

The Comparative Analysis of Two Minshuku Interior Design Styles by the Principles of Formal Beauty

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Abstract: The interior design of Minshuku has its own characteristics and the living room space is the best place to show the design style. This paper mainly analyzed the living room design style of the Minshuku. As many factors can affect the overall interior design style, in this paper, the architectural elements of space were set similar, the effects of colors, materials, lightings and other factors were excluded. Only the effects of the form and layout of furniture and decoration elements on the overall design style were analyzed. Through randomly picking relevant pictures of the living room from the pictures which displayed on the Minshuku reservation website for sketch analysis, this paper explored the rules of furniture and decorations of different styles of Minshuku design, and the rules of formal beauty that were used.

1 Introduction

Minshuku, also known as Homestay or Bed & breakfast (B&B), is a product in the development of tourism market [1]. With characteristic design styles, various cultural backgrounds and folk customs as features, Minshukus are more interesting and attractive than the hotels which are standard designed. In addition to the accommodation function, the interior design of the Minshuku also needs to meet people's aesthetic spiritual and cultural needs. The living room is the best space to show a specific and design style. Photos are often taken from different perspectives to show Minshukus' interior decoration, and then put on booking website (such as Air B&B, Booking.com) for display and promotion. Therefore, breaking down the design elements in Minshukus' photo, might be an approach to interpret design styles. Combined with examples, this paper compared and analyzed Minshukus' interior design styles from Aesthetic Formalism to spirit that are invisible and intangible.

Aesthetic formalism was a way to study art by analyzing and comparing forms and styles in art history [2]. Its discussion included how objects are made and their purely visual or material aspects. It's also considered as an academic methodology to compare an artwork's form and style [3]. Nick Zangwill believed that arrangements of lines, shapes, and colours were taken as formal properties [4]. Aesthetic formalism principles that normally used in architectural design and interior design are symmetry and balance, proportion and scale transition and care, harmony and contrast, diversity and unity, etc. [5]. In this paper, the principle of Contrast and Symmetry were mainly discussed

Contrast is a matching principle formed by different forms or the successful combination of two different visual elements. Although it makes people feel a sharp contrast, it still has a sense of unity. This obvious sense of difference can make the theme more distinct and the visual effect more active. In the environmental design, there are many applications of contrast, and the same in Minshuku design. The shapes of these special furniture, strengthen the visual experience, so that we are in the indoor environment with more changes. However, if contrast is used everywhere in the space, the continuous strong visual conflict will make the interior space disordered.

The so-called Symmetry means that the shape and size of both sides of a point or a line as the center are consistent, and the color, tone and structure of the symmetrical things are all symmetrical, which we call it absolute symmetry. In an interior design, relative symmetry is often used. Pythagoras once said, "The lines of beauty and all other beautiful forms must have symmetrical forms". It's considered that symmetrical things contain the beauty of balance and stability.

In addition to the above laws of formal beauty-Contrast and Symmetry, designers also need to coordinate and integrate the whole space, keep consistent in the changes, tend to unify in the differences, which means making the differences and changes of contrast to achieve the coordination of all the interior elements and making the opposites and subordination between them more orderly.

2 Methodology

A interior design style is usually formed by combination and collocation of interface decoration, furniture

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decoration and furnishing items, etc[6]. To analyze the design elements, models and materials displayed in Minshuku's living room, a number of Minshuku's Photographs were used to compare the formal beauty amount different styles.

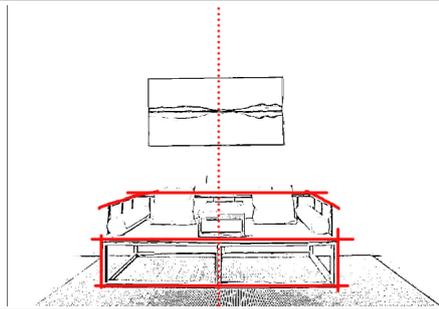
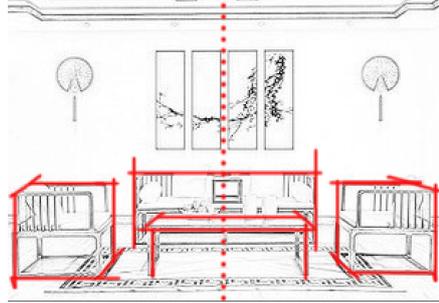
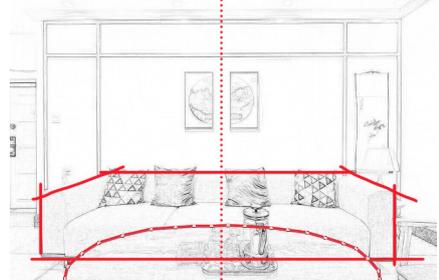
There are several kinds of photography compositions, in which, one point perspective is the simplest composition and practical perspective method [7], which is also the most commonly used photography composition to display the Minshuku space. Focusing on the middle of the front of the space, this perspective performance (photographs) takes an image of the front view. Usually a wall is the far end boundary of the directly visible space. The camera is set at the center of the line of sight, generally at a height of about 160 cm from the ground, and the picture is within 70 degrees of viewing angle. Other scenes and objects take this wall as a reference. This perspective view can make the picture relatively peaceful, give people a sense of intimacy, and have less visual gradients [8]. Therefore, this paper selected the perspective of the center point of the front of the living room pace as samples.

