

# Tibetan Furniture in Traditional Minority Furniture

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**Abstract:** Ethnic minority furniture is a kind of furniture unique to ethnic minorities in our country. In the structure, color and pattern of furniture use, ethnic minority furniture because of its geographical location, economy and culture, it can carry and express culture through its own characteristics such as shape, color and processing technology. Tibetan-style furniture influences Tibetan people's life, and Tibetan people also influence the development and style of Tibetan-style furniture. Therefore, as one of the important objects to study the production and life of the Tibetan people, the Tibetan family has special significance. This paper is based on a large number of firsthand materials, combined with relevant documents for in-depth study.

**Keywords:** Tibetan furniture; Tibetan culture; Ethnic minority furniture

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## 1. Know Tibetan Furniture

### 1.1 Tibetan Furniture and Tibetan Culture

For thousands of years, the hard-working and intelligent Tibetan people have used their own outstanding painting art, exquisite carving skills and decorative techniques with great national characteristics to create an outstanding Tibetan furniture culture with unique structures, exquisite shapes, colorful colors and exquisite workmanship. It not only preserves the primitive primitive, the rough and bold, the thick and deep characteristic, also reflects the distinct regional characteristic and the national style, has the extremely high collection value.

### 1.2 Tibetan Furniture and Tibetan Buddhism

"The more ethnic, the more cosmopolitan"<sup>[1]</sup> is a statement that applies to Tibetan furniture art. Although the use of Tibetan-style furniture scene is realistic, the connotation behind it is built by the ethno-religious culture. Tibetan-style furniture appears in palaces and temples in large numbers, while folk use is relatively low. By contrast, traditional furniture from other ethnic minorities has little of this quality. Tibetan-style furniture is closely related to religious culture with its unique ethnic characteristics, showing its unique charm.

### 1.3 Tibetan Furniture and Tibetan Architecture

Furniture is an extension of the building, and the building is an extension of the interior. People can experience the uniqueness of Tibetan architecture by visiting local houses, temples and palaces. Different types of Tibetan furniture can also be seen in different buildings.<sup>[2]</sup> Tibetan-style furniture is made of materials, painted and carved to match Tibetan architecture and interiors. It is worth mentioning that many patterns and patterns on tibetan furniture are the same as sculptures and paintings in architecture, which together show the connotation of religious culture.

## 2. Know Tibetan Furniture

### 2.1 Material for Tibetan Furniture

Usually tibetan furniture is made of cedar, cypress, pine and walnut. A few use rare plateau hardwoods for simple carvings, but they are relatively rare. The humid climate and pest infestation on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau make the wood used in Tibetan furniture susceptible to decay and unable to be preserved for long. To make up for these shortcomings, Tibetan furniture makers use auxiliary materials to protect and beautify the furniture. If use tung oil, putty, cloth and pastry ash on the outside surface of furniture, can form

an effective protective layer.<sup>[3]</sup>

## 2.2 Production of Tibetan furniture

In the aspect of styling structure, the old Tibetan furniture adopts solid wood structure, mainly frame type, and adopts mortise and tenon socket combination. Substrates selected solid wood saw wood and solid wood board to make the whole board, no seams, do not affect color painting. When making Tibetan furniture in the later stages, patchwork boards are used and cloth is taped to large areas of painted areas. Therefore, the sticker also becomes a typical basis for judging the period of Tibetan furniture.

In adornment technique aspect, tibetan furniture is unique, adornment is colorful. These include painted, inlaid, iron-tipped nail seal edges, wood group edges, carvings and animal skin inlays. Almost all tibetan furniture is covered in ornate paintwork, adorned with rich patterns, beautiful and ornate, mostly related to wealth and jewelry. Some designs are bold in design, treacherous in imagery and very modern in feel. At the level of depiction techniques, rich in color, showing a strong folk interest.

## 2.3 Classification of Tibetan Furniture

### (1) Stash

The collection box originated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and is a kind of late appearance furniture in the Tibetan classical furniture. Tibetan herders adapted to nomadic life rarely use wooden furniture that is difficult to carry. The stash is a perfect solution to the difficulty of moving, mainly to carry food or clothing when going out, and many people use it to carry items during worship. One of the features of this collection is a rope-threading "trip" on the side that binds the case for easy movement.

Tibetan families who settle down also use storage boxes, mainly for carrying clothes and food when they go out. The sides of the boxes are not "tripped" and focus more on paintwork and mosaics. With the change of times and culture, the hidden box was gradually replaced by the hidden cabinet.

