

# *The Application of Zen Thought in Furniture Design—Take Rattan Furniture as an Example*

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**Abstract:** This paper aims to explore the application of Zen thought in the field of furniture design, especially taking rattan furniture as an example for in-depth analysis. Zen, as an important school of ancient Chinese Buddhism, its core ideas of "simplicity", "nature" and "unity of things and me", have exerted a profound influence on modern furniture design. Rattan furniture, as one of the oldest furniture in the world, its unique material, craft and aesthetic feeling, provides an ideal carrier for the practice of Zen thought. From the perspective of Zen aesthetics, this paper analyzes the concepts of simplicity and efficiency, peaceful spatial layout, the application of natural materials and the emphasis on quality and detail in furniture design. With its simple design style, peaceful spatial layout, respect for natural materials and the ultimate pursuit of detail quality, rattan woven furniture perfectly interprets the essence of Zen aesthetics. This paper discusses the application of the concept of "things and me" in furniture design. Rattan makes up furniture through choosing the material that has simple sense and natural aesthetic feeling, made furniture itself became the indispensable part in people's life, realized the harmonious unity of person and furniture.

## 1. Introduction

As one of the important schools of ancient Chinese philosophy, the core ideas such as "nature", "simplicity" and "unity of things and me" have exerted a profound influence on the field of modern design. In the field of furniture design, rattan thought also has important guiding significance. Rattan furniture, as an ancient and unique furniture form, its material, craft and design concept are closely connected with the rattan thought. Therefore, this paper chooses rattan furniture as the case of rattan thought in modern furniture design. In modern society, people have more and more higher requirements for home environment. As an important part of family life, furniture not only needs to meet the basic use function, but also needs to meet people's aesthetic needs and spiritual pursuit. Therefore, the application of Zen thought to furniture design can not only enhance the artistic value and cultural connotation of furniture, but also create a more comfortable and quiet living environment for people. This paper will take rattan furniture as an example to discuss the application of Zen thought in furniture design and its enlightenment to modern home design.

## **2. The connotation of Zen thought**

Cicada Zong emphasizes the philosophy of "nature" and "inaction", and pursues inner peace and self-perfection. In the field of furniture design, the thought of cicada zong is manifested as the respect for natural materials, the pursuit of simple design and the embodiment of the concept of "integrating things are in one". These ideas provide important guiding principles for furniture design, making furniture not only practical, but also can reflect people's spiritual world and aesthetic pursuit. Zen, as a bright pearl in Chinese traditional culture, has broad and profound thoughts and far-reaching influence. It is not only a religious school, but also a philosophy of life, a wisdom of life. The connotation of Zen thought is rich and diverse, but the core is to emphasize the inner spiritual cultivation and beyond the secular realm. This kind of cultivation and realm is not remote, but everyone can achieve it through self-cultivation<sup>[1]</sup>.

### **2.1 First, self-cultivation is an important cornerstone of Zen thought.**

Zen Buddhism believes that everyone has a fundamental heart and a Buddhist nature. This heart is pure and pure, but because of the secular disturbance and personal persistence, people often lost their heart, into the pain and trouble. Therefore, it is necessary to find this heart through practice and achieve the purpose of transcendence. This practice is not an external pursuit, but an inner awakening and transformation. Through meditation, meditation and other ways, people can gradually recognize their own heart, remove the persistence and delusion, and return to the purity and tranquility of the original heart.

### **2.2 Secondly, the Zen view of nature is also an important part of its thought.**

Zen Buddhism emphasized the harmonious relationship between man and nature, and believed that nature is the highest law of the universe, and that human beings should conform to the law of nature and live in harmony with it. This view of nature is not only reflected in the protection of the natural environment, but also reflected in the understanding and respect for human nature. According to Zen, human nature is good, but due to the influence of secular and personal persistence, people often deviate from their nature. Therefore, it is necessary to return to nature through practice and achieve the state of harmonious coexistence with nature<sup>[2]</sup>.

### **2.3 Finally, the simple aesthetics of Zen Buddhism is also a major feature of its thoughts.**

In the view of Zen Buddhism, beauty lies not in the external decoration and prosperity, but in the internal simplicity and simplicity. Therefore, Zen Buddhism advocates simple and simple aesthetic concepts, and opposes excessive decoration and tedious design style. This simple aesthetics is not only reflected in the artistic creation, but also reflected in the lifestyle and life attitude. Zen believes that only by removing the complexity and vanity can we see the essence of things and experience true beauty and happiness.

### **2.4 To sum up, the connotation of Zen thought includes self-cultivation, view of nature and simple aesthetics**

These ideas not only provide people with a new way of life and wisdom of life, but also provide important inspiration and reference for the development of modern society. In today's society, facing the increasingly serious environmental problems and spiritual crisis, people need the guidance and comfort of Zen thought. Through spiritual practice and inner awakening, people can

find their own heart, return to the embrace of nature, and experience true happiness and satisfaction.

