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Exploring the Elements Affecting Aesthetic Value Philosophy Creative Inspiration of Chinese Porcelain Flower-and-Bird Painting

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Abstract

This study focuses on the aesthetic value and philosophical foundations of Chinese ceramic flower-and-bird. However, it is a blind spot for the variables affecting the aesthetic value philosophy of Chinese ceramic flower-and-bird paintings as subject matter for Porcelain surfaces design. Therefore, this study aims to develop a philosophy of aesthetic value for porcelain flower-and-bird paintings and enhance the cultural level and aesthetic appeal of porcelain flower-and-bird painting decorations. And the data is analyzed through document analysis and Thematic analysis. The study's findings offer a valuable resource for students and artisans.

Keywords: Aesthetic value philosophy; Porcelain painting; flower-and-bird painting.

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1.0 Introduction

Philosophical theory is a discipline that studies fundamental and universal problems, generally employing a rigorous logical system of cosmology, and examines the nature of the universe, humanity's place within it, and other fundamental issues. The philosophy of aesthetics is driven by philosophical theory, where beauty is a kind of value, and the philosophy of aesthetic value is closely connected to human beings (Li, 1991). There are famous representatives of aesthetic value philosophy in both China and the West. Significant differences exist in aesthetic consciousness between China and the West. The West emphasizes the opposition between man and nature, whereas China emphasizes the harmony between man and nature.

Additionally, the West tends to emphasize the sublime, whereas China focuses on beauty (Zhou, 1990). Through extensive literature, it is found that there is a notable lack of studies on the philosophy of the aesthetic value of Chinese ceramic flower-and-bird paintings. This research will consult literature and interview experts to collect philosophical variables that affect the aesthetic value of Chinese ceramic flower-and-bird paintings.

2.0 Literature Review Introduction

China's aesthetic value philosophy originated in the pre-Qin period, influenced by ancient Chinese philosophical thought, including that of Lao Tzu, Zhuangzi, and Confucius. Chinese aesthetic value philosophy encompasses Confucianism, Legalism, Mohism, and other

traditional classical philosophical perspectives, as well as Western philosophical ideas introduced through modern Marxism. (Guo,2021). For example, Shen (2014) mentioned in his article the origin of calligraphy and painting with classical Chinese philosophy. The primary concept of Taoism in the Chinese classical philosophical system is the dialectical relationship between "one" and "ten thousand." All things in the world are born of "one", and the source of "one" is deep in all things in heaven and earth, and the change and development of all things in heaven and earth are affected by it. The "one" here does not mean "one" or "everything," but rather "nothing." Therefore, one is also the Tao of nature. Only by completely following the "one painting", that is, the "Tao" of all things in nature, can the painter reach the highest realm of painting. For example, under the influence of classical philosophy and Zen thought, Chinese painter Shi Tao put forward the theory of "One painting", which is not a specific painting and calligraphy creation technique, but a kind of "Tao" in line with people's hearts, and is the embodiment of Confucianism, Taoism, and Zen thoughts in artistic creation. Heaven, earth, man, and the mountains, trees, and rivers, as emphasized by Shi Tao, belong to the nature of heaven and earth. Painting, as a discipline of the humanities, should highlight the core of "Tao nature"(Sheng, 2014)

Feng Wrote in his research that the essence of Zhuangzi's aesthetic activities is the spiritual realm of human beings, and he believes that "Tao" is the highest realm of beauty. Only the unity of truth, goodness, and beauty, that is beauty. "Tao" is nature, so beauty is nature. Therefore, his aesthetic focus is on the relationship between man and nature. Thus, Chinese painters are often influenced by this philosophical idea of aesthetic value. In painting, I am willing to express the freedom and noble personality that I yearn for. Through this approach to painting, the painter's life is elevated to a state of free mind, appreciating life with aesthetic charm (Feng, 2020).

Zhang mentioned the philosophical thought of Confucius in the article, stating that "benevolence" is the highest moral standard in Confucius' core idea, and emphasized that people should consciously observe etiquette and pay attention to its practice. These subjects, therefore, frequently appear in paintings, often reminding people to have a heart of benevolence and justice and to observe basic etiquette. This is like later Marx's philosophy. Practice is a common theoretical characteristic of Marx's philosophy and Confucius' philosophy. The difference lies in the fact that Confucius embodies the transformation of the human spirit, emphasizing the practice of introversion. In contrast, Marx focuses on the development of productive forces through the practice of extroversion (Zhang, 2020).

