Chinese chairs. First of all, upright furniture such as chairs and stools became popular among people, breaking the habit of sitting on the ground for thousands of years. Secondly, the furniture structure established the frame structure as the basic form. Third, the layout of indoor furniture has a certain pattern. Song Dynasty furniture gradually formed its own style in inheritance and exploration.

The sixth stage of Ming and Qing furniture (1368-1840), Ming and Qing political stability and economic recovery and development are the main conditions for the maturity of Ming and Qing furniture, and all kinds of furniture have reached the scientific level. As for the chair, in addition to the scientific and reasonable design of each part, other parts such as shape and proportion must be adapted to the structure of each part of the body.

3.2. Common Design Categories of Ancient Chinese Chairs

There are many types of chairs in ancient China, which can be divided into imperial chair throne, arm chair, back chair, official hat chair, top chair and so on. The throne is a specially designed chair in the shape of a bed in the palace. In the royal palace and royal garden, the palace was built for the emperor and queen. Most families also have large chairs, but they are rarely paired. It is not unusual for them to be separated. They are usually placed in the center of the hall or other important places.

Most chairs are named based on features below the surface, while armchairs are named based on features above the surface, that is, the chair must be round. Since the emergence of the armchair is later than the general top spot, the armchair evolved from the top spot. The top seat ring extends from the brain part to both sides, then moves up and down, and finally forms an armrest. When people are sitting, their hands, elbows and arms are supported together, which is very comfortable. Therefore, they are very popular and gradually developed into chairs for indoor use. Because the indoor furnishings are relatively stable and do not need to use crossed legs, it uses four legs and uses wood as the surface, which is not much different from the surface of a general chair. But the upper part of the chair still retains the shape of the tallest chair. In the decoration and use of the hall, most of them are used in pairs and rarely used alone. The seat ring of armchairs is mostly arc-shaped logs, and the part connected to the brain is slightly thicker, and gradually shrinks from the brain to the two ends. In order to form a harmonious effect with the seat ring, the lower legs and upper pillars of this chair are also made of smooth

logs, with only a set of simple patterns on the surface dotted between the front tooth plate and the back plate. At the end of the Ming Dynasty, there was a kind of armchair with drum legs, cliffs, and mud under the seat. Although the shape of the chair is ever-changing, the four uprights are not connected to the legs and feet, but are installed separately, which will inevitably affect the firmness of the seat ring.

The style of armchairs in the Ming Dynasty was highly valued by the world, so people at that time also called the armchairs "Taishi Chair". The Taishi Chair is the only chair named after an official position in ancient furniture. It was first used in the Song Dynasty, and its original shape is like that of a priest's chair. In the Qing Dynasty, the Taishi Chair became a special name for the armchair. Taishi chair best reflects the modeling characteristics of Qing Dynasty furniture. It has a large body with a back and armrests connected to form a three, five or more fan screen. The back chair is a chair with only a back but no armrests. It can be divided into two types, namely the unified stele-style chair back and the Nanguan hat chair. This kind of chair has a stigma at both ends of the chair, which is slightly upward. It is like a light pole, so it is named "light hanging chair". Generally speaking, the back chair is smaller than the formal hat chair. In terms of materials and decorations, hardwood, miscellaneous wood and various lacquer decorations are light, flexible and easy to use. The official hat chair is named after the ancient official hat. Official hat chairs are divided into Nankan women's chairs and four-head official hat chairs. The southern official hat chair has a soft rounded corner at the junction of the back column and the pan head. The difference between the four-headed chair and the Nantou chair is that the corners of the head plate and the armrest of the chair back are not round, but continue to protrude from the pillar, and the ends are slightly rotated outward to cut a smooth round head. The top seat was introduced from the north at the end of the Han Dynasty. Its shape is that the front and back legs are crossed, the joint is the axis, and the crossbeam is passed through the rope instead of sitting. There is a curved collar at the back corner of the front leg seat, and a back panel in the middle to support the person sitting on it. The interior furnishings are of a higher level.

4. The Deep Cultural Essence behind the Development of Ancient Chinese Chairs

The chair is not only a product of functional materials, but also folk art. It can not only meet some specific direct uses, but also meet people's spiritual needs, so that people have a certain aesthetic pleasure and rich associations in the process of contact and use. Involving materials, sociology, behavior, aesthetics, psychology, plastic arts and other theories. Therefore, the chair is not only a material product, but also an artistic creation. The function of the chair can be summarized into two aspects: use function and mental function. As the basic furniture of human life, it is nothing more than "sitting" and "leaning". Their use function has always been the starting point of chair design, but the spiritual function of the chair cannot be ignored.

4.1. User Perspective

As mentioned above, the spiritual function of the chair cannot be ignored. For example, the throne of the Chinese emperor is mainly made of precious hardwood materials such as red sandalwood and mahogany, plus exquisite sculptures and ornate decorations, while the civilian chairs are beautified with simplicity, gentleness, elegance and decoration. Different users have different spiritual needs, which reflects the important role of spiritual function in chair design. Mental function is the soul of chair design. In fact, wood is the main material of ancient Chinese traditional chairs because it can make the chair strong. Another more important reason is that it is closely related to the origin of ancient Chinese architectural culture. Ancient Chinese architecture is also based on wood. Furniture and architecture are an organic whole, which can meet people's daily needs and realize the specific environmental services that people pursue. During the Song and Yuan dynasties in ancient China, most of the wood used for chairs was

nanmu, cypress and fir. In the Ming Dynasty, the chair material used to change the traditional softwood was replaced by dark-leaf woods such as yellow bark, mahogany, and rosewood. With the change of materials, the structure and technology of Ming-style furniture have undergone great changes, forming a unique style of Ming-style furniture.

