

Revitalizing Ming-Style on Contemporary Furniture Design For Sustainability

Saixiong Gan^{1,2}, Khairun Nisa Mustaffa Halabi^{1*}

¹ City University Malaysia (City U), 46100 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia.

² Nanchang Institute of Technology, Information Visualization Research Institute, No. 901 Yingxiong Avenue, Nanchang, Jiangxi, China

*Corresponding Author: khairun.mustaffa@city.edu.my

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Abstract: *This study investigates how eco-friendly practices have contributed to the resurgence of Ming aesthetics in contemporary furniture design. The Ming dynasty left a legacy in the arts that continues to this day with its emphasis on minimalism, harmony, and refinement. As a way to accommodate progressive preferences and address the pressing demand for sustainability, these ideas are finding a fresh lease on life in the context of contemporary furniture design. This research looks into the feasibility of using eco-friendly materials and production methods to recreate Ming-era-inspired designs. Those with environmental values will appreciate the fresh take on design that emerges when traditional aesthetics are fused with eco-friendly processes. Through an examination of case studies and design prototypes, this study reveals how Ming-style concepts can be implemented into contemporary furniture without compromising sustainability. The findings demonstrate the blended approach's potential for producing eco-friendly, aesthetically beautiful furnishings. The report also highlights the significance of circular economies, waste reduction, and carbon footprint decrease as they relate to sustainable design concepts. More than just a gorgeous face, the fusion of Ming style and eco-friendliness demonstrates the power of bringing together elements from different eras. By reviving the Ming style from a sustainable perspective, furniture designers may pay homage to a fabled past while also contributing to the global imperative of sustainable design and consumption.*

Keywords: Ming-style, contemporary furniture design, sustainability, sustainable practices, aesthetic principles

1. Introduction

The long history that China has, over the years has been observed to constantly strive to explore, innovate as well as create new approaches that are important in daily life. Many researchers have given credit to the intelligence and diligence of the Ancient Chinese (Chen, 2020). Chinese have always been observed to celebrate their knowledge at work and the diversity of some specific visual craftwork. With a wide and long history reflecting a culture that dates back to the rulers of remote ancient times, China over the years has been considered one of the world's ancient Centres for civilization. To date, with continuous improvement regarding living standards as well as the development of the society, the awareness regarding Chinese contemporary culture has been observed to constantly deepen over the years wooden furniture has been observed to occupy a significant role in the day-to-day life of the people of

China (Wu, 2019). It is important fact to understand the aesthetic concepts which have made people make use of contemporary artwork in this modern era as well (Jiang, 2022).

China is considered one of those four ancient civilizations in the world that are known for their cultures. After 5000 years of constant development, it has formed a very traditional culture to stop with the development of concepts and Chinese society and their understanding of Chinese traditional and contemporary artworks, cultural beliefs, and elements. However, the design style of modern wooden furniture is mainly based on different design styles that come from other Nations for foreign countries to stop therefore many of those wooden furniture designs need to integrate Chinese traditional or contemporary Chinese designs and cultural elements into the process of designing the wooden furniture so that it can form a concept of design that can align with the Chinese characteristics and culture. The scope, as well as the degree of application of these artworks in life, have thereafter gradually increased. In the modern time, the status of wooden furniture specifically has been gradually increasing stop in this process of wooden furniture design application of contemporary Chinese cultural elements or artwork as well as the design of wooden furniture is considered an indispensable a or portion of the design work of the designer (Wu, 2019b). The shape, as well as the function of the furniture, highlights the characteristics of contemporary China and Chinese traditional cultural elements along with the cultural orientation. As time is going on and the advancements in the digital vault the development of technology and science took place and has also entered into a new height to stop the emergence of all new materials has a greater impact on contemporary wooden furniture designs.

