Research on the Application of the Chinese Ceramic Culture in the Shape Design of the Liquor Bottle
Taking Jingdezhen Ceramic Art for Example
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Abstract
The Chinese ceramic art has high practical value and aesthetic value. The shape design of the liquor bottle made of by the ceramic material plays an important role in reflecting the connotation of the liquor, improving its quality and enhancing the consumers’ purchase design. This paper combines the Chinese ceramic culture to study the semantic features of the shape of the liquor bottle as well as the starting point and type characteristics of the shape design, in the hope of guiding the shape design of the ceramic liquor bottle. Then, it analyzes the existing problems, value of application and development trend of the creative liquor bottle design with Jingdezhen ceramics.

Keywords
Ceramic Culture; Materials; Liquor Bottle; Shape Design; Jingdezhen

Introduction
The production of the ceramic liquor bottle has a long history in China. As a special work of art, it integrates painting, calligraphy, amorous feelings, allusion, pottery and liquor art together. Now, many consumers have realized its value. They not just regard the liquor bottles as the container, but pay more attention to the cultural connotation to collect them. In this process, the designers play a very important role. It’s necessary to strengthen the study of the ceramic materials and modern technology and combine the traditional materials and cultural semantics with modern production technology together to develop more better designs, so as to create the fresh, pure, elegant, beautiful, fashionable and creative ceramic liquor bottles which are favored by the consumers in all classes and at all ages.

The Characteristics of Ceramic
In the modern liquor package design, the ceramic art is favoured by the designers. They reasonably apply the design elements of the ceramic art in the modern liquor bottle and package design to make them full of traditional charm in addition to the pursuit of new expression forms. It also makes the cultural heritage full of vitality, thus realizing the real fusion between the ceramic art and the modern design culture of liquor bottle and package[1].

The Cultural Characteristics of Ceramics
The Chinese ceramics are known throughout the world for its long history, rich contents, strong national artistic characteristics and superb techniques. They are an important part of the excellent Chinese cultural heritage. China’s invention of porcelain is a great contribution to the progress of human civilization, so it’s known as the country of porcelain in the world. As a kind of wine with strong national characteristics in China, liquor also has a long history and profound cultural background. Liquor and ceramics, which represent the oriental culture, will be a perfect and classic combination.

Liquor and ceramics, which represent the oriental culture, will be a perfect and classic combination Liquor has the
strong cultural connotations and different style[2]. Porcelain has the unique artistic expression and uncommon taste. The combination of them can make porcelain brighter and liquor mellower.

**The Special Material Characteristics of Ceramics**

Ceramics refer to the hard substances which are formed by mixing clay, lean material and flux in correct proportion, grinding and shaping the mixture and then firing it at the high temperature.

Ceramics can be divided into glazed ceramics and unglazed ceramics. The glaze is like glass which can not only play a decorative role, but also improve the mechanical strength, surface hardness and chemical resistance of ceramics. At the same time, as the glaze is the smooth glass material with very little porosity, it's easy to clean and convenient for use; unglazed ceramics are the c to ceramic bodies. The body is made of quartz and porosity which do not participate in the reaction in crystal phase, glass phase and raw materials generated after being fired at the high temperature[3].

It can be analyzed from the above information that the raw materials of ceramics are harmless and odorless, which meets the basic requirements of the daily use appliances; ceramics have certain breathability, which has good aging acceleration effect in the process of aging; its small permeability, good tightness and strong corrosion resistance can avoid alcohol volatilization and chemical reaction; its slow heat conduction can maintain the appropriate temperature of liquor and ensure the long time of storage. In addition, glazed ceramics have elegant shape and smooth glaze surface, which make them easy to clean. All those characteristics demonstrate that it’s very feasible and suitable to produce the liquor bottles with ceramics.

**Key Points of the Ceramic Liquor Design**

As the mass industrial products, liquor bottles have the basic properties of the product. They are affected by function, structure, material and process, but due to the special roles in people’s lifestyle and the dining atmosphere cultivation, more humanistic factors are added in the liquor bottle design. The design attribute of the liquor bottles is mainly reflected in the functional attribute, social attribute and cultural attribute.

**Functional Attribute**

The functional attribute of liquor bottle is mainly reflected on the realization of holing liquor. Early in the Warring States Period 2000 years ago, Han Fei pointed out that even the valuable jade liquor vessel can not hold water if it had no bottom[4]. Thus, the function of the product is very important in the design. People need the product because they want to use it rather than owning the entity. The collection of liquor bottlers plays its decorative function which is derived from the cultural attribute of liquor bottle.

**Social Attribute**

The design out of the society is worthless, because it has close relationship with the product users. Nowadays, with the gradually progressive demand changes of sociality, self-esteem, aesthetics and self-actualization, people increasingly require that the liquor they drink should be appropriate to their special identities and status.