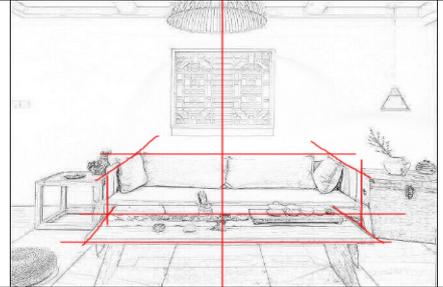
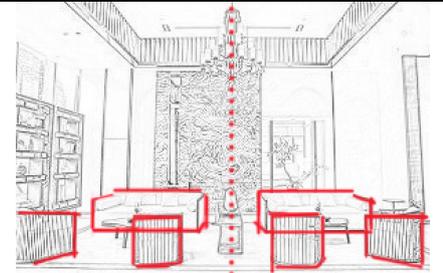
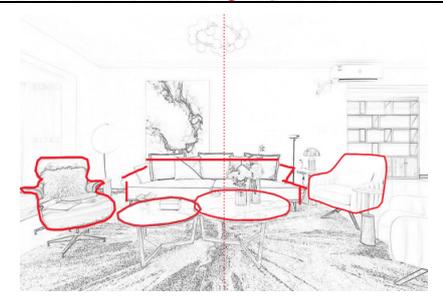
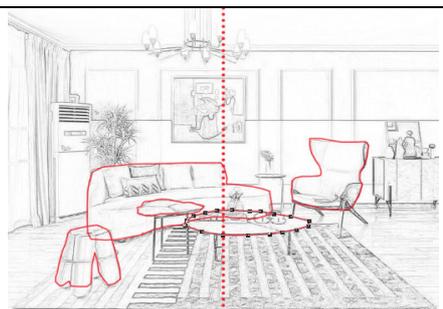
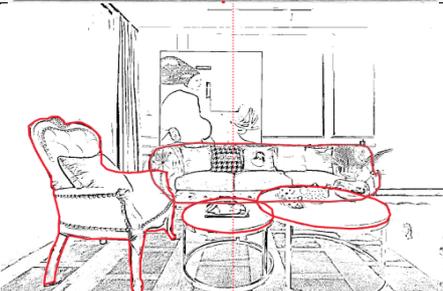
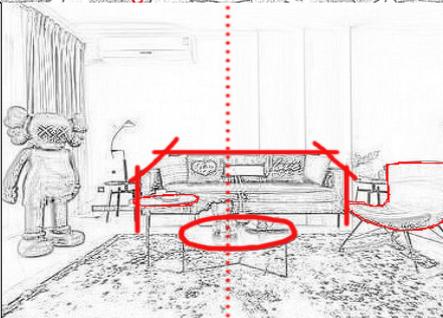
Questionnaires were set for investigators to categorize interior design style. Dozens of photographs were randomly picked from online ordering platform, such as

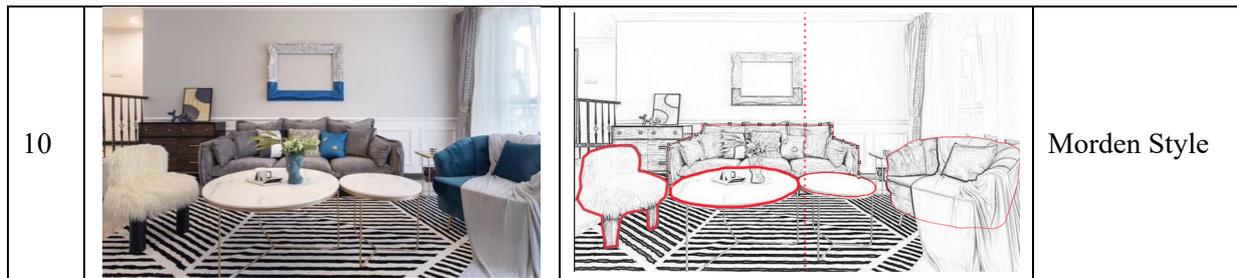
Airbnb, Tujia. Those photographs were all token in perspective view, with sofa background wall as the perspective center. The pictures of Minshuku's living room were then classified to different design styles according to the questionnaire survey. The results turn out to be two categories: Modern style and Chinese style. Then the same amount of pictures were extracted for analysis. First of all, the influence of color on the overall design effect was eliminated through color removal. Through Photoshop software processing, the images were transformed into a line drawing sketches (as showed in Table 1) and finally deduced to perspective sketches. Based on these sketches, the effect of colors, materials, lightings and other factors were excluded, and only the effect of the form and layout of space elements on the overall design style were analyzed.