2. Related Work

Handcrafted furniture makes up the majority of traditional furniture. Some easy activities in furniture manufacture can now be undertaken by machines, thanks to technological advancements and the introduction of electric tools. The machine creates neat shapes, but the lines are rigid and lack vitality. The only carvings that are more refined, imaginative, energetic, and full of life are those done by hand. The literature review will go on to describe various symbols, dynasties, and era that has highlighted and made use of some amazing art forms which became so popular that they turned out to be accepted, used and loved by many over centuries and still can be seen in modern-day furniture designs in China as well as across the Western World. Traditional cultural emblems, on the other hand, have a consistent ornamental strategy throughout the creation process. The Phoenix and the Dragon are considered to be classic good-luck emblems. With that, the aesthetic concept of contemporary Chinese culture in modern furniture design will also be discussed in the literature review. There are six contemporary Chinese furniture designs that are leading the industry at present (Bumgardner & Nicholls, 2020). Chinese furniture design has been observed to look back to its cultural rules and thereby reinvigorating past techniques forms as well as materials as stated by authors Peter and Charlotte. The majority of furniture even during the Ming and Qing dynasties was handcrafted from padauk, rosewood, as well as other high-quality hardwoods. Its creative attractiveness is lasting and is still liked by people today, thanks to its complex production method, elegantly simple style, elegant sculpting, accurate and elegant mortise-and-tenon construction, and silky lines (Fan & Feng, 2019).

Hardwoods including rosewood and padauk were utilized in Chinese classical furniture from the Ming and Qing periods. Hardness, corrosion resistance, and different textures are all common properties of these woods, and furniture manufacturing them is both beautiful and lasting (Fekry Gamal, 2022). The majority of traditional furniture is produced by hand.

Although, because of the advancement of technology and the introduction of electric tools, some simple tasks in furniture manufacturing can now be handled by machines. However, it cannot totally replace manual labor (Fu et al., 2021). The structural portion of Chinese traditional furniture, mortise-and-tenon craftsmanship, is the most elegant aspect of the furniture. In ancient China, connecting bits of wood with nothing more than wood itself was a typical carpenter's art. It refers to the splicing of two components via concave-convex splicing. The "tenon" is the protruding element, whereas the "mortise" is the sunken part (Goldhahn, Cabane & Chanana, 2021). Fit them together neatly when coupled. This approach relies entirely on the mortise link and does not use nails or glue. Spring and Autumn (770-476 BC) as well as Warring States (475-221 BC) dynasties, which gained maturity during the Song Dynasty (960-1279), and peaked during the Ming and Qing dynasties (Goldhahn, Cabane & Chanana, 2021). Its major benefit is that it protects the wood from being damaged by nails, and it is extremely stable and hard. All carpenters must know how to use the tenon-and-mortise system. During the Ming and Qing eras, Chinese furnishings reached their pinnacle. As a result, Chinese Traditional furniture is separated into two types: Ming style and Qing style.

The difference between the two is mostly determined by the work's style, form, and craftsmanship. The production skills of Ming-style furniture are well-known in Jiangsu Province, particularly in the area next to Suzhou (Öhgren et al., 2019). The construction emphasizes function and aesthetic coherence, which is in line with the development of Chinese culture. It appears tiny at first view, but upon closer investigation, it reveals a certain appeal, and every feature is worth noting. The usage of lines is expressed in the linear variation of the shape of various portions, and the style fully embraces the allure of line art (Tsang et al., 2021). For illustration, the headrest board of most chairs has an S-shaped curve that complies with ergonomics while also fitting the natural shape of the human body. This is a really scientific curve. The bones of Ming-style furniture are, in general, the lines. Consecutive talented generations of Chinese designers led the new design movement through the cultural roots of ancient forebears' legacy of remarkable design. China's ancient culture in design influenced the New Design movement in a significant way. Wen Hao founded the 'Hao style' brand in 2011, devoted to creating timeless furniture, a derivative of copper culture. Advanced technology is combined with traditional craftsmanship and redefined the Chinese boundaries in contemporary design and a Modern Chinese Lifestyle.

