

Research on the Development of Ceramic Art China

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Keywords: Ceramic Art, Development, Renaissance

Abstract: After the invention of pottery in the Neolithic period, (5000-2200 B.C.), the ancient Chinese succeeded in producing painted pottery, black pottery and carved pottery. In Renaissance Italy, China ceramic culture makes China culture to obtain greater recognition in the west. Western art and the art idea and China traditional ceramic art idea has the very big difference, formed a huge impact to Chinese modern ceramic art, will be the development of China ceramic into a different form of creation road.

1. Studies on the Origin of China Ceramic Art

After the invention of pottery in the Neolithic period, (5000-2200 B.C.), the ancient Chinese succeeded in producing painted pottery, black pottery and carved pottery. The long years of experience in kiln firing led China entering into a new ceramic age in the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.) Although archaeological finds have revealed that glazed pottery was produced as early as the Western Zhou dynasty (1100-771 B.C.), yet the production of glazed wares was not common until the Han Dynasty. An obvious change in the attitude of figure modelling in the Six Dynasties (265-588 A.D.) was the inclination to include more details, an effort to make the models look more real. Six Dynasties potters also succeeded in improving the quality of early celadon wares both in glaze colour and in body clay. The production of glazed proto-porcelain was a significant achievement in Chinese ceramic history.^[1] The major contribution made by Tang dynasty (618-907 A.D.) potters was their bold introduction of the multi-colour wares. In early Tang dynasty, production of sancai or pottery figurines dominates the pottery scene. Tang pottery figurines comprised three major categories, namely human figures, animals and fabulous tomb guards. The success of ceramic production in the Song dynasty (960-1279 A.D.) was seen in the monochrome wares. The most spectacular of the Song monochromes was the celadon which has been called by various names based on its shade and tone or its pattern of crackles. The production of blue and white wares at the end of the Yuan dynasty (1280-1367) and the beginning of the Ming dynasty (1368-1643) was generally of a poorer quality, possibly due to the shortage of imported cobalt during the period of political instability. In Yung Lo reign (1403-1424), both the potting and glazing techniques improved and wares attained a whiter body and richer blue than those of Yuan.

Throughout the Ming dynasty, dragon and phoenix were the most popular decorative motifs on ceramic wares. Other animals, plant forms, and human figures in garden and interior setting were often used as decors for blue and white wares. It has been noted that after Wan Li (1573-1620), very few ceramic wares of the Ming dynasty bear reign marks. The fashionable wucai wares of Chia Ching (1522-1566) and Wan Li (1573-1620) periods are usually fully covered with colourful patterns. Very often the colours are a bit too heavy. The colours used include red, yellow, light and dark green, brown, aubergine and underglaze blue. In Ming dynasty, a variety of porcelain wares were decorated with motifs coming up on coloured ground instead. They included wares with green glazed pattern on a yellow ground, yellow glazed pattern on a blue ground, green glazed pattern on a red ground and other colour combinations.^[2]

Another remarkable category of coloured wares produced in the Ming dynasty was the susancai or 'tri-colour'. The major three colours are yellow, green and aubergine. Tri-colour wares of the Ming dynasty appeared in the reigns of Hsuen Te, Chia Ching and Wan Li. The peak of Chinese ceramic production was seen in the reigns of Kang Hsi (1622-1722). Yung Cheng (1723-1735) and Chien Lung (1736-1796) of the Ching dynasty during which improvement was seen in almost all

ceramic types, including the blue and white wares, polychrome wares, wucai wares, etc. The improved enamel glazes of early Ching dynasty being fired at a higher temperature also acquired a more brilliant look than those of the Ming dynasty. The production of ducal wares in the Yung Cheng period reached new height both in quantity and technical perfection.^[3] The use of fencai enamel for decorating porcelain wares was first introduced in Kang Hsi period. The production of fencai enamel wares reached a mature stage in the Yung Cheng era. As the improved fencai enamels had a wider range of colours and each could be applied in a variety of tones, they could be used to depict some of the highly complicated pictorial compositions of flower and plant forms, figures and even insects. Ching dynasty is a period specially noted for the production of colour glazes. In the area of monochromes, Ching potters succeeded in reproducing most of the famous glaze colours found in ceramic wares on the Sung, Yuan and Ming dynasties. In addition, they created a number of new glazes, especially the monochromes. Among them were the Sang-de-boeuf, the rough-pink, the coral red and the mirror black. All these four glazes were invented in the reign of Kang Hsi. Yung Cheng potters invented a flambe glaze know as Lujun, or robin's egg which was produced in two firings. Another significant colour glaze successfully produced by the Ching potter was 'tea-dust'. It is an opaque glaze finely speckled with colours in green, yellow and brown.

