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Generations of Professional Excellence

**Unleashing Potentials
Shaping the Future**

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INTRODUCTION

Globalization has inevitably disrupted the sanctity of the local culture of countries in the world under the impact of dominant foreign culture. Ignoring the preservation of domestic culture will lead to cultural homogenization and loss of identity. Conservation of local culture has become one of the most crucial agendas in many countries' cultural development planning, including China. The emergence of Neo-Chinese interior design in China has created a window to forward new interpretations and meanings while preserving traditional Chinese culture through contemporary interior design. This research attempts to formulate a new design model for meaning interpretation and conveying of traditional Chinese culture in Neo-Chinese interior spaces by using semiotics. The meanings and semiotic structures of Chinese traditional paintings will be decoded to help formulate the new proposed model of the Neo-Chinese interior design. The outcome of this research can be helpful to Chinese interior designers while also acting as a reference for other countries.

ISSUES/ PROBLEM STATEMENT

Chinese interior designers often label designs containing forms and elements of traditional Chinese cultural symbols and characteristics as Neo-Chinese. Many Chinese designers choose the most superficial ways to frame the decorative elements, focusing only direct and superficial adaptations of traditional symbols and elements. The actual values and meanings of traditional Chinese culture are not accurately translated in them, and the designs produced are rigid, artificial, lacking innovations and unharmonious with the essence of traditional culture within modern forms.



Night view of urban buildings in Beijing (photo from the internet)

Neo-Chinese interior designs in which the traditional Chinese elements are used very superficially

OBJECTIVES

To analyze the relationship between spatial design and cultural connotations in Neo-Chinese interior design.

To study the semiotic relationship between the interior design representation and artistic conception from traditional Chinese culture, such as Chinese architecture, painting and poetry.

To formulate a methodological model to help Chinese interior designers interpret and reproduce traditional Chinese culture in their designs.

METHODOLOGY

Firstly, this research engages fundamental semiotic theories to analyze the ideographic process of Neo-Chinese interior design and make a comparison analysis with Chinese traditional painting.

Secondly, to formulate a methodological model for Neo-Chinese interior design under the frame of semiotic theories.

Thirdly, data will be collected and evaluated through the analysis of design cases expert interviews and questionnaire surveys, and the assessments of the methodological model will take place.

NOVELTY

Based on semiotic theories, this research explores how to interpret traditional Chinese culture in contemporary Chinese interior design by analyzing the ideographic process of Neo-Chinese interior design.

Chinese traditional painting is chosen and decoded to help formulate the methodological model for Neo-Chinese interior design under the frame of semiotic theories.

COMMERCIALIZATION

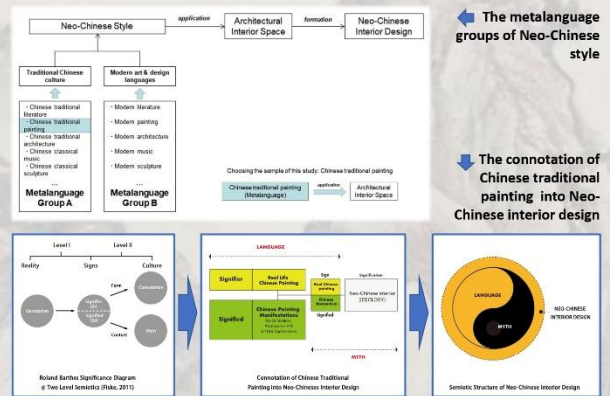
The outcome of this research will be put into commercial application in following three ways.

- To compile a guideline of Neo-Chinese interior design for Chinese interior designers, companies and self learners etc.
- To write a textbook for professional education at school or online.
- To set up an app which can supply online guidance or consultations to the folks.

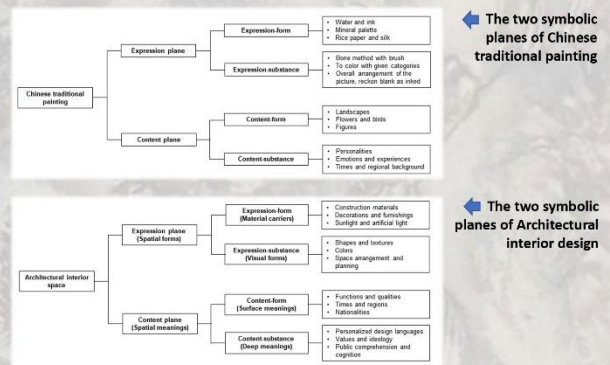
FINDINGS

This study regards "Neo-Chinese interior design" as a representative symbol containing multiple and complex meanings. Roland Barthes' theory of "connotation and metalanguage" has revealed the multiple and complex code structures hidden under the symbol's surface structure level. They will be analyzed to help decode the representation of Neo-Chinese interior design. Louis Hjelmslev's theory of "expression plane" and "content plane" and Umberto Eco's theory of codes have revealed and broadened the innovative ideas that could lead to the formation of Neo-Chinese interior design language.

Adaptation of Roland Barthes' Semiotic Theory



Adaptation of Louis Hjelmslev's Semiotic Theory



CONCLUSION

Semiotics is a capable theoretical instrument that would be applied to aid the process of interpreting traditional Chinese culture in contemporary Chinese interior design. The approach in constructing a methodological model for Neo-Chinese interior design does not intend to make it stylized and dogmatic. Instead, it will make the Neo-Chinese interior designs act as a symbolic system and a narrative text that help to symbolize and sustain traditional Chinese culture into the future.