'Maxmarko', founded by Derek Chen in 2010, was inspired by the Taoism philosophy, "Harmony In Diversity". Originally, it was founded as a design and research center, for the designers to create and explore truly inspired and unique products that showcase the new exciting voice of Chinese Contemporary Design. Doors in Chinese homes of today have an incredibly modern look. Being simple, sleek, lighter, with muted tones, and straight lines, they became lucrative, attractive, and demanding in China as well as in Western Countries. Bentu's Design, another Chinese studio where trash is turned into treasure, revealed the Terrazzo collection in 2017, made from specks of marble, granite, glass, and shell chips mixed with a cement or epoxy binder. The result is a sleek surface with glittering chips that can be interchanged to match the surrounding aesthetic. With globalization, Chinese design became influenced by Western-style including design theory, design practice, and education. But today's China has been improved and they are innovating and creating their own brands independently. Original designs with cultural values that were promoted in the last decades have become prominent through various designing fields a growing need to support the development economically.

The manufacturing of furniture during the Ming Dynasty is credited with a number of important

firsts in the industry (Fan & Feng, 2019). In the annals of the history of furniture manufacture all over the world, that particular era marks the high point of both the manufacturing technology and the quality of the craftsmen. The design and manufacturing processes that it pioneered are still in use today. Ming-style furniture from Suzhou is distinguished from other furniture manufactured during the Ming Dynasty because it has forms that are simple and graceful, materials that are valuable and of high quality, and sizes and structures that are appropriate for the piece. In 2006, furniture designed in the Ming era was designated as the first intangible cultural item in China (Xu et al., 2021). The *Lu Ban Jing Jiang Jia Jing* is the earliest book that has drawings and prose about Ming-style furniture (Pulleyblank et al., 2020). It consists of three volumes and was produced during the Wanli Period of the Ming Dynasty (1572-1620). An addendum to the book was written by Wu Rong. The book provides detailed illustrations of the shapes of a wide variety of furniture kinds, in addition to providing an overview of the building process and living furniture. This book features images of furniture from the Ming Dynasty, together with descriptions of its name, usual usage, measurements, and craft materials used during that period.

The term "Ming-style furniture" can apply to a broad variety of different pieces of furniture. It does not just refer to pieces of furniture that were manufactured during the Ming Dynasty; it can also refer to pieces of furniture that were made of inexpensive wood and included intricate carvings (Bae, 2022). People are currently talking a lot about "China style," with various eras of Chinese style having varying meanings. The emergence of the Chinese style has given design from all spheres of life a fresh appearance (Pedro et al., 2019). Ming period furniture in terms of how Chinese style is used in interior design. In the history of ancient Chinese furniture, Ming furniture is unquestionably a classic. It is also exceptional in the history of furniture. Nationality is essentially the key to cultural legacy in the process of globalization. We refocus our attention away from internationalization and toward traditional culture. Following, I believe there are two factors that have so far influenced Ming furniture. The first point is the Ming Dynasty furniture's artistic emblem. Simple second (Rong & Wei, 2018). Visual viewpoint and modern home design are both perfectly displayed. People's conceptions of life are gradually altering as a result of social growth and a rise in living standards. Thought and desire were developing, yet food and clothing standards were far from satisfying modern people's needs. The evolution of the times and the perceptual prominence of people's views produce beauty. In conclusion, there are artistic references around the house. The Chinese design philosophy's supremacy is still at the core of the traditional design symbol, which takes on a slightly different expression at each step (Rong & Wei, 2018). Modern designers point out that the design profession should have a heritage mission and a sense of design responsibility. International recognition will be higher when nationalism is inherited and enhanced. The so-called design exam in China is not an assessment of our creative prowess, but more of our ability to maintain inner peace while contemplating the best of the past.

The best design concepts must be passed down through tradition. We should consider cultural heritage when designing in the future. It serves to preserve the very core of human culture in addition to highlighting the fashion sense of contemporary furniture design. The structural characteristics of the piece of furniture offer support for this point of view. For instance, the backrests of the armrest chairs appear to be fashioned in the shape of an S so that they can accommodate a person's back while also providing enough support. In addition, armchairs with a round back are created with the height and shape of their occupants in mind so that they can provide support in the armpit as well as the elbow region. Even if both traditional Chinese design and contemporary design are supportive of human values, the design effort is based on humanity and ritual (Akama et al., 2020). This is due to the fact that the ancient Chinese design

philosophy, like Western design philosophy, concentrated on the spirit of mankind. The limitations that were imposed on it by traditional culture were another factor that contributed to its development. In order to form the three-dimensional coordinates of vertical time and horizontal culture, the sustainable development of the modern traditional handicraft industry requires, on the one hand, a systematic organization of experience gained during the development process in the context of its historical context, and, on the other hand, a strategic drawing on the research of various contemporary disciplines. As a significant cultural asset, experience is one of the main driving forces behind the ever-evolving nature of traditional handicrafts (Chen et al., 2022).

