



УДК 747+749

CHINESE ELEMENTS IN CHILDREN'S FURNITURE DESIGN: A SYNTHESIS OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY

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This paper examines the integration of Chinese elements into contemporary children's furniture design. It explores how traditional motifs and cultural symbols are incorporated into modern designs, creating spaces that are both culturally rich and aesthetically appealing. A case study of a Dragon Year-themed furniture set is analyzed to illustrate the successful fusion of traditional symbolism with modern design principles. The paper emphasizes the growing trend of personalization and the role of design in fostering cultural awareness in children.

Key words: furniture design, Chinese elements, children's furniture, cultural symbols.

INTRODUCTION

The use of traditional cultural elements in contemporary design is a growing trend, reflecting a desire to connect with heritage while embracing modern aesthetics. In China, "Chinese Elements" are increasingly incorporated into various design fields, including children's furniture. This integration aims to create spaces that are not only functional and visually appealing but also culturally enriching for young users.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to explore the application of Chinese elements in children's furniture design, focusing on how traditional motifs and cultural symbols are integrated into modern designs. The research seeks to understand the design principles and cultural significance behind this trend, using a specific case study to illustrate the successful fusion of tradition and modernity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The incorporation of Chinese Elements into children's furniture design represents a significant trend in contemporary interior aesthetics. These elements, which encompass a diverse array of cultural achievements and symbols, are used to create spaces that resonate with Chinese heritage while adhering to modern design principles. This approach not only enhances the visual appeal of the furniture but also fosters cultural awareness and appreciation in children [1].

The integration of these elements aims to achieve a unique design style and philosophy, blending traditional Chinese aesthetics with the functional requirements of modern children's furniture. This involves a careful analysis of the characteristics of both Chinese elements and contemporary design trends, exploring how specific



motifs, materials, and forms can be applied effectively. The successful application of Chinese elements contributes to the creation of sustainable and culturally meaningful designs, enriching the search for furniture that embodies indigenous Chinese cultural connotations [2].

A prime example of this trend is the Dragon Year customized children's furniture ensemble from Qicai Rensheng (Seven Colors of Life), illustrated in Figure 1. This collection serves as a compelling case study, exemplifying the skillful integration of traditional Chinese symbolism, specifically draconic motifs, with modern design aesthetics. The designers have not merely added dragon images superficially; rather, they have thoughtfully incorporated dragon imagery, a potent and multifaceted symbol of auspiciousness, power, wisdom, and nobility in Chinese culture, into various components of the furniture. This integration is particularly evident in key pieces such as the bed frame and wardrobe surfaces, where the imagery is prominently displayed. These elements often depict a stylized Chinese dragon, gracefully rendered amidst swirling clouds and mist. This artistic choice serves a dual purpose: it directly references the thematic Year of the Dragon, a significant period in the Chinese zodiac, and simultaneously evokes the dragon's broader cultural significance as a mythical creature associated with strength, good fortune, and imperial authority.



Fig. 1. Seven Colors of Life Customized Children's Furniture Set

The visual representation extends beyond simple decoration, acting as a narrative element that connects the furniture to a rich cultural heritage. While deeply rooted in traditional narratives and symbolism, the furniture's execution is distinctly modern and child focused. It features clean, minimalist lines, a vibrant and engaging color palette, and a pronounced emphasis on functionality and safety – all hallmarks of contemporary children's furniture design. The careful selection of materials and construction techniques further underscores the commitment to creating durable and practical pieces. This juxtaposition of ancient symbolism and modern aesthetics creates a dynamic and engaging environment, stimulating a child's imagination while providing a comfortable and functional space. The predominant use of blue hues and undulating wave patterns throughout the collection evokes a distinctly oceanic ambiance.



This design choice can be interpreted on multiple levels. It may be a subtle, modernist reinterpretation of the mythological Dragon King's underwater palace, a recurring motif in Chinese folklore, adding a layer of fantastical narrative to the design. Alternatively, it could be viewed as a metaphorical representation of expansive imaginative potential and limitless possibilities – concepts particularly resonant in the context of a child's developmental environment. This deliberate ambiguity allows for multiple interpretations, enriching the design's meaning. Furthermore, the “Dragon Year customization” aspect reflects the growing trend towards personalization and bespoke solutions in furniture design. This approach caters to the contemporary family's desire for uniqueness and individuality in their living spaces. By offering tailored options, manufacturers are responding to an increasing demand for furniture that not only serves functional purposes but also acts as a medium for cultural expression and the articulation of personal preferences. This customization allows families to connect with their heritage in a tangible and meaningful way, creating a personalized environment that reflects their values and identity.

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, the integration of Chinese elements into children's furniture design represents a successful synthesis of cultural heritage and modern aesthetics. The case study of the Dragon Year furniture set demonstrates how traditional motifs can be seamlessly incorporated into contemporary designs, creating spaces that are culturally rich, functionally efficient, and visually appealing. This trend highlights the growing importance of personalization in design and the role of furniture in fostering cultural awareness and appreciation in children. The use of Chinese elements not only preserves cultural continuity but also introduces children to their heritage in a relatable and engaging manner.

REFERENCES

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ЧЖАН ЛІНЬ, КОСЕНКО Д.

КИТАЙСЬКІ ЕЛЕМЕНТИ В ДИЗАЙНІ ДИТЯЧИХ МЕБЛІВ: СИНТЕЗ ТРАДИЦІЙ І СУЧАСНОСТІ

У роботі розглядається інтеграція китайських елементів у сучасний дизайн дитячих меблів. Досліджується, як традиційні мотиви та культурні символи включаються в сучасний дизайн, створюючи простори, які є культурно багатими та естетично привабливими. Проаналізовано приклад меблевого набору на тему року Дракона, що ілюструє успішне поєднання традиційної символіки з сучасними принципами дизайну. Робота наголошує на зростаючій тенденції персоналізації та ролі дизайну у вихованні культурної обізнаності дітей.

Ключові слова: дизайн меблів, китайські елементи, дитячі меблі, культурна символіка.