### (2)locker

Hide cabinets are the largest, most common and most practical furniture in Tibetan families. It is mainly used to store items such as food, everyday items and religious items. There are three types of storage cabinets. One is placed in pairs in the most prominent position in the living room, known to Tibetans as "chaigang," or double cabinet, and must appear in pairs, slightly higher than "bigang." Another is a cabinet with a door at the top that can be used to store books and clutter, known as a "bighorn." This kind of cabinet appears late, does not belong to the category of traditional Tibetan furniture. Hyundai also emerged with three modular storage cabinets on one side of the wall, with the middle cabinet lower than the two sides.

### (3)Hide table

Tibetan table is one of the earliest furniture types in Tibet. Used for eating, drinking ghee and sweet tea, tossing colors, and other activities. It is also often used in religious ceremonies and special ceremonial occasions.

### (4) Other appliances

#### ①Niche for a Buddha

Buddhist shrines are an integral part of Tibetans' daily lives, so the process of making them is meticulous. Making the shrine requires experienced craftsmen, who use techniques such as sculpture, painting and mosaics to decorate the shrine with splendor and refinement. The manufacturing process is complex and time consuming, and production costs are often high.

#### ②Cheema boxes

Cheema box interior using partition into two parts, respectively into fried wheat grains and tsamba. Highland barley spikes, red spike flowers and ghee flowers on the lid, symbolize a long life, good harvest and good luck. In the center of the box, a colorful arrow will be inserted to signify auspicious and successful completion.

## 2.4 Features of Tibetan Furniture

### Tibetan Furniture Feature 1: Simple

Tibetan-style furniture is simple and limited in shape, presents a simple and gorgeous form, takes the regular geometric pattern as the layout principle, divides the plane space into various shapes in an orderly manner. This simple and practical design style makes Tibetan furniture have unique charm in modern home. Traditional Tibetan furniture had no leg support and fitted directly to the floor, similar to the houses they lived in, square and with few curved or curvy elements. Decorations also tend to be simple and symbolic, highlighting the deep roots of Tibetan culture.

### Tibetan-style furniture features 2: Use

Most cabinet-type furniture is known in Tibet as the "brocade cabinet." Usually cabinets or lockers with intricate carvings and paint. Not only do they provide storage functions, they also show the wealth and status of the owner. Most cabinet furniture is square and freely chosen or will be stitched together according to the interior space. Box furniture design is very flexible, can choose different

materials, colors and decorations according to preferences and styles, adding aesthetic feeling and practicality to indoor space.

#### Tibetan Furniture Feature 3: Alive

Tibetan-style furniture is square-shaped and resolute, giving a sense of stability, while bright colors and patterns inject life and vitality. Typically, Tibetan-style furniture comes in red, yellow and brown undertones. Tibetan-style furniture is often made up of designs that incorporate religious elements and ethnic characteristics. Tibetan-style furniture is often decorated with precious metals such as gold and silver to give it a more ornate and textured feel.

### **3. Collection Furniture**

#### **3.1 Market Value of Tibetan Furniture**

In the past, due to the relative backwardness of the economy, only senior monks, aristocrats and the elite were able to own fine Tibetan furniture. Nowadays, traditional Tibetan furniture has become an important part of craftsmanship in Tibet. It expands access to employment, protects, promotes and prospers national culture, maintains social stability, promotes the economic and social development of Tibet, and is of great significance for the prosperity of the people and the long-term stability of Tibet.

#### **3.2 Heritage of Tibetan Furniture**

Tibetan-style furniture is a classic example of ethnic minority furniture. It has strong social, regional, ethnic, historical and cultural characteristics and storytelling characteristics. It has also become an indispensable part of traditional Tibetan-style furniture, and more efforts are needed to protect and inherit the history and culture contained in Tibetan-style furniture.

### **4. Conclusion**

With the development of times and society, the influence of foreign culture on Tibetan-style furniture is unavoidable. It is the best way to preserve the unique culture such as Tibetan folklore and custom and absorb the essence of foreign culture. If we blindly pursue and explore new things and ignore the unique value of local culture, it will make Tibetan unique culture lose its luster.

Tibetan-style furniture has played an active role in the inheritance and promotion of Tibetan-style culture, but how to further inherit and promote the unique features of Tibetan-style furniture and let Tibetan-style furniture out of the country is a question that needs deep thinking. Finding these methods will have a positive impact on the development of minority furniture in China.

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