As a result, traditional handicrafts are contextualized here within the larger framework of human history and culture. Analyzing the Su-style furniture industry in the Ming Dynasty and its competitive advantages from a historical perspective. The Chinese place a high priority on the harmonious and integrated relationship between man and nature, which is a form of deep emotional communication (Yin, 2021). The usage of Chinese furniture materials exemplifies this principle perfectly. The grain and natural color of the original materials, as well as their natural features, are preserved in Ming-style furniture. This displays the ancient people's respect for the natural world and their capacity to think imaginatively (Li, Xiao & Huang, 2021). As has been aforementioned, the furniture of the golden period is considered to be mostly used as the designs are still preferred and liked by not only the Chinese people but also people from the Western World (Newcomb, 2021). It has been discovered that China's progress is primarily reliant on its traditional culture. China's national culture is regarded as the cornerstone of the country's decades-long progress. Similarly, current society's industrial design is more than just an artistic creation activity; it also incorporates single technological and scientific tasks. It is also seen as a cultural reproduction of all of this industry's products according to Rong & Wei, (2018). Chinese furniture reached its apex during the Ming and Qing dynasties. As a result, there are two forms of Chinese traditional furniture: Ming style and Qing style. The style, form, and quality of the piece indicate the distinction between the two. Ming-style furniture production skills are well-known in Jiangsu Province, notably in the Suzhou area (hgren et al., 2019). As a result, Suzhou-made furniture is recognized as a symbol of Ming-style furniture, often known as Suzhou-style decor.

From the above literature review and study, it has been found that various components of Chinese traditional culture are seen to be used as inspiration for home design. It can be said that traditional Chinese cultural ideas such as Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism aid Chinese designers in reinventing design schemes and creating more wonderful products. On the other hand, Chinese designers use traditional designs and concepts as an adaptation and inspiration of traditional distinctive works in modernizing interior design such as wood furniture and other objects with aesthetic value. Furthermore, with the growth of modern technology in the design style and diverse designers making full use of the present technology. Moreover, the literature review section has discussed a lot about how few of the particular art forms still paved their way over the centuries and can be seen as a part of modern-day furniture design.

3. Methodology

For this respect, a pilot test has been carried out in order to ensure that the questionnaires have been set right and that maximum responses could be collected. For the pilot test, a survey has been carried out among 50 participants. This has been followed by the first field study which has been made quantitative and finally a mixed method has been applied in the second field

study. For the literature review, varied secondary sources have been reviewed along with magazines, newspapers, and review journals. For the primary method, a survey has been carried out which was online and for that questionnaire have been made. Therefore, the research instrument that has been used in this research is a survey, case study, and questionnaire. The chosen number of participants for the primary research and survey in this research work is 50 participants. Initially, a pilot test was carried out among ten followed by involving 20 participants for the first field study and around 2 for the second field study. Moreover, all the data for the primary research have been collected via online mode by distributing questionnaires online and carrying out the survey. The data analysis for this research work has been done by Excel graphs and SPSS.

The purpose of this study is to investigate Ming-style contemporary Chinese furniture design through sustainability. It is important to explore contemporary Chinese furniture that has a relation with modern-day furniture design and in order to research that, an explanation of how important designs, furniture styles, affirms evolved and secured their place in modern-day furniture design (Dannels, 2018). Contemporary Chinese furniture has an impact on the furniture design of China, but it is preferred and liked by the Western world as well. A quantitative research method is defined as a method in which there is a focus on using statistical data and primary data to come up with conclusions. Quantitative research requires primary data to be generated so that there is a better understanding of how the data school related to each other and by using statistical analysis they can be a better understanding of the underlying factors.

