

Regional Culture Expressed in Modern Architecture Design

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Abstract

Absorbing ethnic traditional elements, modern design should fully protect and develop characteristics of traditional culture and regional culture. Based on respecting traditional culture, modern design should explore the design language with local cultural characteristics. Only in this way can we explore regional and national interior design in modern society. Only in this way can interior design become an international cultural product and can interior design be recognized and accepted by the world.

Key words: Interior design; Architecture design; Culture

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INTRODUCTION

With the advent of Internet era, people have more and more convenient interactions with each other, optical and wireless communication technology will connect people together in more compact space. Therefore, we have entered into the globalization era, we have become much closer, and regions have greatly shortened their distance. The development of modern science and technology has led to global cultural convergence, which has brought great impact on regional and national culture. Meanwhile, people attach more importance to

regional and national culture. Absorbing ethnic traditional elements, modern design should fully protect and develop characteristics of traditional culture and regional culture. Based on respecting traditional culture, modern design should explore the design language with local cultural characteristics. Only in this way can we explore regional and national interior design in modern society. Only in this way can interior design become an international cultural product and can interior design be recognized and accepted by the world.

1. CULTURAL GLOBALIZATION

“Globalization” in cultural globalization and regional culture was first put forward by American scholar Aldo Lovett in *Market Globalization* published in 1985. With the term “globalization”, Aldo Lovett originally intended to explain that commodity, service, capital and technology in the international economy are spread in worldwide production, consumption and investment. Different from “economic globalization”, “cultural globalization” refers to that all ethnic groups will walk together with their own cultural background, their own ethics and morals, and their own values, for the reason that emergency and existence of any culture are clearly marked with nature, region and nationality. In *Philosophy of Art*, Danner says that “A nation has always kept its local trace.” That is to say, any culture itself has its own distinctive local characteristics, so that culture will disappear if without local characteristics. The so-called “cultural globalization” refers to international exchange and fusion of foreign culture based on regional culture.

Region is a concept of space. However, regional characteristics of regional culture are not limited to the spatial meaning but a space pattern formed in the historical time. In other words, the culture which belongs to the world’s particular region in geography is formed through continuous culture accumulation in the long social

and historical process. Therefore, the concept of regional culture contains two dimensions: surface space and deep time. By its nature, as a historical culture, regional culture extends its continuity at time dimension. On the other hand, space pattern refers to the relatively stable group formed in culture spread and change at time dimension. Space pattern differs in different regions of the world, for the basic reason that differences are formed by relatively independent development of different historical cultures.

2. MAIN LEVEL OF REGIONAL CULTURE

Main level of regional culture lies in understanding of regional culture, while which is normally kept at a shallow surface by most people. In his book *Cultural Structure and Modern China*, scholar Pang Pu puts forward theory which has three-level culture, namely, “matter, mind and matter, heart”. According to him, cultural structure includes the following three aspects: first aspect is outer layer referring to matter, which is human’s material product and visible; second aspect is middle layer referring to the combined part of heart and matter, which includes human emotions and hidden in the outer layer of material, such as machine principle and statue’s meaning; third aspect is the core referring to heart, also known as cultural mental state, which is equivalent to spiritual culture and includes value concept, thinking mode, aesthetic, moral sentiment, religious emotion, national character and so on. With vast territory and long history, regional culture and customs in China differ from other countries. Regional culture reflected in the design mainly refers to absorb local, national and folk style, and various culture traces remained in regional history. Regional culture has the following three levels in architecture interior design.

2.1 Outer Culture

“Outer culture” refers to the object and some concrete things. In architectural interior design, outer culture mainly refers to forms and practices, such as traditional architecture’s roof curve, timber frame, brackets, corridor, windows and doors, decorative patterns, etc.. The inheritance of outer regional culture mainly refers to the application of layout and form. Many extreme regional customs, cultures and works of art develop and evolve in complete isolation from the outside world. Therefore, region, to some extent, is more narrow or specific than nationality and is clearly recognizable. For example, Chinese traditional building’s moon gate, beam column, brackets and roof are spatial form elements that we can learn from.

Absorption of “outer culture” selects and directly applies very representative traditional symbols. As the material carrier of regional culture, “big roof”, “big step”, “red pillars” and other regional cultures are directly applied in modern design. In 2010 Shanghai World Expo, China Pavilion adopts red “bucket crown” with China

architectural culture elements and construction way of bucket arch in traditional architectures such as mortise and tenon interspersed, rising up in the center and layer upon layer overhangs, which has become cultural expression of architecture form in National Pavilion. Although bucket crown and bucket arch have simple space design, and only part of them applies to representative traditional symbols, they are enough to cause customer’s profound imaginations about China’s regional culture.