**Cultural Attribute**

Design is a creative activity of the social material lifestyle. In other words, all ways of life of people are the reflection of human culture, but it is sometimes so obvious and strong that attract people’s attention, and sometimes weak and reserved. Design is the expression of a culture. It let the consumers not only buy products but more understand the deeper things. Liquor bottle design comes with the strong information itself. We should resort to the cultural heritage power to fully consider the influences of religious belief, traditional culture factors and design value factors[5].

**The Starting Point of the Shape Design of Ceramic Liquor Bottles**

A liquor bottle is roughly made of mouth, bottleneck, body and bottom. The beauty of a liquor bottle depends
largely on the shape. A beautiful liquor bottle must be processed well in point, line, power, spirit and charm, which is not only a technical activity but also an artistic activity, in order to realize the perfect combination of practicality and artistry.

The National Features

As a country with an ancient civilization, China boasts the profound cultural background. Its traditional arts and crafts also have exquisite technique and unique style. It’s our responsibility to carry forward the rich and precious cultural heritage and apply it in our design to develop more and better designs with Chinese characteristics[6]. At the same time, the applied locations of the products and the consumer psychology are taken into account and the color matching and forms are carefully processed, in order to ensure the functions and beautiful appearance and reflect the distinct characteristics of the Chinese nation as well.

Modern Geometric Shape

Geometrical elements are diversified. Different combinations of them can also show other shapes. Those shapes with simple and beautiful lines can produce different changes, so they are the essence of modernism design. With the special beauty and charm, the geometrical elements are applied in many classical designs in the world. Those are very worthy of our reference and study.

Liquor bottle is a decorative product itself. The application of the geometrical elements in the visual decoration can obtain the surprising changing effect and the strong visual impact. Some basic shapes like round, oval and square as well as the irregular shapes produced through changes are mainly used. Those shapes have a direct link with the function of liquor bottle[7]. On the premise of ensuring the basic function of the liquor bottle, those shapes produce changes to achieve harmony and form the special aesthetic feeling.

The Natural Form

People find the most pure forms in nature, absorb the natural essence and then abstract the natural forms to use them. At the same time, the constructing order of the natural objects is also the important evolving resources of the design forms. People can transplant some relations of the nature to deduce the artificial and practical designs from the functions and structures of the natural objects and obtain the formal meaning. Out of consideration for the function of the product, the natural forms like gourd and trunk are adopted; after modeling, they form the unique styles with simple, pure and fresh flavor.

The Shape Type Charateristics of Ceramic Liquor Bottles

The shape of the ceramic liquor bottle as the packaging container contains the rich semantic characteristics. The application of the ceramic culture in the shape design of the liquor bottle can be summarized into the following types:

Taking the Reflection of the Liquor Culture as the Shaping Semantics

After a long period of historical accumulation, different places have formed the unique liquor culture. China is the hometown of liquor, so its liquor culture has rich connotations, which is mainly reflected in two aspects of rite and literature. Liquor was initially used for sacrificing. Later, influenced by the Confucian thought of rite, the liquor cultural phenomenon of no liquor, no rite. There were many different kinds of ritual vessels in ancient China. Among bronze ritual vessels, some were used for holding liquor and some for cooking or playing. Some ceramic liquor bottles imitate the shape designs of those ancient ritual vessels to convey the ritual characteristics to people and give them the strong sense of history and culture at the same time.

Taking the Auspicious Culture as the Shaping Semantics

People look forward to the better life, which gradually forms the unique auspicious culture. They paint the shapes with the auspicious meanings on the ceramic liquor bottles to give liquor the auspicious meaning. They pray with
liquor for the better future and get the spiritual comfort[8].

For example, gourd is a very popular plant shape with Chinese people. It implies the rich auspicious semantics. Its Chinese sound is similar to Fu Lu which means blessing and wealth; and there are many seeds in the gourd, symbolizing more sons and more blessings. Taoism even regards the gourd as a sacred vessel and put the golden remedy for prolonging life in it, so it also has the meaning of long life. Therefore, the ceramic liquor bottles made by ceramics in the gourd shape are very common in China and favored by the consumers.

**Taking the Reflection of the Regional Culture Characteristics as the Shaping Semantics**

Water and food are the main raw materials of liquor making. The unique features of a local environment always give special characteristics to its inhabitants. In addition to the different production materials and processes, liquor also has the strong regional culture characteristics. The adoption of the elements with the regional culture characteristics as the shapes of ceramic bottles can not only enhance the local affection and the sense of geographical belonging, but also play an important role in promoting the regional culture and increasing people’s understanding of the local places. Liquor also has become the local souvenir and been enjoyed by the tourists.

