

# Research on the Application of Lacquer Painting Techniques in Modern Handicrafts

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**Abstract:** Lacquer painting as a traditional craft art form, its cultural connotation and artistic value can effectively improve the market demand for modern handicrafts. In order to promote the integration of lacquer painting and modern decoration, the application of lacquer painting techniques in modern handicrafts is proposed. Firstly, the concept of lacquer painting is analyzed, and the artistic language of lacquer painting is explored in the light of the specific classification of the craft. From the perspective of human-oriented and inheritance, the application principle of lacquer painting is analyzed, and it is proposed that the traditional aesthetics of lacquer art should be combined with modern design aesthetics. Finally, it is proposed that lacquer painting can be applied in three aspects, namely, thematic application, symbolic application and embellishment application, so as to integrate traditional lacquer painting techniques with modern handicrafts design and inject new vitality into the modern handicrafts market.

**Keywords:** modern crafts; lacquer painting; interior decoration; traditional art

## 1. Introduction

Lacquer, a traditional handicraft, not only embodies the ancient people's pursuit of beauty, but also is the crystallization of the wisdom of the Chinese nation. However, with the change of time and the progress of science and technology, the modern handicraft market is becoming more and more prosperous, and various new materials and techniques are emerging, so lacquer art as a traditional handicraft is facing unprecedented challenges and opportunities. How to utilize and develop lacquer painting techniques in modern handicrafts, so as to revitalize this traditional craft, has become an urgent problem for us to solve<sup>[1]</sup>. In the modern society, people's sense of identification with traditional culture is increasing, and the demand for handicrafts with cultural connotation and artistic value is becoming more and more prosperous. As a traditional craft integrating practicality, artistry and culture, lacquer art has great market potential and development space. Therefore, in-depth research on the application of lacquer painting techniques in modern handicrafts not only helps to inherit and develop this traditional craft, but also meets the demand of modern market for high-quality and high-cultural value-added handicrafts, which is of great practical significance and far-reaching historical significance. In recent years, as scholars at home and abroad continue to deepen their research on traditional crafts, the study of lacquer painting techniques has also made remarkable progress<sup>[2]</sup>. In terms of theoretical research, scholars have conducted in-depth discussions and analysis on the historical origin, artistic characteristics and cultural connotations of lacquer painting techniques, providing a solid theoretical foundation for the inheritance and development of this traditional craft. In terms of practical application, some artists and designers have tried to combine lacquer painting techniques with modern crafts design, creating a number of modern crafts with unique artistic charm and cultural connotation, which have been widely recognized and praised by the market. However, there are still some shortcomings in the research on the application of lacquer painting techniques in modern handicrafts<sup>[3]</sup>. On the one hand, due to the many difficulties and challenges facing the inheritance and development of traditional crafts, there is a relative lack of lacquer painting techniques, and the inheritance of skills is in danger of being cut off; on the other hand, there is a growing demand for crafts with cultural connotations and artistic value in the modern craft market, but there are relatively few modern crafts on the market that can truly embody the artistic charm of lacquer painting techniques. This paper aims to understand the historical origin, artistic characteristics and cultural connotations of lacquer painting techniques by reviewing relevant literature and data<sup>[4]</sup>.

## 2. Conceptual analysis

### 2.1 Concept of Lacquer Painting

Lacquer painting refers to a traditional process of painting and decorating works of art, mainly using lacquer<sup>[5]</sup>. The word "painting" refers to the process of lacquering objects with lacquer, while the word "decorating" implies the meaning of ornamentation and decoration. This craft not only focuses on the selection and use of lacquer, but also involves many aspects such as pattern design, color matching, and carving techniques, thus creating colorful and unique artistic effects. Lacquer painting mainly uses natural lacquer, which has unique physical and chemical properties, such as high strength after drying, corrosion resistance and abrasion resistance. At the same time, lacquer can also be used in combination with a variety of materials, such as wood, metal, ceramics, etc., to create more colorful artistic effects<sup>[6]</sup>.

