

Contents



Preface 1

Historical Overview 3

- Bronze and Lacquered Furniture in the Shang and Western Zhou Dynasties 4
- Low Furniture in the Qin and Han Dynasties 8
- The New Approaches of the Wei, Jin and Northern and Southern Dynasties 10
- The Transition from Low to Tall Furniture during the Sui, Tang and Five Dynasties 13
- Tall Furniture in the Song and Yuan Dynasties 16
- Classical Furniture during the Ming Dynasty 18
- Qing-style Furniture 22



The Lingering Charm of Texture 27

- The Value of Hardwood 28
- Rare Hardwoods 29
- Plain and Practical Softwoods 35
- Other Materials 39

Structure and Shape 43

- Mortise-and-Tenon Joints 44
- Furniture and its Origins in Traditional Architecture 47
- Components Originating in Traditional Architecture 50
- Dimensions and Decoration 53



Decorative Techniques 57

- Hot Wax Setting 58
- Lacquering 60
- Engraving 63
- Inlay 66



The Decoration of Structural Components 69
 Moldings 72
 Metal Fittings 74

Interesting Patterns 77

Beds 78
 Tables 81
 Chairs and Stools 86
 Cabinet Furniture 89
 “Box-like” Furniture 94
 Screens 96
 Rack Furniture 98
 Root Furniture 100

Cultural Significance 103

Regional Styles 104
 The Influence of Scholars on Ming-style Furniture 110
 The Relationship between Furniture and the Theory
 of Man as an Integral Part of Nature 114
 Rituals 117
 Symbolic Decoration 123
 The Layout of Chinese Furniture 128
 Chinese Furniture and the West 130

**Appendix: Chronological Table of the Chinese
 Dynasties 135**