**Taking Advanced Ideas as the Starting Point of Creativity**

In a diversified era, some people like to use the personalized products to flaunt their own personalities and sense of belonging, and some products also hope to attract consumers through personalized symbolic features, in which shaping is one of the important expression elements. In order to make themselves conspicuous, some liquor brands have very strange names; the shapes of ceramic bottles also highlight various personalities. For example, Jiugui Liquor is shaped in the sack, which is very elegant, popular, plain and natural. It not only conveys the concept of food liquor and trusted liquor, but also passes warmth and affection[9].

**Taking the Pursuit of the Formal Pleasure as the Starting Point**

People create various beautiful ceramic shapes in the long-term labor practice, thus forming the independent visual language form of the ceramic shaping art. Many traditional ceramic shapes have achieved the recognized perfection in proportion and form. They have been used as the liquor container since the ancient, so people always label the traditional shapes as the symbol of history. Some ceramic liquor bottles are processed by replacing curves with straight lines to make them more tough and concise and thus have certain modern flavor, which accords with modern people’s aesthetic interest of pursuing the simple life.

**The Application of Jingdezhen Ceramic Art in the Modern Liquor Bottles Design**

Jingdezhen in China has a long history of ceramic production and profound ceramic culture. Jingdezhen rose with its ceramics. It’s the birthplace of the world ceramics. It has been prosperous for more than 1 thousand years by relying only on the single handicraft and its ceramic products are collected by the museums in all countries, which is very rare in the world. The special ceramic history and culture in Jingdezhen cultivates the oldest industrial development in Chinese history, which lays favorable conditions for the creative industry of Jingdezhen ceramic liquor bottle under the new situation with the profound liquor culture[10].

**Combination of Jingdezhen Ceramic Culture and Liquor Culture**

Creative industries are developed from the innovative ideas and creative activities of people. Creativity is the basis of creation, invention and innovation. Rather than a tree without a root or water without a resource, it’s generated from the accumulation of human civilization. In fact, it’s the intelligent recreation of the existing human civilization. Therefore, the essence of the creative industry is the inheritance and further development and utilization of human civilization. It puts emphasis on the innovation of culture and art and on the promotion role of culture and art on the economy and the industries. It’s originated from culture and above it. Undoubtedly, more than one thousand years ago, the ceramic manufacturing art of Jingdezhen was regarded as a magical mystery which caused a sensation and exploration at home and abroad. In the Song dynasty, the fine ceramics produced in
“Changnan” were exported to many countries and regions in the world. They were also favored by the emperors as the imperial tribute; In the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, Jingdezhen was famous for manufacturing the court wares, which made Jingdezhen ceramic manufacturing industry attain the summit. Jingdezhen played a decisive role in the ceramic manufacturing industry in China and even in the world and enjoyed a fame of the ceramic capital of the world with the unique charming ceramic history and culture. Its exquisite and high-grade porcelain became the pronoun of Jingdezhen ceramics. Blue and white porcelain, underglaze blue with rice pattern, famille rose porcelain, eggshell porcelain and other fine ceramic products were popular among people. Long history, good quality, and systematic, complete and skilled porcelain making technique laid a good foundation for Jingdezhen ceramic creative industry and the rise and development of the creative industry of ceramic liquor bottle in the new period. In Fig.1, the decorative pattern on the bottle of Fenjiu, a famous liquor brand in Jiangxi, adopts the color and technique of blue-and-white porcelain and combines with Chinese calligraphy. The white background color is decorated with the bright blue flower, elegant and noble. Those not only apply different styles of the ceramic decorative art in the personalized liquor package design; more importantly, the implied decorative spirit is integrated with the overall design concept.

![Figure 1. The bottle design of Fenjiu.](image)

China has been the hometown of liquor making since ancient times. Liquor has a long history. It’s not only an objective object but also a cultural symbol. Liquor vessel holds the special juice and spreads culture and history at the same time. As a special handicraft, it integrates liquor art, liquor history, ceramic art, pottery, porcelain, painting, calligraphy, poetry, sculpture and folk custom together. Thus, liquor vessel is not only the carrier of liquor but also an important embodiment of the liquor culture.

As is well known, the liquor culture and the porcelain culture have a long history in China. As two miracles of China’s one thousand years of civilization, they have been taking the lead all the time. Instead of competing with each other, they are integrated. Liquor has the profound cultural connotations and different style; porcelain has the unique artistic expression and uncommon taste. The development of the ceramic liquor bottle is to pour the liquor culture into the essence of the porcelain culture and take porcelain as the container and liquor as the content to play the national culture with the resonance between porcelain and liquor. At the same time, porcelain and liquor are combined to make porcelain more beautiful and liquor mellower[11].