### 2.2 Artistic Language of Lacquerware Painting Technique

There are mainly 8 kinds of ancient lacquer ware painting techniques, also known as "eight methods of painting", i.e., painting, painting, inlaying, carving and filling, grinding and drawing, stacking, honoring painting, and carving lacquer eight techniques. For example, the word "painting" means to put lacquer on an object. The method of painting is the most basic technique in lacquer art, and many other techniques are developed on this basis. The painting process can be divided into two types: plain painting and colored painting. The main technique of plain lacquering is monochrome lacquering, which is more often used indoors. Painting is in the processing of good artifacts for the depiction of patterns and designs, do not have to cover the dye, push the light and other processes, this method to make the furniture more gorgeous. There are also stacked molding process, stacked molding process refers to the smooth lacquer surface, with viscous thick lacquer plus charcoal powder, lacquer ash and other materials for the pile up, and then in the high up on the pattern and then decorated. Pile molding techniques vary; from the form can be divided into: line pile, surface pile, thin pile (shallow relief), high pile (high relief). In the realm of interior space design, the walls can be transformed into captivating features through intricate pile molding processes. This technique not only enhances the wall design with relief patterns, but also significantly amplifies the sense of three-dimensionality and atmosphere within the space<sup>[7]</sup>. Historically, ancient lacquerwork predominantly featured black and red hues, with artisans striving to achieve vibrant and multicolored effects. To accomplish this, they harnessed the unique viscosity of lacquer, utilizing it as a medium to adhere decorative elements of natural materials.

This led to the development of intricate craftsmanship such as tin inlay, eggshell inlay, bone and stone inlay, among others. These techniques involved meticulously cutting and shaping various materials, including precious metals, organic substances like eggshells, and natural stones, before inlaying them into the lacquered surface. The resulting walls became works of art, telling stories through their intricate patterns and vibrant colors, adding depth and character to the interior spaces.

The patterns of lacquering craft and its performance themes are rich and varied, and its main performance themes include geometric patterns, auspicious imagery, narrative scenes, etc<sup>[8]</sup>. Geometric patterns are the most important elements of lacquering patterns. Geometric pattern is the most widely used pattern form in the painting pattern, most of the geometric pattern forms are relatively neat, and its painting effect has a sense of order and rhythmic beauty. Auspicious imagery themes include animal and plant motifs, plant motifs not only depict the natural beauty of the landscape, but also auspicious and beautiful symbolism. Animal tattoos and natural animal tattoos, animal tattoos commonly used in dragon, phoenix, taotie, unicorn and other subjects, most of these tattoos are used to express some kind of emotion. Natural animal tattoos have various forms, abstract and figurative forms, among which the common tattoos are tiger, fish, birds and other tattoos with good symbolic meanings. Narrative scene motifs are the fusion of the previous motifs, presenting the atmosphere of the scene motifs. The painting is characterized by the use of a variety of painting language to portray the scene in its entirety, and the use of patterns to shape the story of the picture and the sense of spatial atmosphere<sup>[9]</sup>.

### **3. Lacquer painting techniques in modern crafts design application principles**

#### ***3.1 People-centered principle***

The principle of human-centered design emphasizes innovation on the basis of respect for tradition. In the modern application of lacquerware painting techniques, it is necessary to firstly inherit its exquisite skills and profound cultural heritage, and at the same time innovate with modern aesthetics and market demand. This includes innovation in pattern design, color matching, material selection, etc., so that the traditional lacquer ware painting techniques and modern crafts design can be perfectly integrated, which not only retains the traditional characteristics, but also meets the modern aesthetics and practicality. Meanwhile, in the modern application of lacquer painting techniques, the user's experience should be fully considered. For example, in the design of handicrafts, it is necessary to consider the user's sense of touch, grip comfort, ease of use and other factors, so that the handicrafts not only have a beautiful appearance, but also have practical functions<sup>[10]</sup>. At the same time, modern technology can also be used to improve the lacquer painting technique, improve its production efficiency and precision, and provide users with a better user experience.