### **3. The material and craft of rattan woven furniture**

Rattan furniture with rattan as the main material, after weaving, grinding and other processes and processing. As a kind of natural material, rattan has a unique texture and beauty, in line with the cicada's respect for natural material. At the same time, the weaving technology of rattan furniture also reflects the craftsman's careful treatment of materials and the persistent pursuit of technology. These characteristics make rattan furniture become the ideal carrier of cicada thought in modern furniture design. The application of rattan weaving furniture, as the treasure of traditional Chinese craft, has been loved by people with its unique charm and practicality since ancient times. When Zen thought and rattan furniture meet, the two produce a wonderful chemical reaction, which makes rattan furniture not only a kind of household goods, but also become a cultural carrier and a display of art<sup>[3]</sup>.

#### **3.1 Simplified modeling — return to the essence of beauty**

In Zen thought, "subtraction" is an important philosophical principle, which advocates the removal of all superfluous and complexity, and the pursuit of the essence and purity of things. This thought is perfectly reflected in the design of rattan woven furniture. Designers abandon the complex and tedious decoration in the traditional furniture, and instead use simple lines and geometric figures to build the overall form of the furniture. This simplified shape not only makes rattan furniture more in line with the aesthetic needs of modern people, more importantly, it highlights the natural texture and texture of rattan materials, so that people can more intuitively feel the unique charm of nature and rattan. For example, a simple rattan coffee table, its desktop used smooth rattan woven and become, without any redundant decoration and raised. This kind of concise design makes tea table look more relaxed and comfortable not only, still showed the natural texture of cane fully and downy touch feeling. When people sit at the tea table and drink tea and chat, as if they can feel the breath of nature and the depth of Zen thoughts.

#### **3.2 Pay attention to the material material — Respect for the gift of nature**

The Zen thought emphasizes the harmonious coexistence between man and nature, and holds that nature is the highest law of the universe. In the design of rattan make up furniture, stylist people respect the gift of nature fully, chose the plant such as the cane of natural, environmental protection and bamboo as main material. These materials not only have good toughness and air permeability, but also can give people a sense of returning to nature and getting close to nature. During the process, designers focus on preserving the natural texture and color of the material, minimizing manual intervention and chemical treatment. In this way, each piece of rattan furniture has become the epitome of nature, so that people can always feel the warmth and tolerance of nature in the process of use<sup>[4]</sup>.

#### **3.3 Integrate natural elements — Add poetry to life**

Zen thought believes that nature is the highest law of the universe, and human beings should follow the law of nature and live in harmony with it. In the design of rattan furniture, designers skillfully integrated a few natural elements as decoration or ornament, make the furniture more vivid and interesting, full of the poetry of life. For example, a few rattan make up furniture is carving or weaving exquisite animal and plant pattern, wait like butterfly, flower, bird to wait.

These patterns not only enrich the visual effect of furniture, but also place people's yearning and pursuit for a better life. In addition, stylist people still are good at using the adornment material of a few natural color to decorate furniture, wait like the bamboo of green cane, brown etc. The use of these colour makes furniture more harmonious blend in natural environment not only, still brought a kind of pure and fresh, quiet feeling for people. To sum up, the application of Zen thought in the design of rattan furniture is an innovation and development of traditional craft. By simplifying the shape, paying attention to the material and integrating the natural elements, the designers successfully combined the Zen thought with the rattan furniture, creating a new type of furniture that has both the traditional culture and meets the modern aesthetic needs. This kind of furniture not only improves people's life quality, but also brings people a kind of life attitude of returning to nature and the pursuit of inner peace.

#### **4. Take rattan furniture as an example to analyze the application significance of Zen thought in furniture design**

##### **4.1 Emphasize nature and environmental protection**

Cicada thought emphasizes nature and environmental protection, which fits with the natural environmental protection characteristics of rattan furniture. Integrating the thought of cicada into the design of rattan furniture can emphasize the environmental protection attribute of furniture more deeply, promote people to establish environmental awareness and protect the ecological environment<sup>[5]</sup>.

##### **4.2 The pursuit of simplicity and practicality**

Cicada zong thought pursues contracted and practical, this fits with the contracted and practical characteristic of rattan make up furniture. Integrating the thought of cicada into the design of rattan furniture, we can pursue the simple aesthetic feeling and practical function of furniture more deeply, and meet the aesthetic and practical needs of modern people for furniture.

##### **4.3 Realize the unity of things and me**

The thought of cicada emphasizes "the unity of things and me", that is, the harmony and unity of man and things. Integrating the cicada into the design of rattan furniture can pay more attention to the interaction and integration of furniture and people, so that furniture becomes an indispensable part of people's life. This kind of design concept can enhance the added value of furniture and people's quality of life.