2.2 Intermediate Culture

As the combination of mind and matter, intermediate culture refers to concrete method, formula and rule, such as complementation of geometry and natural forms, spatial interaction, human behavior mode and space design, and organizational technique of garden space. Intermediate regional culture is mainly reflected in space treatment and streamlines organization.

In architecture interior design, “intermediate culture” applies closed space and open space, which coexist in the same environment and interact in space. Modern design emphasizes virtual and real space interaction and changes of space form, so that space becomes smooth and energetic. In Chinese traditional architectures, these space forms with vague functions such as virtual and real space, internal and external smooth, and scenery introduced into room have the characteristic of space blending, so that space model is filled with humanity and shows the simple, peaceful and harmonious beauty. Chinese traditional interior space pays close attention to “partition”. However, these partitions such as floor cover screens and curio shelves aim at “separation and connection” instead of “blocking space”. These partitions refer to space’s transition, decoration and indication. For example, interior space of Yixing International Hotel’s lobby adopts “partition”. Open-type decorative wood door separates the lobby from cafeteria; hollow shape provides people with visual effect of seeming isolation and non-isolation; people’s view not blocked; streamline combed; and the design of the whole space lays great stress on space mobility. For another instance, the spatial path of some garden hotels is design according to owner-member relationship of space, customer behavior and process order. In spatial organization, some meandering “verandas” are properly applied to create space environment with twists, turns and varied scenery, which make scenes vary to the people standing in different positions, so that tourists will imperceptibly reach their destinations while enjoying well-designed scenery. These designs summarize and abstract space layout of traditional architectures, transform and innovate, and reproduce traditions with imagination and metaphor combined with modern design function, material and technical conditions; or these designs interpret traditional plane layout, space form and appearance with modern material, in order to convey traditional regional culture.

2.3 Deep Culture

Deep culture belongs to spiritual culture, including religious thought, national character, etc.. For example, Lao Zi's space theory includes "theory that man is an integral part of nature", "symbiosis", "rebirth", "doctrine of mean", "theory of yin and yang", "five elements" and "geomantic omen", etc.. Inheritance of regional culture is more than copying images, graphics and structures. We should pay more attention to space composition, connotation of traditional culture and national characteristics.

"Theory that man is an integral part of nature" is widely applied in architecture interior space. Room, residence, courtyard, small and large environment are unified, and human keep good relationship with space and environment, in order to achieve living realm that "man is an integral part of nature". According to Chuang-tzu, "coexist with heaven and earth, and unify with everything". The thought that "man is an integral part of nature" has become a consensus of ancient's architectural thoughts, which are achieved accompanied by the development and maturity of the thought that man is an integral part of nature. In addition, it controls traditional architecture culture. A piece of perfect interior design work should ensure that people are integrated into the space environment, indoor and outdoor environment. Traditional design "scenery borrowing" has reflected holism "man is an integral part of nature" in Chinese architecture design. For example, Chinese pavilion in World Expo is composed of two parts: national pavilion and regional pavilion. Spatial position and orientation of these two parts respectively embody Oriental philosophy's understanding of the relationship between "heaven" and "earth". National pavilion refers to "heaven", and "Crown of the East", sculptural modeling body, dominates the national pavilion and forms situation of erect standing; regional pavilion refers to "earth", extends under national pavilion as the base, forms situation of vigorous dependence, and embodies essence of Chinese culture. Exterior design is extremely rich in Chinese spirit, and designer adopts seal character, Chinese ancient text, as decoration. Surface of regional pavilion decorated by laminated seal characters conveys human and geography information about twenty-four solar terms. Shaped like crown cover, national pavilion's roof platform architecture framework has its cultural foundation of nine longitudes and nine latitudes in "craftsman camp". Main body of national pavilion has powerful form, just like dominating China's crown and world's granary; platform base of regional pavilion gathers people with implied meaning that Shenzhou is prosperous and everywhere is wealthy. Overall layout of national pavilion and regional pavilion has the metaphor of harmony with heaven and earth, and all perfect things, which shows that Chinese culture and Oriental philosophy long for ideal living social environment. Beyond the pursuit of traditional

architecture's external image, national pavilion and regional pavilion study historical life style, ethics and values, aesthetic standards and philosophical thoughts with modern methods, and fully demonstrate inheritance and innovation of regional culture, therefore this spatial organization form is worth promoting.

3. EXPRESSION APPROACH OF REGIONAL CULTURE IN ARCHITECTURE INTERIOR DESIGN

Regional design refers to absorb local, national and folk style, and various culture traces remained in regional history. With strong recognizances, to some extent, region is more narrow or specific than nationality. In order to inherit traditions, we must firstly be clear about the relationship between traditional and modern design creations. In applying traditional design thoughts to modern design creations, we should find the correct design approaches and avoid copying entirely. Expression of traditional regional culture in architecture interior design has three main ways: extraction and derivation of "form"; application and extension of "meaning"; grasping and inheritance of "spirit".

