

Field Research and Study of Ceramic Wine Vessels in the Song Dynasty: Taking the Jingdezhen kiln as an Example

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Abstract: The purpose of this article is to discuss the social background of wine utensils from Song Dynasty and the aesthetic views unique to the same period. Through field study and research on kiln sites such as Hutian kilns in Jingdezhen, it focuses on analyzing ceramic wine utensils from this period. In the context of the political, economic, cultural, and aesthetic ideas of the Song Dynasty, with the theme of the aesthetic style reflected in Song Dynasty wine utensils, it tries to learn the aesthetic value and functional value of Song Dynasty wine utensils under the background of “emphasizing literature and restraining military” based on the understanding of people's normal lives, social conditions, and religious culture at that time. We hope that it can provide a certain reference for future wine ware research.

Keywords: Ceramic Wine Vessels; Field Study; Aesthetic Value.

1. Introduction

For the historical research on ceramic wine vessels from the Song Dynasty, what needs to be considered is the usage requirements in a specific historical environment. People in the Song Dynasty had specific production methods, lifestyles, and customs, and the various components of ceramic wine ware were used to the fullest, with clear functions. After fully understanding the volume and capacity of ceramic wine vessels, they conform to the rationality of people's use while satisfying functionality and aesthetics. Starting from morphological research on Song porcelain wine ware, field study and research on kiln sites such as Hutian kiln was carried out, with the purpose to explore the historical evolution of ancient ceramic wine ware, go deep into and analyze the development history and direction of evolution of ceramic wine ware in Jingdezhen, and understand the cultural background of Song porcelain wine ware from various angles such as material, shape, color, content, and cultural feelings. Based on the research for the morphology of wine vessels, we can have a profound understanding and conduct research on the industry, diet, culture, function, and customs of the production of wine vessels in the Song Dynasty, thereby promoting the development of historical and cultural research on the Song Dynasty. The field research method is used for data improvement and collection, and conduct innovative morphological design research on ceramic wine utensils from multiple angles and multiple thinking models, so as to analyze the morphological characteristics of ceramic wine utensils favored by people, which will provide a valuable reference for designing ceramic wine utensils that match both aesthetic function and usage function.

2. Research Background of Ceramic Wine Vessels in the Song Dynasty

The winemaking industry and porcelain craftsmanship in the Song Dynasty were very well developed. The prosperity of wine culture and the unique historical background of the

Song Dynasty brought new development to wine. Whether it's drinking utensils, wine storage utensils, or barware with other functions, they had many innovations in shape and style. Song Dynasty ceramic barware influenced by economic, political, and cultural backgrounds reflected the high economic prosperity of the time. In the Song Dynasty, agricultural technology was improved and the handicraft industry developed rapidly. More and more cities were shifting from political centers to integrating political and economic centers, such as Bianliang, the capital city of Northern Song, and Lin'an, the capital city of Southern Song. They were both the political center and the largest commercial center at the time. The spread of wineries could well illustrate the prosperity of the economy of the Song Dynasty, which also provided a strong material foundation for the development of wine culture and the production of ceramic wine utensils. Politically, due to the implementation of the policy of “governing the country with culture” and “comforting the inside and eliminating the outside,” the status of literate scholars had reached an all-time high. It can be said that the Song Dynasty was one of the dynasties with most popular humanistic atmosphere in Chinese history. From the ruling class to the landlords and gentry, it formed a huge class with cultural literacy and aesthetic interests. Most of them are passionate about calligraphy, painting, and poetry. “Drinking alcohol became a type of elegant behavior in the Tang Dynasty, and drinking vessels also became elegant utensil.” The trend of drinking in the Tang Dynasty was still preserved in the Song Dynasty, and a large number of literate people also appeared. They liked to get happiness through alcohol, so drinking alcohol also became an elegant act. The wine ware manufacturing industry developed rapidly, and since in the Song Dynasty, scholars advocated “elegance” and pursued aesthetic simplicity and natural sensibility, the production of ceramic barware kept innovative. It abandoned the assertiveness and grandness of gold and silverware, paid attention to details with no lack in poetic pursuit, thus establishing the “restrained, indifferent, and quiet” aesthetic characteristics of Song Dynasty ceramic wine ware.

The Song Dynasty was a period worth exploring. Looking at the history of various generations in China, only in the Song Dynasty, scholars had a high social status. The entire dynasty was influenced most by scholars' ideas, and the politics, ideology, and culture of that time all showed different characteristics of the times. With the study of Song Dynasty wine vessels as a background, on the one hand, we can have a more comprehensive understanding of and gradually improve research on the morphology of Song Dynasty wine vessels, promote the continuous development of the theoretical system of Song dynasty wine ware, and provide more data and basis for promoting research on the morphology of ancient wine vessels in China. On the other hand, through comparative analysis of the connections and differences between the forms of drinking vessels from the Song Dynasty and the forms of wine vessels from various dynasties, it provides more possibilities for promoting research on the forms of wine vessels in ancient China, which is of great significance in promoting the design and development of contemporary wine ware forms in China. Going deep into the analysis and research of wine ware from the Song Dynasty has further broadened research on the artistic style of wine pourers made of different materials in different periods, perfected certain shortcomings in the history of the development of wine utensils in China during this period, and also helped promote in-depth research on the field of ancient ceramic styling from various angles.

