
图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

永恒的明式家具/侣明室收藏-北京:紫禁城出版社, 2006.11

ISBN 7-80047-596-4

I.永... II.侣... III.家具-中国-明代-图集
IV.TS666.204.8-64

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字 (2006) 第102543号

永恒的明式家具

紫禁城出版社出版发行

(北京景山前街4号故宫博物院院内)

北京雅昌彩色印刷有限公司印制

开本: 特 1/16 字数: 115 千 图数: 113 印张: 14.5

2006年11月第一版第一次印刷 印数: 1-2000册

ISBN 7-80047-596-4/J · 276

定价: 200.00元

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9 787800 475962 >

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定价: 200.00 元

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侶明室家具圖集

王世襄題



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前言

比利时王国 洛朗王子

秉承丰盛发达的优秀文明，明初的帝王勇于开创，既稳固国基，亦民阜物盛。

具有创意的工匠，尤以家具匠为然，彼等致力参与，使开创有成，功不可没。

家具匠采用黄花梨、杉木、梨木、黄檀木等至为珍贵的木材，这些木材质地坚硬结实，无惧岁月无情，亦无患顺时逆境。明代帝王因而声名益彰，而明代家具匠亦备受尊崇。

斯风依然。感谢热心收藏家的品味，让这些艺术珍宝、巧夺天工的精品，在今天重遇知音。

收藏家以卓越的识见去演绎他们对明代家具的尊重和认识，而明代家具则与他们建构和持续丰盛的对话。

Foreword

Kingdom of Belgium Prince Laurent

To have so enriched and advanced an extraordinary civilization, the early Ming emperors must have been endowed with an exceptional feeling for creativity. It encompassed not only the moulding of their immediate environment, but also the harmonious evolution of their subjects.

And yet, for that creativity to be put into practice, the intervention of inventive artisans, especially furniture craftsmen, was vital.

The latter, both to honour and dignify their sovereigns as well as out of their own sense of self esteem employed the noblest woods such as *huanghuali*, yew, pear, rosewood, all of which are very hard and extremely resistant, outlasting the passage of time, the vagaries of fortune and neglect.

So it is that still today, thanks to the interest of some passionate collectors, these artistic treasures, the products of nature and man's genius, find once again the public they justly deserve and which they have never known.

Their approach translates both the respect as well as the recognition engendered by a transcendent vision. Likewise it evokes the construction and evolution of a fertile dialogue.

具有深刻 文化内涵的 明清家具



中华人民共和国文化部副部长
故宫博物院院长 郑欣森

中国古代家具历史相当悠久，早在3000多年前的商代就已经出现了非常精美的青铜和石质家具。随着人们起居方式的变化，家具也经历了由低向高的发展，特别到了宋代，家具品种和形式已经相当完备，工艺也日益精湛，结构的科学性和装饰上的多样化，都为明清家具艺术高峰的到来积累了经验。它从一个侧面体现了当时的生产发展，生活习俗，思想感情以及审美情趣，在一定程度上反映了一个国家和民族的历史特点和文化传统。中国的家具艺术不但被国人所珍视，在世界家具史上也享有极高的声誉。

中国古代家具，尤其是明清以来的家具，以其精湛的工艺价值，极高的欣赏价值和深远的历史价值对东西方许多国家产生过深远的影响。

明代家具可以说是中国家具史上最辉煌的一页，明代后期，除漆木家具普遍使用外，社会上开始崇尚硬木家具，人们开始追寻古朴之风。明人范濂在《云间据目抄》中记载：“隆万（隆庆—万历，明穆宗、神宗年号，1567—1620年间）以来，虽奴隶使用之家皆用细器。”从这条史料可知，使用硬木家具之风蔚然兴起，争购细木家具已成为当时的时尚。在明代有大量文人热衷于家具的设计和制作，给明式家具平添了更多的文人审美情趣。他们把中国传统家具历史和艺术融会贯通，并把美学、力学、哲学、人体工程学以及礼教等文化融入到家具体制中，赋予了家具更深、更大、更美的文化内涵，使家具更富有文化气息。明式家具的简约、古雅、空灵、柔婉而不失厚重，以及方正的造型、匀称的比例，被后世研究学者誉为“实用的美学理念”。在装饰方面，明式家具一般都比较简约，或干脆不加装饰，或者是多取材于自然界的植物、动物，风景题材和带有吉祥寓意的图案，总体上给人以简洁明快、素雅大方之感。

清代家具则是继承了明代家具的风格特点，又向前发展了一步；它讲究华丽繁缛的装饰，多种工艺结合运用，有复杂的雕饰和镶嵌，做工细腻，整体家具粗大、厚重，到乾隆时期达到顶峰。乾隆时期的家具，尤其是宫廷家具，材质优良，是清代家具的典型代表。清代家具在装饰方面大多取材于富有吉祥意义的图案，如龙、凤、蝙蝠等，华丽富贵，还有的是利用物象谐音企盼平安幸福。清代家具制作，皇帝竟要亲自过问，反映了当朝的重视，明清家具具有如此的成就，除了社会经济的稳步发展，其主要原因还是明清宫廷的重视。