On the other hand qualitative research method is defined as a method in which the focus is not on statistical analysis but rather on analyzing the context of the research. There is an open-ended type of questions that are offered as part of the research, so that not only quantitative metrics can be measured but also the important complexity around the topic can be discussed in a thematic manner which is considered to be one of the hallmarks of qualitative research. Research design is how the overall studies are conducted and go into detail about the factors involved in the qualitative or quantitative study. It is extremely important for Ph.D. research as the focus is on combining the right methodology with the line of investigation to make sure that the right type of conclusion can be reached. For any type of research, having the right research design can mean the difference between the correct analysis versus one which is deemed to be incorrect. The research site on the location of the data collection for this research was chosen to be an online platform. For the pilot test that was conducted before conducting the research **for field study 1 and field study 2 the online platform** was chosen **and 50 participants** were targeted for the pilot study on the online platform (Geofrey, 2020). This way it was found that quick responses could be collected through online platforms. Moreover, the participants also found it reliable and it did not take much time for them to fill up the questionnaires (Haddon, n.d.). Besides they read about different articles related to Contemporary Arts online. As a result, while the participants found questions here related to Contemporary Arts and its impacts on the modern-day furniture industry, they found it quite relatable as well as interesting (Kim and Jang, 2022). All these mentioned points have been found to be very prominent during this particular research study as the sample size has increased due to online data collection and the sample diversity was also found. Apart from that, it was easier to access both for the participants as well as for the researcher and the participants found it to be more convenient than filling up the forms manually. The online medium of Data Collection moreover has aided in cutting down the cost as well as helping the researcher with time investment along with other appealing features (Man-chi Cheung, 2021). Contemporary Chinese furniture and its impact on the Chinese furniture industry is a vast topic.

This particular topic can involve scholars, artists, historians as well as General people of the customers who buy the furniture (Nanu et al., 2020). Therefore, the participants for this research work were mixed participants and random where the researches selected general customers as participants as well as historians, scholars, artists, and designers to get a different aspect and opinion about the furniture industry the buying pattern as well as the art and evolution of the art from ancient dynasties of China (Pan Gaojie, 2021). Defining the research issue, as well as the research's goal and objective, are all part of a theesearch procedure in this study. Selecting articles and journals from which to collect data and ensuring that the articles and journals are current (Wang and Jin, 2018). The data were also analyzed, a study report was written, and a questionnaire was prepared as part of the research procedure. For data collection, the research tool that has been used in this research is a questionnaire for the survey that has been carried out. The data has been collected by preparing questions and setting those in the form of question year to get the responses from specific participants who have been randomly selected and given the questionnaire via online mode. Before sending the questionnaire initially, a pilot study was conducted, with ten participants chosen from a pool of general customers, people historians' designers, and research researchers (Pittwood, 2019). The pilot study aided the researcher in determining whether or not the question setting was effective and whether or not the researcher needed to make any specific modifications to the question. Data analysis is understanding the various tools which will be used during the analytical framework to develop. For the first part, the goal is to use SPSS as a quantitative study is being carried out which would be followed by more qualitative methods. In this research work for credibility, the member checking technique for credibility has been used. Member checking credibility is one of the most essential techniques that needed to be used in this research work as there was the involvement of a different section of people starting from historians, designers, artists, as well as people in general people in general. With the help of the “**member checking technique**” of credibility, the researcher could establish credibility for this research and therefore the participants could comfortably and happily answer the questions which made the accuracy of the questions possible to be 100% (Doubleday, 2021). This research work is Transferable as well because other scholars can read the research work and establishd their own research based upon this full stop moreover it is mentioned that during the research work specifically during primary research the content of the participants has been taken before sending them the email and attachment of the questionnaires (Hwang and Fu, 2018). The study has been conducted after taking permission from the teacher invitation letters have been provided to each participant where ba rief of the study the aims and objectives have been provided so that the participants could understand what the survey will be on. With that it was made clear those responses will be accurate (Kim and Jang, 2022). The validity and reliability of a study can be used to assess the research's quality. This aids in determining how accurate a methodology or method is at measuring something. Validity refers to the correctness of measurement, whereas reliability refers to its consistency (McNichols and Stubben, 2018). The primary and secondary sources used in this study were both primary and secondary. For the primary source, preliminary research was conducted by learning about contemporary Chinese ffurnitureand its impacts uponurniture design. n primary techniques, data gathered through interviews and other origces was employed. Secondary sources, on either hand, include data and information obtained from a variety of sources, including textbooks, periodicals, magazines, and other scholars' research works. This study, on the other hand, used secondary sources along with primary sources to gather information (Harris, 2019). Data for the primary study was gathered through interviews and questionnaires, whereas data for the secondary data study was gathered from books, journals, and previous research.