When Ming was taken over by Qing (about 1639-1700 AD), and when Qing was taken over by the Republic of China (about 1909-1915 AD), the disturbances in these two periods resulted in the collapse of the official kilns. In their places, private kilns were established by the operators and artists who previously worked in the official kilns. With their expertise, they produced high quality porcelain wares, such as the 'export porcelain wares made during the transition of Ming to Qing', which earned a high praise in overseas markets, and the excellent imitations of Sung, Yuan and Qing wares are made during "the early stage of the Republic of China," which were almost true to the originals. When the war broke out in 1937, triggered by the incident at Lo-Kou Bridge, all the kilns were closed. The operators and artists were dispersed, and many of them traveled to the south, trying to make a living. When peace came in 1945, social stability led to the re-establishment of the pottery industry. In this stretch of fifty years to the present time, the industry has re-gained its previous glory and is enjoying a growing prosperity. In the past twenty years, the ceramics industry has been developing at a quick pace.

2. Trade Transmission China Ceramic Art

Chinese ceramic history began eight thousand years ago - clay container. Soon after, the late Neolithic age, the potter's wheel that prompted the invention of the container production. The complexity of this early Chinese pottery is the best embodiment is found in the tomb of Qin Shihuang in the Terracotta Army of the Qin Dynasty (about 221-206 BC). After numerous new ceramic techniques and styles of centuries of development, development to the Tang Dynasty, the most famous is the tricolour ware pottery. The name suggests is the bright yellow, a kind of art style green and white glaze, glaze is applied to three kinds of ceramic body. They not only reflected in the traditional form of bowls and vases, but also to the more exotic form of trade spread in Central Asia tourist commodities, proved that the cultural influence of the Silk Road development. Another type of ceramic art style of blue and white porcelain also obtained the Tang Dynasty Royal favor, in the west, it is also called the celadon.^[4] This is a delicate blue and green glaze, characterized by their simple and elegant shape, they are so popular, continuous production in various kilns in Tang Dynasty China center has developed into a mature period, and has received many countries welcome, was shipped to Egypt, Nan yang, South Korea and Japan.

Blue and white porcelain workshop baking at a very high temperature, porcelain is the key of its purity kaolin soil. In the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) blue and white porcelain pottery, get perfect development, it has become one of the Chinese ceramic art representatives. China Jiangxi province Jingdezhen, as has become not only produced a large number of porcelain kiln industry center, but also become the focus of export products output. Shape style and enhance the decorative pattern and the container with the blue and white porcelain, thanks to each new emperor of the Ming Dynasty and the production process of the new requirements. The glaze color and quality than any other time

periods of blue and white porcelain, it is incomparable in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), ceramic innovation is rich in colors. Application of various glaze, flower decoration scheme, landscape pattern and visualize the scene, makes these products enjoy a high reputation in the west. Almost every major European museums, you'll find out a lot of color or monochrome ceramics (blue, red, yellow or pink) Unfortunately, begins to decline in quality China porcelain in this period, this is due to political instability, and therefore to the art development produced a lot of obstacles. However, in Renaissance Italy, China ceramic culture makes China culture to obtain greater recognition in the west. In addition to the kiln in some small scale production, a lot of kiln center has established a more traditional style.

3. Ceramic Art Developments

Ceramics is one of the most ancient industries on the planet. Once humans discovered that clay could be dug up and formed into objects by first mixing with water and then firing, the industry was born. As early as 24,000 BC, animal and human figurines were made from clay and other materials, and then fired in kilns partially dug into the ground. Almost 10,000 years later, as settled communities were established, tiles were manufactured in Mesopotamia and India. The first use of functional pottery vessels for storing water and food is thought to be around 9000 or 10,000 BC. Clay bricks were also made around the same time.

Glass was believed to be discovered in Egypt around 8000 BC, when overheating of kilns produced a colored glaze on the pottery. Experts estimate that it was not until 1500 BC that glass was produced independently of ceramics and fashioned into separate items. Fast forward to the middle Ages, when the metal industry was in its infancy. Furnaces at that time for melting the metal were constructed of natural materials. When synthetic materials with better resistance to high temperatures (called refractoriness) were developed in the 16th century, the industrial revolution was born. These refractory created the necessary conditions for melting metals and glass on an industrial scale, as well as for the manufacture of coke, cement, chemicals, and ceramics.