##### **4.4 Expand the design ideas**

As a unique philosophical thought, cicada zong thought provides new design ideas and inspiration for the design of rattan furniture. By studying the thought of cicada zong and applying it to the design of rattan furniture, the design ideas of designers can be expanded and the innovation and development of furniture design can be promoted.

##### **4.5 Cultural inheritance and innovative development**

Applying the Zen thought to the design of rattan furniture can not only inherit and develop the Chinese traditional furniture culture, but also promote the innovation and development of modern furniture design. By deeply excavating the essence and concept of Zen culture, it can provide new

ideas and ideas for modern home design, and promote the integration and development of tradition and modernity<sup>[6]</sup>.

#### **4.6 Humanistic care and emotional experience**

The Zen thought emphasizes the people-oriented humanistic care and emotional experience. By integrating zen ideas into the design of rattan furniture, it can provide users with more comfortable experience and use experience. For example, by optimizing the size, structure and material of furniture, users can use and place items; or by adding some humanized design and details, such as handrails, foot pads, enhance the sense of security and comfort.

#### **4.7 Green, environmental protection and sustainability**

The Zen thought advocates the idea of conforming to the nature and protecting the environment. Applied to this concept to the design of rattan furniture, can pay attention to the principle of green environmental protection and sustainability. We need to reduce the impact on the environment and reduce waste consumption by using renewable materials, or through the development and application of new materials and technical means to improve the quality and performance of products and extend their service life.

### **5. The application of cicada zong thought in the design of rattan furniture**

Natural and contracted fusion: the design of rattan makes up furniture emphasizes natural and contracted fusion. Designers choose natural vines as the main material, and combine simple lines and shapes, to create a furniture with natural beauty and simple style. This kind of design style accords with cicada zong thought "nature" and "contracted" idea, make furniture presents a kind of pure and fresh aesthetic feeling.

The embodiment of the unity of things and me: the thought of cicadas emphasizes "the unity of things and me", that is, the harmonious unity of people and things. In rattan make furniture design, designers pay attention to the interaction of furniture and person and fusion. They through reasonable size design, comfortable touch and humanized function setting, make furniture become an indispensable part of people's life. This design concept embodies the concept of "unity with things" in the thought of cicadas, and makes furniture become a part of people's life. Critical rational thinking: the critical rationality in the cicada thought urges designers to think more deeply in the design of rattan furniture. They are not only concerned with the appearance and practicality of furniture, but also with the intrinsic value and meaning of furniture. By choosing environmentally friendly materials and using traditional crafts, designers are committed to creating furniture works with cultural connotation and historical heritage. This way of thinking is in line with the characteristics of critical rationality in the cicada thought, which makes the design of rattan furniture more depth and connotation.

### **6. The application of cicada thought in the design of rattan furniture**

#### **6.1 Development trend of diversification and individuation**

With the continuous diversification and individuation of consumer demand, rattan furniture design will also present a diversified and personalized development trend. In the future design, we can continue to dig deep into the connotation and essence of cicada thought, combine modern aesthetic and consumer needs, and create more works with unique charm and personalized rattan

furniture.

## 6.2 Pursuit of environmental protection and sustainable development

Environmental protection and sustainable development have become an important issue in today's society. In the future rattan furniture design, we will pay more attention to the concept of environmental protection and sustainable development, through the selection of environmental protection materials, the use of energy saving technology and other ways, reduce the impact on the environment, promote the green development of furniture industry.

## 6.3 Integration and innovation of technology and art

With the continuous progress and development of science and technology, the integration of technology and art will become an important trend of future furniture design. In the future rattan furniture design, we can use advanced scientific and technological means and technical support to realize the intelligent and automatic design and manufacturing, and at the same time pay attention to the artistic expression and aesthetic pursuit, to create more innovative and artistic rattan furniture works.

## 6.4 Enhancement of international exchanges and cooperation

With the deepening and development of globalization, international exchanges and cooperation will become an important force to promote the development of furniture design. In the future development, we can strengthen the exchange and cooperation with international designers and brands, learn from the international advanced design concepts and technical means, and promote the international development of rattan furniture design.

## 7. Conclusion

The application of cicada thought in the design of rattan furniture is of great significance and value. It not only provides a new design concept and inspiration source for rattan furniture design, but also promotes the integration and innovation of furniture design and traditional culture. In the future development, we will continue to dig deep into the connotation and essence of cicada thought, combine the modern aesthetic and consumer demand, and promote the innovation and development of rattan furniture design. At the same time, we should strengthen international exchanges and cooperation in order to promote the international development of rattan furniture design.

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