The Complete Ceramic Manufacturing Technique and Perfect Supporting System of the Ceramic Industry in Jingdezhen

The development of Jingdezhen ceramic industry goes back to ancient times. One thousand years of ceramic manufacturing history and perfect technique support the development of Jingdezhen city industry. Blue-and-white porcelain, full-color porcelain, red glaze and plain tricolor in Kangxi Period, famille rose decoration, fancy color vase and colored enamel porcelain in Yongzheng and Qianlong Periods and all sorts of color glazes achieved the unprecedented achievements. Four product series of blue and white porcelain, engraved porcelain, famille rose porcelain and color glaze porcelain integrate sculpture, colored drawing, design and modeling together to make
the ceramic art system become an indispensable part of the excellent cultural heritage of the Chinese nation.

After the reform and opening up, due to some adjustments and recognition, Jingdezhen ceramic industry presented the diversified development in the industrial structure. Daily-used porcelain, artistic porcelain, architectural and sanitary ceramics and industrial ceramics have become important parts of Jingdezhen ceramics; special ceramics, electronic ceramics and high-tech ceramics also have obtained the corresponding development; in the industrial technology, geological exploration, raw material production, equipment manufacturing, ceramics production and sales and other links have formed the complete supporting system of the ceramic industry. The high-quality kaolin, good water with few impurities, long history of ceramic manufacturing technique and perfect supporting system of the ceramic industry make Jingdezhen ceramics favored by people due to the characteristics of fine quality, environmental protection, heat resistance, durability, easiness to clean and brightness and provide the strong technical support and guarantee system for the rise and development of the creative industry of Jingdezhen ceramic liquor bottle.

**The Thought about the Development of the Creative Industry of Jingdezhen Ceramic Liquor Bottle**

The application of ceramics in liquor making has many advantages: the raw materials of ceramics are harmless and odorless, which meets the basic requirements of the daily use appliances; ceramics have certain breathability, which has good aging acceleration effect in the process of aging; its small permeability, good tightness and strong corrosion resistance can avoid alcohol volatilization and chemical reaction; its slow heat conduction can maintain the appropriate temperature of liquor and ensure the long time of storage. In addition, glazed ceramics have elegant shape and smooth glaze surface, which make them easy to clean. All those advantages fully demonstrate that it’s the trend of the time and people’s high-level pursuit for life to produce the liquor bottles with ceramics. It is known that ceramic bottle production is mainly distributed in Guangdong, Hunan, Shandong, Jiangxi and Hebei Province. The national ceramic bottle sales are about 8 billion yuan. There are over 30 ceramic liquor bottler manufacturers in Jingdezhen with about 5000 employees. The annual sales are about 1 billion yuan, accounting for 1/8 of the total sales across the country.

At present, the ceramic liquor bottler creative industry cluster has been initially formed in Jingdezhen ceramic industrial park where a complete industrial chain has been formed from raw material processing, packaging to transportation. In terms of the total amount, Jingdezhen ceramic liquor bottle production has had a certain scale with certain influence in the domestic market, but from the point of long-term development, the backward manual operation and the innovation of the ceramic bottle design are still the main problems in Jingdezhen ceramic liquor bottle production. The creative industry of Jingdezhen ceramic liquor bottle should seek changes and innovations and make great efforts for development rather than accepting the situation.

**Conclusions**

Most It can be seen from the above analysis that the forms reflecting the semantics of ceramic liquor bottles are diversified, but each kind of ceramic liquor bottle reflects its semantics through several forms rather than a single one. The shape design of ceramic liquor bottle should be logical and scientific. On the premise of market and consumer positioning and on the basis of fully understanding the cognition and emotional characteristics of the target consumer group, it makes the shaping semantics suitable for the corresponding cultural background. Through the organic connection between content and form, it conveys the enough product information and spiritual cultural connotation.

The color and quality of ceramics are the external manifestation of the internal quality of the material. They are coarse, fine, warm, or sharp, bringing people different psychological experience. The ceramic liquor bottle also show different semantic features due to the different materials. Thus, it’s necessary to grasp the material characteristics of ceramics and integrate the shaping factor and the quality together effectively to fully show the perfect state of the material and more perfectly reflect the semantic characteristics.

In addition, the shaping semantics of the ceramic liquor bottle is just an important part of the whole liquor
packaging semantics. In order to attract the consumers, it should combine the shaping semantics with color, texture, graphic, text and outer packing, and transform and sublimate those visual symbols through artistic means to form the perfect packaging system. In Jingdezhen, with the perfect combination of porcelain and liquor, the profound historical culture, strong ceramic technology and ceramic cultural and artistic resources will certainly push the ceramic liquor bottle creative industry to the commanding height.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am very appreciated that during the process of writing this paper, Ms. Wang Min has given me many invaluable suggestions and ideas to inspire me and assist me to complete the writing successfully. This research was financially supported by the Scientific Research Project of Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute, and I would also like to acknowledge its financial aid.

REFERENCES


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