

# Research on the Application of Traditional Elements of Mongolian Yurt in Themed Catering Space

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## Abstract:

This paper aims to understand the application of traditional elements of Mongolian yurts in the theme catering space, which is introduced from three aspects: the shape of the yurt, the structure of the yurt and the interior decoration of the yurt. It's understood that the elements of yurt in the theme catering space of yurt can be expressed in three aspects: the combination of practicality and culture, the combination of tradition and modernity, also paying attention to green design. It's concluded that the traditional elements should be refined and processed, and the traditional elements of yurt should be better integrated into the current theme catering space design on the basis of simple deformation and color neutralization.

## Keywords:

Mongolian Yurt, Themed Catering Space design, Interior design

## 1. Introduction

Mongolian is a grassland nomadic nationality with a long history and a variety of traditional cultures, and has created its unique national culture in the long years. The yurt is also one of its important traditional cultures, which can be said that Mongolian culture is concentrated in the yurt. With the advantages of simplicity, easy disassembly and installation, yurt has continued to this day. It is the traditional residence of the Mongolian people, and its shape, structure and internal decoration are the representatives of Mongolian traditional elements and reflected in all aspects of interior design. The application of the traditional elements of yurts in the design of theme catering space is also the development and inheritance of Mongolian traditional elements.

## 2. The Shape of Mongolian Yurt

Mongolian yurt is the housing name of Mongolian herdsmen. It is the most suitable form of residence for nomads, but also a typical architectural form of grassland nomadic culture. Its unique style fully reflects the aesthetics of the Mongolian people and is the crystallization of nomadic wisdom [4]. The combination of architectural

structure and natural materials is completely suitable for the Mongolian people's way of life, and reflects the Mongolian's ideology of integrating with nature [4]. Its formation and development are inseparable from the geographical climate environment and living customs.

The shape of Mongolian yurt is round, and round dwellings are common in early human habitation. From the appearance, it's conical at the top and cylindrical at the bottom. This shape design is the result of the Mongolian people's continuous exploration and practice in order to adapt to the natural geographical environment of the northern grasslands, and finally chose this "circle"-based architectural form. From a practical point of view, this circular building form can also effectively resist the wind and snow in winter and the rain in summer. Not only that, the shape of the yurt is round because of the traditional "cosmology" of the Mongolian people. Standing on the endless grassland and looking around, the whole world is round. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west, which is not only the Mongolian intuitive understanding of the world [9], but also the "round heaven and round earth" cosmology formed by the Mongolian worship of nature.

When the shape of the yurt is applied to the modern theme catering space, most of which are expressed from the shape, some catering spaces directly apply the round shape of the yurt. For example, the architectural appearance of Figure 1 is the round shape of the yurt. Some architectural appearances will deform the traditional shape of the yurt and design it into a modern shape. For example, in Figure 2, the shape design of a catering space adopts a series of the same floor-to-ceiling windows in the peripheral design, so that the whole internal space is very bright. The shape of the yurt can also be reduced to the interior, designed into a lobby elegant room, which echoes very much with the overall atmosphere.



*Figure 1. Mongolia Camp Hotel.*



*Figure 2. Exterior view of Bayin Hauriwa's yurt.*



*Figure 3. The Second floor of Mongolia Camp Hotel.*

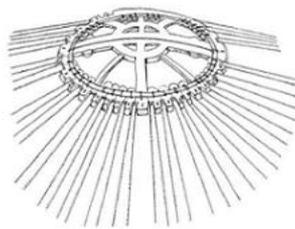
### 3. The Structure of Mongolian Yurt

The structure of the Mongolian yurt is fixed by the main components such as the skylight, ejector rob, enclosure bulkhead, door, etc., and the outside is covered with wool felt, wool rope and other secondary decorative structures. The yurt has a round spire, composed of a round wall and an umbrella-shaped roof frame. The wall and umbrella stand are nailed with wooden poles. There are skylights [4] on the top of the package, which is ventilated and transparent. The architectural structure can not only resist wind and cold, easy to disassemble and assemble, but also meet the habit of Mongolian people who constantly migrate at any time with the change of season, which is very suitable for the living needs of nomadic people.