3. Main Characteristics of Ceramic Wine Vessels in the Song Dynasty

Ceramic wine vessels from the Song Dynasty have three characteristics in the shape, function, and material. The shapes include cock-crown pots, phoenix bottles, cups, etc., and decorative patterns include separate patterns, lines, and color languages. The image patterns are also divided into various pattern themes such as plants, animals, imitation leather, and geometry. Among them, Song Dynasty culture had a profound influence on wine vessel form art, including various aspects such as farming culture, foreign culture, and religious culture. The shapes of ceramic wine vessels in the Song Dynasty were rich and diverse. The shapes of ceramic wine vessels can be divided into geometric forms, natural forms, and man-made forms. Geometric forms are formed by changing pure abstract geometry. They have the simplest form, which is regular in overall, and clear in changes, with distinctive characteristics at a glance and clear abstraction. Natural forms are created with the help of some beautiful shapes in the natural world. They are familiar to and easily accepted by people. The shapes are vivid, emotional, and usually more figurative. Anthropogenic forms have both the simplicity of geometric forms and the richness of natural forms. They clearly express human creativity and have a certain human touch. In the course of the development and evolution of ceramic wine vessel shapes, these forms have continuously influenced and integrated with each other. Some shapes have the characteristics of several forms, so it is difficult to completely distinguish which type they actually belong to, but they only show a fairly obvious trend in one aspect. Therefore, understanding the material classification, use, and shape categories of wine ware from the Song Dynasty, decorative art characteristics, pattern patterns, cultural connotations, etc., and grasping the characteristics and culture of Song Dynasty wine ware can promote the research on Song

Dynasty wine ware and provide more theoretical basis for research on Song Dynasty culture in China.

4. Field Investigation and Research on Ceramic Wine Vessels from the Song Dynasty in Jingdezhen

Jingdezhen is blessed with natural resources, rich timber for kilns, high-quality kaolin for porcelain billets, convenient and developed water transportation, and a deep technical foundation for porcelain production, so it can develop itself into a famous porcelain industry center in the country. Yingqing takes the first place of the six major porcelain schools in the Song Dynasty, which is one of the two major porcelain kilns in Jiangnan. It had a very wide influence, and there are relics excavated by Yingqing all over the country. The Jingdezhen kiln began kiln firing in the five dynasties, and it was called the Raozhou kiln in the Song Dynasty. The porcelain making technology was mature, and the scale and quality were greatly developed and improved. It reached a considerable level in all aspects such as raw material selection, porcelain production process, and decorative patterns. It can be said that the concentration represents the level of porcelain production in the Song Dynasty. In the Song Dynasty, Jingdezhen mainly fired blue and white porcelain, a unique style of porcelain. Because the color of the glaze was between blue and white, white in white, and blue in white, it was called "blue and white porcelain" and is customarily also known as "Yingqing." The glaze of blue and white porcelain is a type of enamel between celadon and white porcelain that is bluish in white and white in blue. It is like light lake water, and clear as jade, so it is called the fake jade vessel by people. The blue and white porcelain of Jingdezhen in the Song Dynasty is a whole, with common characteristics of the times and the charm of a common aesthetic style. It is an embodiment and reflection of the entire aesthetic ideas and concepts of the Song Dynasty. It is a product of the historical and social conditions of the Song Dynasty, adapting to and satisfying the aesthetic and practical needs of people in the Song Dynasty, so it is a reflection of the philosophical concepts, aesthetic ideas and aesthetic interests of the Song Dynasty.

4.1. Aesthetics of Song Porcelain

The political factors, logic, Zen ideas, and aesthetic factors of the dominant position of literary figures and scholars with characteristics of the Song Dynasty were reflected in ceramic wine pourers, making the ceramic wine styles of the Song Dynasty show the elegant and beautiful aesthetic characteristics of the times. Among them, the shape of the Hutian kiln wine ware in Jingdezhen also reflected this feature. Through investigation and research on the Jingdezhen kiln field, the author found that the ceramic wine ware produced by the Jingdezhen kiln is white and delicate, the carcass is thin and firm, the degree of porcelain is good, and the sound of hitting is clear and translucent; the enamel is white and light, the color is white and elegant, and the glaze is crystal clear and gentle; however, the porcelain wine pitcher from the early Northern Song Dynasty has no decorative patterns, which was popular for its regular jade-shaped glaze color; after the middle period, it focused in carving, including printing, bas-relief, hollowing, stacking, etc.; the engraved pattern was deep in one side and light in the other side. After glaze sinters, the glaze is white in the shallow part of the engraving, while the deep part of the glaze is slightly cyan,