The principle of human-centered design focuses on meeting the needs and preferences of different users. In the modern application of lacquer painting techniques, emphasis should be placed on personalized and differentiated design. Through in-depth understanding of the user's cultural background, aesthetic preferences, living habits and other information, unique crafts can be customized for the user<sup>[11]</sup>. At the same time, innovative and unique lacquerware crafts can be developed to meet the personalized needs of users by combining modern design concepts and market demands.

#### ***3.2 Principle of legacy***

The core of the principle of inheritance lies in respecting history and tradition, and for the lacquer painting technique, this means that first of all, we should keep a sense of reverence for its deep historical heritage and exquisite craftsmanship. When applying lacquer ware painting techniques in modern crafts design, the traditional characteristics and essence of the techniques should be fully preserved, such as unique color combinations, pattern designs and production processes<sup>[12]</sup>. This is not only a respect for traditional craftsmanship, but also the basis for ensuring the inheritance and development of lacquer painting techniques. While respecting history and tradition, the principle of inheritance also requires us to integrate traditional and modern elements in the design of modern crafts. This means that on the basis of maintaining the traditional characteristics of lacquer ware painting techniques, we should actively explore the possibility of combining them with modern design concepts and market demands. Through the introduction of modern design elements, innovative materials and craftsmanship, traditional lacquerware painting techniques can be revitalized to meet the aesthetic and practical needs of modern consumers. The principle of inheritance also emphasizes the importance of the inheritance of skills and the cultivation of talents. The inheritance of lacquerware painting and decorating skills requires the efforts and dedication of generations, therefore, when applying this skill in modern crafts design, the inheritance of skills and the cultivation of talents should be emphasized<sup>[13]</sup>. By providing professional courses, organizing training courses and carrying out apprenticeship, more inheritors of lacquer ware painting and decorating skills should be trained to ensure the continuation and development of this traditional craft.

Under the guidance of the principle of inheritance, we should also actively explore innovative ways of inheritance. With the progress of science and technology and the change of time, the traditional inheritance methods may not be able to meet the needs of modern society. Therefore, we can make use of modern technological means, such as digital technology, virtual reality technology, etc., to present the production process and characteristics of lacquer ware painting and decorating techniques to the public in a more intuitive and vivid way to enhance the public's awareness of and interest in traditional crafts. At the same time, interaction and communication with consumers can also be strengthened through online platforms, social media and other channels to understand their needs and feedback and provide more ideas and inspiration for the inheritance and development of traditional crafts.

## 4. Application Strategies of Lacquer Painting Techniques in Modern Crafts

### 4.1 Thematic application forms

Interior theme space design, on the one hand, is to meet the social and cultural development, art and aesthetic culture of diversification, on the other hand, is to make space and art, space and people, art and life more closely. Therefore, space theme decoration must have connotation, that is, artistic spirit and artistic connotation. The traditional cultural heritage of lacquerware painting and decorating techniques and its unique artistic style as well as the cultural symbols embedded in the patterns and motifs are suitable for spreading the culture of intangible cultural heritage and creating the theme of national consciousness of the spatial atmosphere<sup>[14]</sup>. The main design performance are: first, the use of lacquer painting patterns to express the space theme, the extraction of lacquer painting technology in auspicious imagery theme patterns used in space design, meaning good luck, the choice of decorative patterns in the space should be combined with the type of space, more in line with the needs of the service object, the most important thing is that it should be combined with the overall spatial atmosphere. For example, in the application of lodging space in recent years, the original pattern should be deconstructed, restructured, and modernized so that the traditional pattern and modern design principles are integrated to present a visual effect more in line with contemporary aesthetic concepts, thus creating a modern and traditional lacquer cultural flavor of the theme of space. The second is to use color to express the theme of space, coordinate the color used in the space with the lacquer art, and create a lacquer art cultural theme space through the change of color. For example, in the design of display space, the black and red colors commonly used in lacquer art can be extracted and decorated to create the artistic effect of lacquer art space, so that people can understand the culture of lacquer art more intuitively and experience the cultural atmosphere of lacquer art. Third, the use of lighting to assist the design of the performance theme, indoor space lighting is indispensable, different lights can create a different spatial atmosphere. Therefore, we can use light mapping to strengthen the cultural characteristics of lacquer art and national spirit<sup>[15]</sup>.