Another major development occurred in the second half of the 19th century, when ceramic materials for electrical insulation were developed. As other inventions came on the scene-including automobiles, radios, televisions, computers-ceramic and glass materials were needed to help these become a reality.

4. The Intersection China Ceramic Art and Western Culture

Ceramic artists began to ceramics as an art of communication media, but in the traditional inheritance, there is a large part of the basic thought of predecessors. In Jingdezhen, to continue the traditional ceramic creation holds the very great proportion, can be said to have a lot of is completely in accordance with the traditional form and decoration, especially hand-painted porcelain, is a further development of the traditional. Traditional ceramic art represented the basic appearance of China ceramic art, Jingdezhen porcelain and painted walked out from the decline of Qing Dynasty, inherited the Millennium porcelain style. From an objective point of view, can be said to be a good thing, but for the needs of the times still has its one sidedness. To the seventy or eighty's, Jingdezhen ceramic artists began to explore new ideas. Cultural openness, there has been a great development for their creative space, artistic creation, continue to carry forward the traditional advantage of ceramic, and learn from other folk arts, created a number of exquisite artistic charm with modern art ceramic art, the shape is also basically is to improve the traditional modeling so, more adapted to the new requirements of the times Chinese; decoration is the re creation of the traditional, continue to carry forward the unique charm of China traditional ceramics, the China ceramic further to the peak. But the study of its development, which is mainly to the traditional continue, in art is still not fully developed or universal updates to the needs of the times of the ceramic art language Along with the western art and art concept into China, this period of ceramic creation not follow the western form creation form, caused Chinese ceramic art relation direction appeared very big change. But at the time of the western art form to pursue, also injected new

elements for China traditional ceramic art, the China traditional ceramics began to enter the creative transition. On pure China style pottery creation, if not inject new elements, it will lead to development of single ceramics, ceramic art and hinder the advance. In the new period, the continued development of the traditional ceramics, is not necessarily to meet the needs of the age, the China ceramics can be said to be a fatal blow. In the pre injection elements, there will be a transition stage early, it is can hardly be avoided. Therefore, the western concept, to form into Chinese, ceramic art, that is not a good thing. And this period can be regarded as Chinese future further development of paving age pottery. Western art and the art idea and China traditional ceramic art idea has the very big difference, formed a huge impact to Chinese modern ceramic art, will be the development of China ceramic into a different form of creation road.^[5] One is to carry China traditional ceramic art, the continuation of Chinese style of art creation, from the Chinese appreciation. That is an integral part of the China in ceramic art. On the other side is following the western artistic thoughts and ideas into the Chinese pottery of Oriental Art impact and fusion, or even replace. The mostly born in the younger generation of artists, their mind is more ceramics as an art of language, to convey thoughts and creation of the role of the media. The expression is more personal emotion and reflects the social dynamics. They have a better understanding of art. But many of them have completely copy the Western model works, just follow the formalism, and form complete and Chinese traditions of different artistic styles. More is still reflected in the reform of cultural globalization after art, they seek to express the inner world, and into the ceramic works, through the unique ceramic works of art to express the author thought emotion or reflect the era culture. But this is not completely set aside China traditional art spirit, complete imitation of the western art ideas, no Chinese unique art theory, is a kind of Western art regional change, but did not achieve the integration of regional, and some even completely is not China native thought, thus led to the development of modern ceramic art Chinese blocked. Not to China traditional ceramic art to the western thought and Chinese draw involved in the creation of modern ceramic, so completely unique charm not Chinese Millennium pottery, did not form a process of re creation. Can say, to abandon the traditional completely, with fresh air is not allowed. Of course, this is just China ceramic art development road of a part or a period, on behalf of the Chinese pottery art development road of foreign culture art early absorption.

Acknowledgement

Foundation Project: the Special Scientific Research Project of Sichuan Minzu College, “Research on the presentation and spread of Chinese Volksgemeinschaft consciousness in Sichuan, Tibet, Yunnan and Qinghai’s national costumes and objects” (XYZB2111ZX) ; Sichuan Minzu College 2021-2023 talent training quality and teaching reform project “Research and practice of diversified and innovative talent training in Tibetan folk crafts” (JG202111).

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