The detailed analysis of this research work has been done quantitatively. Responses have been

collected initially from 50 participants as a pilot test and those responses have been analyzed with the help of Excel by taking out the percentage of the responses which helped the researcher to analyze the analysis to a conclusion. The next step was filled in Study 1 Study 20 has been included and the responses from those participants have been analyzed with the help of graphs and charts (Bloomfield, 2019).

4. Discussion

This study adds to our understanding of how eco-friendly practices have helped bring Ming aesthetics and contemporary furniture design closer together. The implications of this synthesis, both theoretical and practical, are further upon. The fact that modern furniture can successfully borrow ideas from the Ming dynasty's aesthetic is further proof that good taste endures. The fact that elements of Ming-style design, which have their roots in a wide variety of epochs and cultures, can coexist with modern aesthetic preferences is evidence of their enduring appeal. This finding challenges the view that aesthetics are bound to specific eras and cannot be applied to other times and places without a great deal of effort.

The study's emphasis on sustainability is in line with a growing international consciousness of environmental protection. Attempts to merge Ming-style designs into eco-friendly furniture have been discussed, with a focus on using sustainable materials and production practices. These talks have also added to the larger dialogue on responsible production and consumption. This is consistent with modern values, which place greater emphasis on ethical and environmental considerations. It also highlights the market potential for Ming-style, eco-friendly furniture. As shoppers become increasingly concerned about the environment, they are more likely to choose products from companies that reflect their values. A niche but large group of consumers would appreciate a synthesis of the understated elegance of Ming design and eco-friendly details. Concerns concerning the complexity of achieving this synthesis have been raised as a direct result of this study. Finding a happy medium between being true to the past and relevant today, or between form and function, is challenging. The environmental impact of the furniture industry as a whole is substantial, so we've made it a priority to employ sustainable materials and practices. The implications of greening Ming-style furniture design are explored further as a means of modernizing the aesthetics of that period. It draws attention to the transformative force of design at the crossroads of history and the future, which may appeal to customers' aesthetic sensibilities and urge them to engage in sustainable practices.

5. Conclusion

In the final section, we examine how Ming aesthetics and contemporary, eco-friendly furniture design have come together to form a novel synthesis. This research has shown that elements designed in the Ming style are exceptionally long-lasting, demonstrating their relevance to modern design aims. The mix of classical beauty and contemporary practicality works to reinforce the notion that good taste transcends time and place. The research offers a vital new dimension to this synthesis by focusing on sustainability. The urgent international call to action for environmental conservation is mirrored in the study's suggestions to adopt ecologically friendly materials and industrial methods. Ethical actions that address the concerns of today's conscientious consumers are endorsed by the fusion of Ming aesthetics and eco-friendly practices.

The market will be profoundly affected by this convergence. Sustainable furniture with an aesthetic inspired by the Ming era can win favor with connoisseurs. Customers who are

concerned about their impact on the environment may also find these products appealing. The research does, however, highlight the challenges inherent in striking a happy medium between preservation and progress, aesthetics, and functionality. While it is essential to prioritize the use of sustainable resources, it is also important to assess how the production process as a whole affects the environment. In addition, this design strategy will need to be constantly communicated and collaborated on amongst designers, artisans, and sustainability experts.

This study elucidates the transformative potential of design as a bridge between the familiar and the novel, between culture and nature, and between the past and the future. The rebirth of the Ming style through eco-friendly methods is more than just a design exercise; it serves as a symbol of responsible production that embodies the values of our time. This synthesis is a beacon that points the way toward future design processes that are more considerate of cultural values and ecological considerations as a whole.

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