For example, a designer designed a lacquer art gallery using a thematic application. The entrance of this design scheme utilizes a thematic design approach, with forest-themed decorative wall panels at the entrance, creating a thematic atmosphere as a transition between the city and nature, and introducing customers to the quiet and elegant lacquer atmosphere. Lacquer Museum is the office and display function as one of the space types, the space color extracted from the lacquer in the black and red colors, so the space color tone for the dark tone, green, red, blue decorative paintings is the focus of the space, and to change the lighting, together to create the lacquer themed atmosphere, specific as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Lacquer Art Museum Furnishings

### 4.2 Embellished application forms

With its unique artistic charm and deep cultural heritage, lacquer painting technique provides rich embellishment elements for modern interior space decoration. In the indoor environment, through the embellishment application form, the lacquer painting technique is applied to curtains, partitions,

furniture furnishings, fabrics and other soft furnishings, which can create a unique artistic effect, making the space full of strong cultural atmosphere and personalized artistic atmosphere. In the embellishment application, in order to make the lacquer painting technique more in line with modern aesthetics, it is necessary to adopt the design method of integrating tradition and modernity. This includes innovative simplification of traditional lacquer patterns, structural reorganization and other treatments to meet the needs of modern interior space decoration. Simultaneously, by harmoniously integrating modern design concepts with advanced material technology, we endeavor to craft lacquer decorations that not only embody the rich traditional flavor but also exude a contemporary sensibility. This fusion ensures that each piece not only preserves the timeless elegance and craftsmanship of the past but also showcases a fresh, innovative perspective, appealing to a wide range of tastes and aesthetics in the present day. The result is a unique blend that celebrates both heritage and progress, offering a visually stunning and culturally significant addition to any setting. Since ancient times, people have been pursuing auspicious and beautiful symbols. In lacquer painting techniques, the use of auspicious imagery is particularly rich. The application of lacquer patterns with auspicious symbols in the form of embellishment in interior space decoration not only creates a warm and harmonious spatial atmosphere, but also conveys people's desire and pursuit of a better life.

### 4.3 Symbolic forms of application

The application of design symbols in interior decoration is relatively wide, which carries rich and diverse traditional culture and is the carrier of spatial culture. The basic technique of symbol expression is the repetition of the parent theme, and the repetition of the parent is a design technique with a long history, which is favored by many designers. When incorporating lacquer elements into a space, one can draw inspiration from the rich tapestry of traditional Chinese patterns and decorations. These include exquisite lacquer trousseaus, intricately carved lacquer plates, the timeless motifs found in portrait stones, and the vivid hues and intricate narratives of Dunhuang murals. By incorporating such cultural treasures, the space is imbued with a sense of history, elegance, and deep cultural significance. By tapping the resources from traditional arts and inheriting the cultural lineage, we discover and recreate the symbols and elements that inherit the traditional Chinese culture. Using this technique, these symbols and elements are integrated and repeated in the interior space to emphasize the cultural theme atmosphere of lacquer in the space. There is also the application of formal symbols, formal symbols are generally divided into direct and indirect application, for some symbols with significant lacquer cultural characteristics can be directly applied in the space, while the indirect application needs to be combined with modern aesthetics to innovate, presenting the lacquer culture in the space in a metaphorical form, to meet the indoor space decoration and inheritance of lacquer culture at the same time.

## 5. Conclusion

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it promotes the integration of traditional lacquer painting techniques with modern crafts design and injects new vitality into the modern crafts market. At the same time, it also provides a new path for the inheritance and innovation of traditional crafts, enabling this ancient and precious art form to take on a new life in modern society.

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