Kong discusses how to view the poetic characteristics of aesthetic value from a philosophical perspective in this paper. From the philosophical perspective, value has objective reality, and aesthetic value is the self-confirmation and self-identification of human cognition of the world. The author attempts to identify four poetic characteristics of aesthetic value through an analysis of the philosophical significance of aesthetic value. In this way, the mystery of the aesthetic value of artistic works is revealed, allowing people to better understand the role of human beings in shaping the aesthetic value of these works. The author believes that beauty is the result rather than the cause, and it is not beauty that leads to aesthetic activities, but aesthetic activities that lead to beauty. In short, people harness the power of nature to create a spiritual lamp, which illuminates the spiritual home of human beings and enables them to live poetically on earth (Kong, 2015).

Zhao believes that the essence and function of aesthetics lies in transforming the needs of human survival and development into the pursuit of human emotions. The regulation of emotion does not mean the exclusion of knowledge; rather, emotion is something more fundamental in the field of aesthetics and artistic activity, and if it is lost, the value of understanding will also be lost. Man will lose his power and become a machine without a purpose, so there will be nothing to say about the pursuit of beauty and the creation of art. The emotional effect brought about by beauty activities will unconsciously influence and promote people's various social behaviors and activities, thereby contributing to the human social system's pursuit of health, all-around development, and harmonious integration, forming a virtuous circle trend (Zhao, 2006).

In conclusion, the aesthetic value philosophy of Chinese flower-and-bird painting is closely related to classical Chinese philosophy, which is also closely related to traditional Chinese religious thought, including Taoism and Confucianism. Only by completely following the objective laws of all things in nature can the artist reach the highest realm of painting. Any artistic creation is inseparable from the painter's own ideological state and living environment, and the process of painting is the process of the creator's own artistic thought and social and cultural background. Through the analysis of traditional Chinese painting theory, philosophy, and cultural thought, Chinese flower-and-bird painting is an organic combination of subjective aesthetic feelings and objective aesthetic objects. At the same time, Chinese materialist dialectics emphasizes that creative subjects should give full play to their subjective initiative, grasp the basic laws of artistic creation, and discern the essence of things through phenomena, that is, the beauty inherent in nature. Only through the careful observation of the painter can the "beauty" of nature be vividly expressed.

3.0 Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative analysis method. Exploring the elements that affect the aesthetic value and creative inspiration of Chinese porcelain flower-and-bird painting. This study employed a qualitative method to investigate the aesthetic philosophy and creative inspiration behind Chinese porcelain flower-and-bird paintings. A systematic literature search (Wos, Scopus, CNKI) was conducted with clear inclusion and exclusion criteria, documented through a PRISMA flowchart. Seven papers, seven books, and four experts were included in the study. The experts were chosen based on their professional backgrounds in ceramics and aesthetic theory. All materials were coded and analyzed using thematic analysis. Triangulation across literature and expert insights ensured reliability and validity, and procedures were clearly justified.

We have conducted a comprehensive literature review, utilizing the keywords "aesthetic value philosophy," "creative inspiration," "ceramic flower," and "bird painting," among others, to compile a list of relevant electronic books and literature. This review follows systematic guidelines for preliminary screening using Web of Science, Scopus, and CNKI databases. Through repeated research, seven

relevant papers and seven books have been identified (Figure 1), providing valuable insights into the aesthetic value and philosophical inspiration for creating Chinese ceramic flower-and-bird paintings. In addition to the literature review, four experts were interviewed.