with blue and white colors interwoven, sometimes dark and sometimes bright; in terms of the shape of the wine vessel, the outer edge of the mouth is outward, the neck is long, and the belly is prismatic, slender and slightly curved, and the foot is short, and some only leave a trace of footprints. The prismatic pitcher is quite common in Song porcelain. Most of them are modeled after gold and silverware from the same period, and those made in the Jingdezhen kilns are the most exquisite in appearance.

4.2. Practical Functions

From an overall perspective, the shape of Hutian kiln wine vessels in Jingdezhen in the Song Dynasty had the characteristics of being light, beautiful, and upright and pretty. It included beautiful formal rules such as balance, coordination, and echo. It was a typical representative of Song porcelain and a concentrated expression of the social lifestyle of the Song Dynasty. At the same time, it also has very practical functions. The shape of the Hutian kiln wine ware in Jingdezhen does not aim to pursue changes in the sense of form, but is closely related to the implementation of the applicable functions of ceramic wine vessels. The new combination of wine vessel components and the creation of new wine pitcher shapes are all intended to achieve better functions such as placement and pouring during use. The main expression of the Hutian kiln ceramic wine vessel is a round belly with a square fold in a circle. The round and long, straight and curved are harmoniously combined, and the shape is more beautiful than in other eras.

4.3. Exquisite Craftsmanship

The uniqueness of the ceramic techniques of the different kilns in the Song Dynasty brought the shape of the ceramic wine pouter in the Song Dynasty with regional characteristics. The square pot from the Song Dynasty is a beautiful masterpiece of Hutian kiln in Jingdezhen. It is 32 cm high, 9 cm in diameter of the mouth, and 8.6 cm in diameter of the bottom; the lid is a shallow dish, with a flower bud shaped lid button in the center, and a small tubular system along the lid; the pot has a horn, long neck, and broad shoulders; a long, round, ten-petaled belly and flat bottom; the shoulder side of the pot has a tubular curve and a long flow. The top of the handle has a small tubular setting, with plastic leaves on both the handle and the lower part of the neck; the outer edge and lower edge of the neck are covered with plastic blades; the outer edge and lower part of the neck and neck are covered with plastic leaves; the outer edge, the lower neck edge and the middle of belly are covered with multiple flower string patterns; and the blue and white glaze with a crystal finish throughout is exposed only on the bottom and inside of the lid. The overall shape is upright and grand, and has quite a “king” style. The long curved handle is like a long streamer flying in the wind, adding a few beautiful lines to the huge and stable jug. The mouth contrasts with the virtual space extending out and the actual space of the pot body, making the whole vessel flexible. Yingqing *wine-warming ewers and bowls* are also mostly made in Jingdezhen kilns. This piece of ware is made from two parts, including a *wine-warming ewer and bowl*, forming a set of wine utensils. The outer bowl is generally diamond-shaped, used to hold hot water and heat wine; the inner *ewer*, also known as a jug used to place wine and pour wine. It is a set of *wine-warming ewer and bowl* unearthed in Song Tomb in Susong County, Anhui. This set of wine

utensils is made of blue and white glazed porcelain from Jingdezhen kiln in the Song Dynasty. The lotus pet-shaped jug is equipped with a lotus shaped bowl, and the lid is shaped like a crouching lion as a button; the whole vessel is shaped like a blooming lotus flower, ingenious and unique in shape. This type of instrument is made to imitate gold and silverware, and began firing in the five dynasties. Because it uses a binary formula of kaolin and porcelain stone, the firing temperature is high, the tire is white and hard, and most of them were applied with Yingqing glaze, which is reflected in the shape of the wine dispenser, and has characteristics such as a dense carcass and a rich enamel color.

5. Conclusion

Research on ceramic wine ware from the Song Dynasty is an attempt to start from the social, economic, and cultural background of the Song Dynasty, analyze the function of ceramic wine ware at that time, and then sort out and summarize the aesthetic characteristics of ceramic wine ware from the Song Dynasty by discussing the craftsmanship, shape, and decoration of ceramic barware and the intervention of “logic” ideas at that time. Based on the ceramic wine vessels produced from Hutian kiln in Jingdezhen, this paper discusses the functions, the cultural awareness and aesthetic sense reflected by them, highlighting the relationship between objects and people. While valuing documents and research results of previous people, we start from a comprehensive research perspective, and try our best to clarify various influences and aesthetic and functional value of the Song dynasty rulers and literati scholars on ceramic wine ware.

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