3.1 Form

As the most surface cultural expression, form maintains and strengthens treatment of traditional and local architecture's basic structure and form, removes trivial details, and highlights local cultural features. Form merely makes simple copy of Chinese traditional architecture images. Form is mainly reflected in interior design from the following aspects: continuation of traditional architecture's wooden structure shape; settings of furnishings such as hanging fascia, caisson ceiling, color painting, calligraphy and painting, elegant plaything and furniture; or directly applying traditional decorative patterns, calligraphy and painting elements to space facade design. With successful heightened atmosphere, the technique of form has added simple and elegant features to the whole space. However, this technique of form has only simply listed and inherited traditional elements, therefore this mode of inheriting traditions is not the best way.

3.2 Meaning

As the core of culture, traditional philosophy's essence is traditional thinking mode. Meaning belongs to such a thinking mode. This is thinking mode extracts and applies typical symbols of traditional and regional art to interior design, instead of just applying mechanically in order to emphasize national traditions and regional characteristics. Unlike simple copy of the first type, this technique pays more attention to compliance and symbolism of traditional elements. Traditional architecture symbols can not be completely copied and conform to the conventional pattern in interior design.

We should explore and summarize cultural spirit behind the symbols, so as to understand its meaning, absorb its essence and extend its spirit. We should reorganize and innovate combined with time spirit, new material, new technology and modern design methods in order to meet modern pluralistic aesthetic requirements. For example, in architectural design with the theme of Chinese traditional culture, we can apply decorative elements of traditional architecture after scattering, deforming, refining and reconstructing them. Symbol's reconstruction innovation provides bridge for understanding regional culture, is conducive to dissemination and inheritance of regional culture, is conducive to improving cultural taste of indoor space environment in architecture, and creates indoor space environment in architecture with local "sentiment", geographical characteristics and use.

3.3 Spirit

Spirit refers to expression of certain meaning or idea, also known as artistic conception. Vigorous, courageous, spacious, powerful, sincere and honest regional culture is basically related to artistic conception, that is to say, "realm forms respectable personality." (*Human Words* written by Wang Guowei). As the soul of architecture interior design, artistic conception has the power to infect people. Nowadays, culture develops towards pluralism and adheres to the idea that traditional architecture creation is no longer simple copy of traditional forms. Architecture interior design emphasizes regional culture's connotation, therefore borrowing some traditional decorative symbols cannot make culture become regional. We should attempt to express traditional significance through architecture indoor. In order to reflect artistic conception, we extract and abstract elements and symbols of traditional architectures to emphasize national and regional culture. Modern functional requirements, modern concept technical and modern technology material are applied to show elements and symbols with traditional artistic conception in order to display architecture interior space with traditional cultural atmosphere for people. This method breaks through form and meaning seeking the form, and expresses traditional culture artistic conception with more originality.

4. REGIONAL CULTURE EXPRESSED IN ARCHITECTURE INTERIOR DESIGN

The United Nations organizes every country to make a huge investment to protect cultural heritage around the world, so as to advocate integration of national traditional culture's charm into modern culture creation and maintain characteristics of regional culture. Mr. I.M. Pei once said that "Modern architectures must be derived from their own historical roots the same as a tree must originate from the soil. It takes time to pollen, until it is accepted by the local environment." In modern architecture interior

design, we should fully protect and develop characteristics of traditional culture and regional culture. In addition, we should strive to explore contemporary interior design language with Eastern culture characteristics based on respecting traditional culture. In the pursuit of modernization, designers should seek traditional culture which has been long forgotten again with rational perspective, recognize that any development and civilization progress should not be at the expense of forgetting history and tradition, and recognize that "modernization" should be based on traditional culture. A female architect in Finland says: "The next international style is cultural and regional characteristics," and national is global. Regionalism is an important part of national style, and in interior design, form is extracted and derived; meaning is adopted and extended; spirit is grasped and inherited.

CONCLUSION

A good innovation way of architecture's interior design is to use traditional culture for reference, emphasize regionalism, and express traditional architectural vocabulary with new design language. Architectural interior design should have both modernity and nationality, which should have creative design with unique vision. Interior design can reflect the regional characteristics with unique style, which embodies fashion and nationality in development of interior design. In order to develop regional architecture interior design under the background of globalization, we should abstract and extract elements of national culture and local culture, and we should express national, traditional and local "feeling" with modern architecture language, so that Chinese interior design can be distinguished from the western and others. Only in this way can we explore distinctive regional and national architectural features in modern society. Only in this way can interior design become an international cultural product and is recognized and accepted by the world. Emphasizing regional design will become a highlight topic in interior design of 21st century, and emphasis on regional and national style refers to international interior design.

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