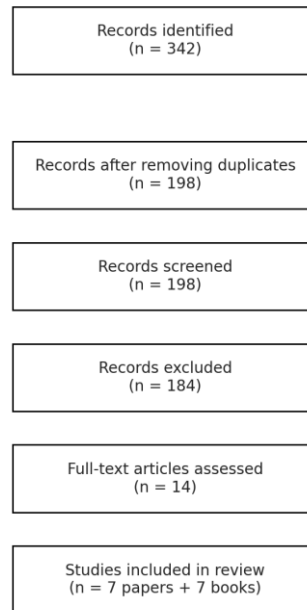


Figure 1: Prisma Flow Diagram of Study Selection

After data collection, the contents of each document and expert interview are carefully analyzed, summarized, and recorded in electronic form for further examination. Using qualitative methods such as theme analysis, this paper analyzes the recurring themes in the aesthetic philosophy of Chinese ceramic flower-and-bird painting.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the data, strict verification measures have been implemented. Clear inclusion criteria were established for the literature review, and strict screening procedures were followed. Different experts specialize in various areas, and the content provided for the interviews presents diverse perspectives, thereby mitigating the risk of bias and supporting the conclusions drawn from the literature review. In addition, the findings were cross-referenced and triangulated with existing literature to verify their accuracy and consistency. By employing qualitative methods and robust data validation techniques, this study aims to provide credible insights into the aesthetic philosophy of Chinese ceramic flower-and-bird painting.

4.0 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Aesthetic value philosophy of porcelain flower-and-bird painting.

By interviewing 11 experts and asking questions about the factors influencing the aesthetic value philosophy of porcelain flower-and-bird paintings, the experts gave different opinions.

Expert Lai Dequan proposed that the aesthetic value philosophy of porcelain flower-and-bird painting has the following elements. Philosophy of contradiction. He believes that ceramic flower-and-bird painting is closely connected to Chinese philosophy, and the creation of ceramic painting utilizes the contradictory principle of philosophy to achieve a combination of opposition and unity. "Contradiction" is a famous piece written by Mao. "Contradiction" refers to the universal relationship of opposites and the unity of things. In short, contradiction is the unity of opposites. Conflict is the opposite of contradiction, and identity is the unified attribute that contradicts it. They are the two fundamental attributes inherent in contradiction (Mao, 1975).

For example, the ceramic glaze produced by Ge Kiln in Zhejiang, China, will crack due to the lack of a suitable formula and an incorrect expansion coefficient, resulting in cracked enamel. Initially, it was a defective work, but after cracking, another kind of ice crack aesthetic feeling was formed, making the cracked works of the Ge kiln a treasure handed down to the world. Today, many shops in Long Quan City, Zhejiang Province, China, still sell this cracked style of ceramics. In addition, the ceramic enamel, originally only red, also showed green. Because it is in the firing process, the copper oxide in the material changes to a different color after firing at more than 1000 °C. The REDOX exhibits an opposite color combination of red and green (if it is not REDOX, it will appear earthen yellow, which is not visually appealing). Finally, the pearl glaze (Figure 2), created by Master Lai Dequan, embodies a theme of contradictory philosophy. He initially matched a glaze for the pearl color but inadvertently matched the wrong one. Still, the three-dimensional particles formed after firing are more beautiful. When the painter applies the pearl glaze, the picture creates a halo effect. Still, it can also accumulate repeatedly to form the effect of oil painting. Taoist natural philosophy. This philosophy emphasizes that designers must observe and understand the changes in nature, form, and color, and skillfully integrate them into the design, allowing design and nature to achieve a harmonious symbiosis (Wang, 2019). Chinese ceramic flower and bird paintings often feature various color combinations,

such as the pairing of red and green, commonly incorporating gold, silver, and white colors to create a range of color combinations and fusions.



Figure 2: The pearl glaze created Porcelain Painting by Master Lai Dequan

Expert Zhao Kun said that: 1. In ancient China, Buddhism and Taoism were the main philosophical thoughts, but he believed that ceramic painting was more closely related to Taoist philosophical thoughts, showing the concept of circulation, and integrating everything into it. The Taoist law mainly advocates for nature and follows the rules of nature. The ceramic combines fire and earth. It simultaneously shows the "five elements" philosophy of the Book of I Ching." That is the cycle of metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. A relationship of mutual support, promotion, or facilitation characterizes the five elements. The meaning of the five elements includes five essential dynamics through the evolution process of Yin and Yang (the two opposing principles in nature): water (representing moistening), fire (representing inflammation), gold (representing convergence), wood (representing extension), and earth (representing neutralization). Ancient Chinese philosophers employed the five-element theory to explain the formation of all things in the world and their interrelationships. It emphasizes the whole and describes the movement of things and the transformation relationship. Yin and Yang are fundamental concepts in ancient Chinese philosophy, representing the unity of opposites (Wang, 2018). Ceramics require soil and water to form billets, wood fires for high-temperature firing, and gold water for painting, in addition to ceramic pigments that contain metal elements. Therefore, ceramic painting is related to the philosophy of the Book of Changes, also known as the "I Ching."