明清家具具有极高的美学价值。王世襄先生曾说过：“明及清初期的家具陈置在我国传统的建筑中最为适

宜，自不待言，不过出乎意料的是见到几处非常现代化的欧美住宅，陈设着明代家具，竟也十分协调。为什么明式家具和现代生活这样合拍呢？不难设想，正是由于西方现代生活所追求的简洁明快的格调在本质上和明式家具具有相同之处的缘故，事实证明，明及清前期的家具造型艺术已经成为世界人民共同财富。”

15世纪，中国家具开始进入西方。初期只流入到欧洲各国，18世纪以后大量涌入美国，虽只限于漆家具和竹藤家具，但对西方家具的发展产生了相当程度的作用。上个世纪30年代，德国人艾克（G.Ecke）出版了第一部介绍中国古典家具的著作《中国花梨家具图考》，让世界认识了中国古典家具之美。

比利时菲力浦·德·巴盖先生长期以来致力于中国家具的收藏，其收藏的大量精美的中国硬木家具更是独具特色。其中，明代家具是其收藏品中最为重要的一部分，还有一部分是清代早期的作品，这些作品延续了明代家具的风格特征，从某种意义上讲仍然属于明代家具的范畴。德·巴盖先生的藏品不仅数量丰富，而且做工精细，材质精良，大部分都是用黄花梨木制作而成的。它们的结构相当合理，加上做工精良，历经百年时间，至今仍然严丝合缝，十分坚固。菲力浦先生的藏品种类也相当丰富，箱柜、床榻、椅凳、桌案以及小件的文房用具等，几乎涵盖了中国古代家具的所有种类。

2003年10月15日，比利时王子到故宫参观，他的随行人员之一就是德·巴盖先生。王子在与我会谈时，介绍了德·巴盖先生热爱中国文化并收藏有140余件中国明清家具的情况，推荐在北京故宫办个展览，以了却德·巴盖先生的心愿。尔后，在经过与故宫博物院一起长时间的精心筹备和挑选之后，德·巴盖先生确定了79件（套）精品家具，构成一个明式家具精品展，并于2006年4月在故宫博物院永寿宫展出。故宫是明清两代的皇宫，更是明清硬木家具的重要源头。这些明清时期的古典家具在故宫展出，也正是其原位性回归的很好表现，可以更好地展示、发掘出中国古代家具所具有的深刻文化内涵。而今年又是中国与比利时建交35周年，德·巴盖先生的家具展，则成为中国与比文化交流的一项重要活动。

为配合此次展览，德·巴盖先生特将藏品结果出版，以便有更多的受众了解其收藏，同时对古代家具研究者也提供了一份非常重要的参考资料。在此，我谨代表故宫博物院并以我个人的名义对本书的出版表示由衷的祝贺。并借此机会，预祝本次展览取得圆满成功！

Ming and Qing Furniture: the Epitome of Chinese Culture

Vice Minister of Culture, the People's Republic of China
Director of the Palace Museum Zheng Xinmiao

The development of Chinese furniture has a long history dating back to the Shang dynasty over 3,000 years ago, when bronze and stone furniture of intricate designs was already made. With the changing lifestyles over the centuries, furniture developed from the mat level to become taller in height. By the Song dynasty, not only was there a wide range of furniture of all types and in various designs, the craftsmanship was increasingly exquisite, the structure was scientifically sound and the decorations were diversified. This paved the way for the acme of artistic perfection of the Ming and Qing furniture. Through the furniture we are also offered a glimpse into not only the state of the manufacturing industry, the lifestyle and customs of the populace, the thoughts, feelings and aesthetics in China at the time, but also the historical characteristics and cultural tradition of China and its people. Chinese furniture is not only cherished by Chinese people at home, it also enjoys high esteem in the furniture history worldwide.

Due to its exquisite craftsmanship, high aesthetic and important historical value, Chinese furniture especially that from the Ming and Qing periods, has exerted a lasting effect on many countries in the East and the West.