4.2. Sociological Perspective

Under the influence of the patriarchal society, the evolution of ancient Chinese chairs was subject to the influence of people-oriented thinking. The furniture reflects a rich and profound society. Under the influence of the ancient social system, the chair slowly moved towards a harmonious structure of proportions. Development, with the development of human history, chairs have established their own "independent family" and theoretical system in furniture. The history of the chair permeates the historical traces of the political system, economic development, culture and art, religious beliefs, technology and crafts, customs and habits of various ethnic groups. The chair records the values, ethics and morals, thought patterns, behavior patterns and aesthetic tastes of the nation in a specific historical period. Thousands of years of human history has given birth to an independent and wealthy subject of chair culture.

4.3. Aesthetic Point of View

Aesthetic concept is the rational standard of aesthetic judgment formed through long-term aesthetic practice under specific social and historical conditions. In specific aesthetic activities, it is often manifested as a unique aesthetic taste and aesthetic ideal. The aesthetic characteristics of ancient Chinese chairs can be described from two aspects. The first is the beauty of the body. Seats once existed in people's lives, giving people a strong visual impulse and a strong feeling. All this is based on the aesthetic experience of the chair. When people see a chair for the first time, they are attracted by the details of the material, molding process or personal sculpture. Sensory appreciation can arouse people's aesthetic consciousness. If they don't see such complicated technology for a long time, they will have aesthetic appeal and a little fun. These pleasant feelings are not entirely caused by the material, shape or the chair itself. The formal meaning of the chair not only derives from the meaning and thought expressed by these forms, but also from the meaning of the chair's unique material, shape and craftsmanship. The second is the beauty of harmony. The beauty of the chair lies in the harmony and unity of all parties. For example, chairs have many different structural elements, each of which is essential. Only the harmony and unity of the whole and the part can form the beauty of the chair, and the subtle coordination of the parts can be reflected in the whole. In general, this means that every element of the chair is necessary for its value, and any element that is not part of the whole cannot form beauty. Generally speaking, a chair depends on the relationship between its craftsmanship, decoration, shape and other factors. The requirements of each element meet the requirements of other elements, and only in this way can the chair form a perfect whole.

4.4. Philosophical Perspective

On the one hand, the development law of things has a certain periodicity. The development of things is not a cycle, but another cycle. The evolution of the design style is also based on previous changes and developments. The end of the first style is the beginning of the second style. This continuous cycle provides unlimited possibilities for the development of the chair. To deny the development of these things is to sublimate and abandon them every time, that is, to overcome and protect the old with new things. While overcoming and abandoning the design of the previous stage, we should inherit and absorb the reasonable and positive design factors of the previous stage, and add new designs that did not exist in the design of the previous stage. Therefore, in the change of chair design style, every denial will promote the progress of chair design. On the other hand, the style design of ancient Chinese chairs also reflects the theme of

the unity of man and nature, that is, the harmony between man and nature, between man and man, and between body and mind. Chinese Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism all advocate spirit and pursue natural texture and stable leaf color. Decoration and function modeling echo each other, which greatly responds to the concept of harmonious coexistence between man and nature. It combines the beauty of nature with the creativity of craftsmen and designers to create chairs that are more suitable for the audience's needs. For example, armchairs are a good example of this idea. The square seat surface supported by the chair legs and the curved chair loop immediately forms a contrast and fusion of straight lines and curves. The Ruyi flower on the backrest is in the middle, and the angle teeth on the top of the chair legs are unified. In the design of the chair, special attention should be paid to the coordination of the whole and the parts, the unity of the parts and the parts, but there should be no lack of changes and traditional features, highlighting the main features of the traditional chair design. It not only uses natural wood texture, but also fully embodies the characteristics of wood. The overall style is quiet and solemn, and the atmosphere is simple, showing the simplicity and agility of the ancients. The processed straight and curved, static and dynamic brain and back are combined. The round backrest and square surface of the chair reflect the philosophy of the ancient round world. The design of the chair is strict and accurate, in line with the scientific principles of ergonomics, so the shape is affected by the function and unified with each other.

5. Concluding Remarks

This article summarizes the history of the development of ancient Chinese chairs. According to the evolution of Chinese chair seats, the typical chair seats are discussed from the aspects of kneeling in the age of sitting, kneeling and sitting with feet down, and the transition period of high and low seats. feature. According to several types of ancient Chinese chair design styles, the modeling semantics, functional semantics, aesthetics and cultural semantics of traditional seating are studied. In short, the production, technology and structure of ancient Chinese chairs were carried out under the background of Chinese classical culture. The collective skills formed by the evolution of chairs are in line with people's aesthetic interest and the historical development process, and people's aesthetic expectations for chairs and new social innovations. Awareness promotes the continuous development of the chair. With the development of modern science and technology, the design of the seat is more humane, and the Chinese-style chair is also developing in a more global direction. Traditional Chinese chair furniture is an important part of Chinese culture. It has a long history, its own style and strong national emotions. The essence of modern chair design comes from the "Chinese doctrine" embodied in classical Chinese chairs. Reflected in the interpretation of traditional design concepts, modern furniture design represented by chairs is a continuation of traditional furniture culture and is combined with modern culture and aesthetic development. When applying traditional Chinese art to modern solid wood furniture design, it is not only We must pay attention to inheriting the modeling and decorative language of traditional Chinese furniture, and at the same time we should learn to combine it with modern aesthetic concepts, design techniques and production techniques, learn to innovate based on inheritance, and integrate with the development trend of modern solid wood furniture design. Keeping up with the trend of world development, and on this basis, direct application or combined application, which not only enriches the creative techniques of modern design, but also restores the vitality of Chinese symbols. This is the best way to protect cultural civilization.

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