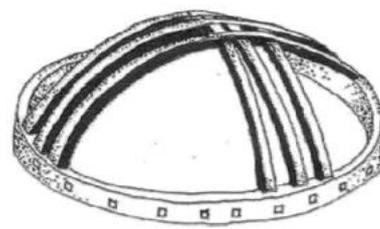
### 3.1. The Main Frame Wood Structure

#### 3.1.1. Skylight

Skylights, called “Tao Nao” in Mongolian, is located in the center above the interior of the yurt. It’s not only the key of the yurt, but also the highest point of the yurt. Its shape is round, which can meet the needs of daylighting and ventilation. Some Mongolian people will calculate the time and season by the light position in the yurt through the penetrated sunlight. The timing is quite accurate, which is due to the round structure and characteristics of the yurt. Its size is determined according to the size of the yurt. There are buckle rope around the felt roof of the skylight, which can be adjusted according to the situation. It can be opened according to the hot and cold during the day, and capped at night. The structure of the skylight is divided into two types, the connective skylight (Figure 4) and the tenon skylight (Figure 5). The connective skylight means that the outer ring has a small wooden structure clamping the top rod and connecting the fixed skylight with a thin leather rope [8], but it takes a lot of manpower to build, so tenon skylight is generally used now, the tenon skylight does not need to be fixed with a rubber band, it is convenient to disassemble and consign at any time.



**Figure 4.** *Connective Skylight.*



**Figure 5.** *Tenon Skylight.*

In the themed catering space of Mongolian yurt, the shape of the skylight is mainly used to the ceiling design of the lobby or the private room, and the skylight is made of natural wood or composite wood. For example, the ceiling design of the following two catering space.



**Figure 6.** *Ceiling design of exhibition area.*



**Figure 7.** *Ceiling design of Lobby aisle.*

#### 3.1.2. Ejector Rob

The ejector rob (Figure 8) is an integral part of the top of the yurt, which is a slender round stick that connects the skylight to the enclosure bulkhead. The upper end is inserted or connected to the skylight, and the lower end is connected to Hana (Figure 9), which is arranged radially, implying that the sun’s rays shine down and can bring warmth. The material is made of natural wooden, the length should be the same, and its quantity and length vary with the size of the “Tao Nao”, so as to unify the shape and structure of the yurt.



**Figure 8.** Ejector rob. **Figure 9.** The connection between ejector rod and enclosure bulkhead.

The Ejector rob is also used in the current yurt catering space, but it is not limited to the round surrounding type of the yurt, and can also be made into various shapes according to the needs of the space, as shown in Figure 10, the material is natural wood, which is not only environmentally friendly but also highlights the characteristics of nomads' love for nature.



**Figure 10.** The ceiling design of Mongolian dining room.

### 3.1.3. Enclosure Bulkhead

The enclosure bulkhead, also known as “Hana” in Mongolian, is the periphery of a net structure composed of wickers of different lengths and uniform thickness. The intersection is connected by nails with raw cow leather or camel leather. Using the geometric principle of diamond, it can be retractile, large or small, and is very convenient for disassembly and installation. It is surrounded by wool felt outside, which is very suitable for nomads such as Mongolians.



**Figure 11.** Mongolian dining room.

### 3.1.4. Door

The doors of the early yurts were mostly felt doors, but now felt doors and wooden doors are in use. The width of the door is approximately equal to the diameter of the skylight. It is connected with the ejector rob, and the left and right are connected with the enclosure bulkhead, the height is equal to the height of the enclosure bulkhead. The wooden door of the yurt is both single-open and double-open, the single-open

door only opens to the outdoors, and the double-open door is both the inside and the outside.

### 3.2. Secondary Decorative Structures

#### 3.2. Felt Structure

After the main building structure of the yurt is built, a layer of wool felt is covered on the periphery, which has the advantages of cold resistance, frost resistance, firmness and stability. Wool felt is a common building material and decorative material on the grassland, and its manufacturing method is also an important part of nomadic life. The overlying wool felt is divided into cover felt, top felt, encircling felt and felt door.

The cover felt is a square felt covering the skylight, with four corners decorated with tapes, and when covered, its center coincides with the center of the skylight (Figure 12). The cover felt can regulate the lighting, ventilation and temperature inside the yurt. The cover felt is regarded as the hat of the yurt, outsiders can not touch it at will, and when building the felt on the periphery of the yurt is also the first to start with the cover felt.

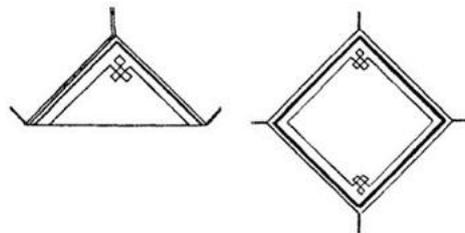


Figure 12. Cover felt.

The top felt (Figure 13) is a felt covering the Ejector rob of a yurt, made up of three or four layers of fan-shaped felt superimposed, which should be staggered from each other when covering to prevent wind, sand and rain from entering.



Figure 13. Top felt.