The development of Chinese furniture peaked during the Ming dynasty. In late Ming, while lacquer furniture was in common use, hardwood furniture became much sought-after as the nation craved antique design in their furniture. As mentioned in *Yunjian jumu chao* by Fan Lian of the Ming, 'Since the Longqing and Wanli periods (respectively of Ming Emperors Muzong and Shenzong [1567–1620]), even minor officials cannot do without furniture made of fine woods at home.' This provides a documentary proof of the popularity of hardwood furniture during the late Ming dynasty, when no one wanted to be left out in the race to own hardwood furniture. Also, the design and making of furniture became a common passion of men of letters of the time, and Ming furniture took on a literary aesthetic dimension. Knowledgeable

about the history and art of traditional Chinese furniture, these men of letters instilled into furniture making of the time such cultural elements as aesthetics, mechanics, philosophy, ergonomics and ethics. This gave Ming furniture a richer sense of culture, encompassing deeper, greater and aesthetically more pleasing cultural contents. Its simplicity, archaic elegance and spirituality; its soft and warm touch without losing a sense of solemnness and presence; its upright and dignified design and its well-balanced proportions — have become through the ages what scholars and researchers of later generations hail as the epitome of ‘practical aesthetics’. As for decoration, Ming furniture tended to be minimalist in design, sometimes to the point of no decoration at all. At times drawing from plants, animals, natural scenery, or auspicious patterns as its motif, Ming furniture always gives the beholder a sense of simplicity and elegance.

Inheriting some of the style elements of Ming furniture, Qing furniture took it a step further and tended toward more splendid and elaborate decorations, incorporating various arts and crafts and including intricately carved decorations and inlaid work. Whereas the form of the furniture was bulky with a sense of heaviness, the craftsmanship was refined and delicate. The development of Qing furniture culminated in the reign of Emperor Qianlong. Furniture of the time, particularly that for use in the imperial palace, was made of the finest material, representing the very best of Qing furniture. Auspicious motifs such as the dragon, the phoenix and bats were employed abundantly not only as a show of wealth and splendour, but also with wishes for peace and good fortune. Furniture making was taken so seriously during the Qing that Emperor Qianlong was known to personally oversee its process at times. Thus the Ming and Qing furniture witnesses not only the social and economic progress of the two dynasties, but also the importance attached to furniture by the imperial courts.

Furniture of the Ming and the Qing was cherished for its high aesthetic value. Mr Wang Shixiang said, 'It goes without saying that furniture of the Ming and the early Qing goes very well with traditional Chinese architecture. What is surprising is when you see Ming furniture looking so becoming in some modern households in Europe and the US. Why would Ming furniture go so well with contemporary lifestyle? Well, the answer is obvious: the simplicity that has become the order of the day in modern times echoes that of the Ming dynasty. This is certainly proof that the art of furniture of the Ming and the early Qing has become the common wealth shared by people from all over the world.

When Chinese furniture was introduced to the West in the 15th century, it first found its way into Europe. From the 18th century onwards Chinese furniture entered the US on a massive scale. Although limited at first to items made of lacquer, bamboo and rattan, the import of Chinese furniture contributed significantly towards the development of furniture industry in the West. Through the publication of *Chinese Domestic Furniture* by the German scholar Gustav Ecke during the 30's in the last century, the first work on classical Chinese furniture, readers were given the chance to appreciate the beauty of classical Chinese furniture.

Mr Philippe De Backer is a Belgian veteran collector of Chinese furniture. Of particular interest in his prestigious collection is a vast number of hardwood furniture. Ming furniture figures most prominently in his collection, with some early Qing examples, which, inheriting the Ming legacy, can be categorized as Ming furniture as well. The furniture items in Mr De Backer's collection, which are mostly made of *huanghuali*, are characterized by their exquisite craftsmanship and quality material. Thanks to their rational structure and distinctive craftsmanship, these furniture items have lasted through the centuries with their joints still intact and their structure firm. Rich in variety, Mr De Backer's collec-

tion covers virtually the full range of classical Chinese furniture, including chests, cabinets, beds, chairs, stools, tables and scholar's items.

Mr De Backer was among the retinue of the Prince of Belgium on his visit to the Palace Museum in Beijing on 15 October 2003. During our conversation, the Prince introduced me to Mr De Backer's passion for Chinese culture and his collection of over 140 items of Ming and Qing furniture. The Prince suggested an exhibition of Mr De Backer's collection at the Palace Museum. Following careful planning and selection working with the Palace Museum, Mr. De Backer confirmed 79 items of fine examples for an exhibition of Ming furniture, scheduled to be open at the Yongshou Palace of the Palace Museum in April 2006. The imperial palace was not only the seat of the empire during the Ming and Qing dynasties; it was also an important source of Ming and Qing hardwood furniture. Hence the exhibition at the venue of the Palace Museum can be regarded as a sort of journey back home, giving us a chance to better understand and explore the rich cultural contents of classical Chinese furniture. As this year marks the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Belgium, the exhibition of Mr De Backer's furniture collection represents an important cultural exchange event between the two countries.

To accompany the exhibition, a book on Mr De Backer's collection will be published as both an introduction to his furniture collection for the public and an important reference source for classical Chinese furniture researchers. On behalf of the Palace Museum and on a personal level, here I would like to offer my heartfelt congratulations to Mr De Backer on the publication of the book. Let me also take this opportunity to wish the exhibition every success!