Through this method, the sketch in the original design schemes were reversely deduced by means of diagrams, and the sketches were analyzed by modularization perspective to find the common expression method in the same design style. Then further analysis were extend to design concept, and the use of geometric and spatial elements for layout processing.

Table 1 Photographs Analyses of Different Minshuku Styles

No.	Photographs	Analyses	Design Styles
1			Chinese Style
2			Chinese Style
3			Chinese Style

4			Chinese Style
5			Chinese Style
6			Morden Style
7			Morden Style
8			Morden Style
9			Morden Style



3 Analyses

3.1 Modern Style

As showed in the perspective analyses of modern style sketches (Photographs No.6-10), most of the layout were asymmetric, and most of the main sofa' center were on its own symmetry axis, which're also staggered with the photos' central axes. The main sofa itself was not necessarily symmetrical. It might be different high on two ends, or there might be a conjoined imperial concubine chair on the other end. In this way, the visual focus was usually on the single chair left or right hand side. Chair and main sofa were not matched in form, nor the same series. The shape or delineation of chair were not cube, most of them combined with S-shaped (serpentine) curved lines, arc or with deformation. The single chair or other furniture can form a contrast, making a certain visual impact to the viewer, and became the visual focus of the whole picture. Instead of stable cube, tea tables' geometric shapes were composited with the arcs and curved geometry models. Tea table groups were usually displayed with a big and small combination, or a high and low dislocation. Interface decorations such as wall hanging paintings, carpets and so on were not necessarily symmetrical. There were hanging pictures of different sizes on the left or right side, or there's a hanging picture in the background wall center. Designers also liked to choose carpets with geometric texture to make a contrast and match the style. Applying the rules of formal beauty – contrast and asymmetric layout, modern design style emphasized that everyone's a unique and free individual. So it's not necessary to be serious and stereotyped, just applying modern techniques to show individual independently.

3.2 Chinese Style

Chinese style living rooms (Photographs No.1-5), furniture and interface decorations were mostly symmetrical perspective distribution. There's no relatively prominent single furniture. The main sofa and single chair were basically the same series, and the number and the shapes of chairs, on the left and right, were exactly the same or similar. The center of the main sofa was usually aligned with the axis of symmetry. There's usually only one coffee table, and the geometric shape was relatively simple, cylinder or cuboid. Interface decorations, such as background wall, carpet decoration were also relatively simple. Some of the background walls were left blank, some were decorated with paintings, and

some were made of Chinese style panes wireframes. The pictures on wall were displayed symmetrically, whether they were a group or only one. If there is a carpe, it's normally plain colors, simple patterns or without patterns, thus no outstanding visual effect. In the decoration, the natural potted model was the main one, which gives people a sense of three-dimensional and hierarchical vision. The unique balance of Chinese style homestay can give people a sense of "quiet" by visually symmetrical furnishings. Following the beauty formal rule – Symmetry, Chinese style reflect the pursuit of balance and stability of space and layout aesthetics behind Chinese traditional culture.

4 Summary and Conclusions

In art history and criticism, formal analysis was a widely used method for analyzing art works, perceiving and understanding the styles [9]. In this paper, two styles of Minshuku interior design were studied using formal beauty analyses.

On the photos of Morden style Minshuku, chairs were mostly formed with S-shaped (serpentine) curved lines rather than straight lines. It's probably the S-shaped (serpentine) curved lines that brought the feeling of liveliness and movement, and drew the attention of the viewer [10]. Designers used a lot of contrast rules of form in modern style Minshuku furnishing, which reflects the modern people's pursuit of individuality, the concept of relaxed free life.

On the photos of Chinese style Minshuku, in most cases, the formal aesthetics of Chinese style homestay was orderly and symmetrical, the furniture were arranged in symmetrical layout. Furniture were mostly form with straight lines rather than curves. The number of seats were equal, and the paintings, columns, lights and other decoration arrangements on the left and right walls were also symmetrical. All of them reflect the symmetrical form of Chinese style furnishings to show the steady and atmospheric decoration effect in a balanced and even way [11].

Compared to the Chinese style Minshuku, photos of the Modern style Minshuku were easier to get people's attention in a short time, and became the visual focus. Sometimes, adding some asymmetric factors to the overall symmetrical pattern can increase the vividness and beauty of the composition. Although Chinese style photos were not as varied and eye-catching as modern ones, they were never tired of being around for a long time, and needed to be quiet enough to appreciate the beauty of balance and stability.

There were no absolute advantages and disadvantages between the two styles, all depends on the preferences of designers and consumers [12]. No matter what kind of style of Minshuku design, we should apply the rules of formal beauty flexibly according to the different contents of a specific design. In dealing with the design of furniture and interface decoration, we should achieve the following goals: seeking the change of contrast in unity, seeking the harmony in contrast, and keeping the moderate degree of contrast and unity, imparting a distinctive feeling in the interior environment design of Minshuku or homestay.

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