The encircling felt is a large rectangular felt wrapped around the enclosure bulkhead of yurt. Its size and number of pieces are determined according to the size of the yurt. The ordinary yurt is generally four pieces [10].

Felt door is made by stacking three or four layers of felt. The size of the felt door depends on the size of the door hole or door frame. The color is mostly white, and the four sides are embroidered with blue or red edges.

#### 3.2.2. Rope Art Structure

After fixing the felt on the periphery of the yurt, it is fixed with the traditional yurt rope (Figure 14), and various structural components are connected to maintain the shape of the yurt to prevent the enclosure bulkhead from exploding or the top felt from slipping.

Yurt rope art is divided into braided rope and knotted rope, braided rope is the woven

rope; knot is the part that needs to be knotted after being fixed. The material is made of wool and horse bristles.

The knotted rope of yurt is divided into encircling rope, pressing rope, binding rope and falling rope. The encircling is a rope tied around the enclosure bulkhead, which is made of ponytail. It is tied at the upper, middle and lower positions of the outer enclosure bulkhead can prevent the felt from slipping off; the pressure rope is pressed on the skylight to prevent the skylight from sinking or upturning; the binding rope is the joint connecting two adjacent enclosure bulkhead to make it a whole; the falling rope is a pull rope tied to the center of the skylight and used to fix the yurt.

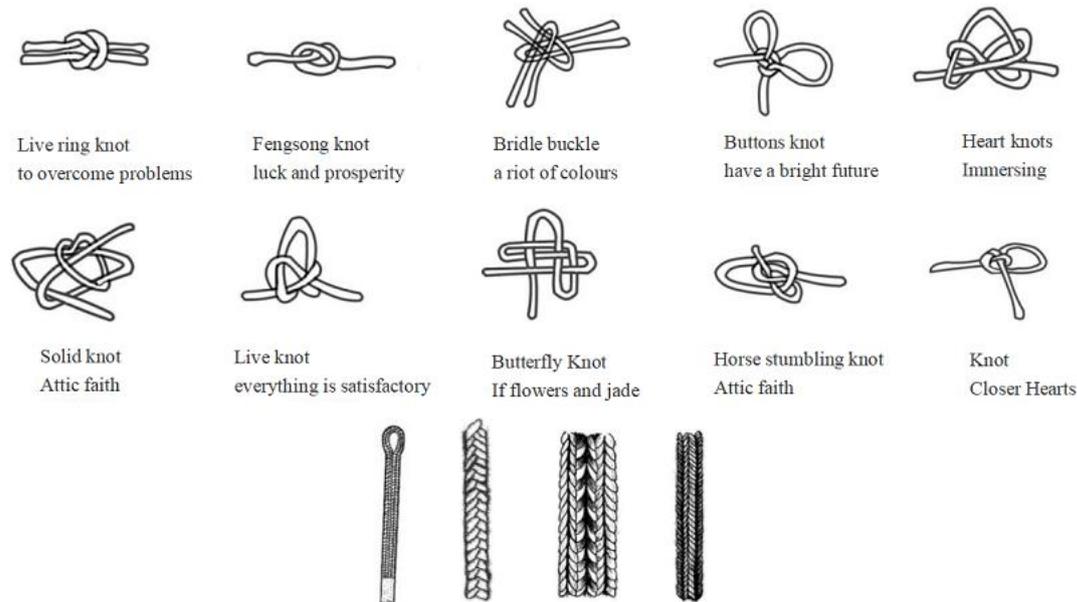


Figure 14. Knotted rope.

## 4. The Interior Decoration of the Mongolian Yurt

The interior decoration of the traditional yurt covers many aspects, from the decoration of the skylight enclosure bulkhead to the decoration of carpets, furniture and carpet felt. Based on this, the paper will briefly describe the interior decoration of the yurt mainly from the aspects of color decoration and traditional pattern decoration inside the yurt.

### 4.1. The Color Decoration of the Mongolian Yurt

The color decoration inside the yurt has its own unique characteristics, and different colors have different meanings. Mongolian people have the custom of advocating white, believing that white represents purity, peace and auspiciousness. For example, hada presented to guests is white, and gray white felt carpet will be laid on the ground, while the yurt is also white, and the main color of a large area is white.

The secondary color inside the yurt is red. The Mongolian people like red first because the Mongolian people worship fire, which is the symbol of the sun. They believe that fire can bring warmth and happiness, but also because the Mongolian people have a enthusiastic and cheerful national character, and red can best reflect this character, so red will be used to decorate internal components and furniture. For example, skylights, ejector rob and columns are often use red as the background color

for large-area laying, and then use yellow or blue on the top to depict the pattern in order to set off the atmosphere and spread the color culture.

Blue represents the color of the sky. In the eyes of the Mongolian people, blue symbolizes courage and loyalty. Blue is often used in the top felt outside the yurt and the drawing of some patterns inside the yurt; Inside the yurt, there are also some felt embroidery pendants as furnishings placed in the yurt, usually in yellow. Most yurts are decorated with large areas of white as the earth color and red, blue and yellow as the decorative color (Figure 15).



*Figure 15. Distribution of traditional colors in the Mongolian yurt.*

#### **4.2. The Traditional Pattern Decoration of the Mongolian Yurt**

The Mongolian people are a nomadic people living on the grasslands. Most of the content and forms of their folk traditional decorative patterns are also from the patterns of animals and plants in nature [1]. The most common natural patterns are mountains, water, fire, and clouds patterns (Figure 9), etc., such patterns can be seen everywhere inside the yurt, the top decoration of the ejector rob, the pattern drawing of furniture, etc.; the patterns of horses, cattle, sheep and deer on the grassland can be used for the border decoration of Mongolian furniture; There are also auspicious patterns with Mongolian characteristics such as the swastika grain, the pan intestine pattern, the horn pattern and the swastika pattern. These type of patterns are usually used in the corners and middles of laid on the interior of the Mongolian Ministry, generally expressed by traditional Mongolian embroidery, and some are expressed in relief or painting on sitting and sleeping furniture. Auspicious patterns are also carved or depicted on the pillars, skylights and doors of the yurt, with a strong sense of decoration [2].

The following Figure 16 is the design of a Mongolian restaurant. The traditional pattern of yurt is drawn on the ceiling wall, the corridor column of the background wall and the indoor Mongolian traditional furniture in the way of hollow carving.



*Figure 16. The design of a Mongolian restaurant.*

### **5. Current Situation**

The performance of Mongolian yurts elements in the current Mongolian yurts theme catering space can be summarized from the following three aspects:

Firstly, the combination of practicality and culture. In the design of the Mongolian theme catering space, when paying attention to the transmission of cultural connotations, we must also pay attention to the use needs of dining customers [3]. For example, the design of a yurt catering space in Figure 17 not only meets the basic dining environment, but also applies a lot of Mongolian traditional elements. In decoration, many traditional Mongolian patterns are drawn on the partition porch and the floating surface of handrails. In the application of traditional color, red is applied to elegant corridor columns and curtains, and gold is used in pattern carving, elegant curtains and seats [9], and a small Mongolian characteristic layout is set up next to the private room, so that people can appreciate the cultural characteristics while eating.



**Figure 17.** The design of the Mongolian theme catering space.



**Figure 18.** A hall of the Inner Mongolia Hotel.

Secondly, the combination of tradition and modernity. The traditional decorative elements of the yurt are combined with modern material methods, and the illumination of lights is added to convey a thematic mood.

Figure 18 is the design of a hall in the Inner Mongolia Hotel [5]. From the perspective of modeling structure, the dome structure of the yurt is applied to the design of the suspended ceiling of the hall, and the complex dome structure is designed into a simple and theme-based design with modern methods. The ceiling, combined with modern materials, lighting, and the choice of dining tables and chairs is also biased towards modern simplicity, but on the whole, the whole space does not lose the national flavor, creating a special atmosphere.

Finally, focusing on green design. The advantages of yurt space design are that they can be disassembled at any time, less consumables, natural materials with no pollution and resource saving. At present, green environmental protection design is also advocated. When designing the catering space with yurt theme elements, all elements should not be stacked in the space, which will not only make people feel disorderly, but also cause waste of materials and environmental protection, this is also the current catering space design should pay attention to.

The current application of the Mongolian yurts in the theme catering space is mainly to create a space atmosphere from the modeling, color matching, and furnishings and decoration. In terms of color matching, many catering spaces no longer use high-brightness solid colors. On the contrary, designers began to choose traditional colors to match the space theme; the shape is not limited to traditional round buildings, but it has also begun to incorporate the styling features of yurts in the interior. In terms of furnishings and decoration, the traditional elements of yurts are integrated into the space from various aspects, whether it is furniture, accessories, soft clothes, etc., showing the traditional characteristics of yurts.

## 6. Conclusions

At present, the traditional elements of Mongolian yurts are very suitable for the theme catering space, but much more needs to be improved. In terms of modeling structure, it can be simplified to a suitable structure to design the shape of ceiling; Simplified deformation engraving can also be made on furniture, columns and walls. The color matching highlights the atmosphere on the basis of color neutralization. The traditional elements of the yurt are refined and processed into a unique design language to express the ideas and themes of space [6], so as to make the essence of Mongolian traditional culture more dynamic.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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