Shao Xue Tian, an expert, mentioned that she usually likes Chinese "Tai-chi" sports; she believes that Chinese ceramic painting and Chinese "Tai-chi" philosophy are closely linked. The Chinese tai chi movement is characterized by its fast and slow components, with specific rules and rhythms; people's movement also has its own way of thinking, much like the painter in ceramic painting. The painter will paint quickly and slowly according to his thoughts and moods, showing his aesthetic value and emotions. (Qian, 2019) written a book that said Chinese "Tai-chi" sports is one of ancient China's most characteristic and representative philosophical thoughts. The complete movement process of Qi represents the highest level of Chinese "Tai-chi" sports (Figure 3), which harmonizes the entire body of the practitioner, including the synchronization of breathing and movement, as well as the integration of internal and external elements. Practicing Chinese "Tai-chi" sports not only exercises the body but also cultivates the mind. It teaches us how to find balance in the hustle and bustle of life and how to stay calm under pressure. The philosophical thought contained in the Chinese "Tai-chi" sport is its unique feature. It emphasizes the harmony of "Yin and Yang," where hardness is overcome by softness, allowing people to experience the power of harmony and balance during the practice process. This philosophy applies not only to martial arts but also to painting, helping us better face the challenges and pressures of life, appreciate the charm of hardness and softness, and improve our health and inner cultivation.



Figure 3: "Tai-chi" sports

Cheng Yu Qian experts believe that the aesthetic value philosophy influences ceramic flower and bird paintings. The Chinese aesthetic value philosophy has Buddhist philosophy and feng shui philosophy. The Dharma encompasses profound and broad philosophical insights, which teach people how to perceive the world correctly and treat themselves and others with compassion. In the

process of studying Buddhism, people should learn to observe their inner disturbances, transcend the confusion of appearances, and gain insight into the true meaning of life through wisdom. Only through continuous practice and study can we gradually understand the meaning of life and gain actual knowledge. Therefore, Buddhist philosophy profoundly influenced many painters, who continued to practice and learn, ultimately creating Buddhist ceramic works. For example, many paintings of lotus hands are because the Buddha symbolizes guiding the maze, and the lotus symbolizes a clean, free meaning (Baiyun, 2006).

Vastu philosophy contains profound natural philosophy and humanistic wisdom. From a literal analysis, "wind" refers to the flowing air in nature, and "water" is the source of life that nourishes all things on earth, both of which constitute the cornerstone of life and reproduction. Vastu philosophy, in essence, is some knowledge about the selection and optimization of the living environment, which covers a wide range of fields such as homes, palaces, tombs, temples, villages, and even urban planning, mainly focusing on the layout of the Yin house (mausoleum) and the Yang house (living place). Its historical origin can be traced back to "the art of." This ancient skill is deeply rooted in folk customs, religion, the concept of good luck, psychology, and the philosophy of harmonious coexistence between man and nature. Viewed from the perspective of modern science, the philosophy of Vastu integrates the essence of geophysics, hydrogeology, environmental landscape science, arcology, cosmic magnetic field, meteorology, and human body informatics, forming a comprehensive scientific system. Therefore, the philosophy of Vastu deeply influences the artist, and the content of the painting changes accordingly, with specific requirements for the composition, layout, and placement of the ceramic flower and bird painting (Zeng, 2010). Additionally, China's aesthetic value philosophy is closely tied to its political context. Different rulers' political influence on the times' aesthetic value philosophy.

4.2 The elements affecting the creative inspiration of porcelain flower-and-bird painting.

Through interviews with 11 experts, the elements that affect the creative inspiration of porcelain flower-and-bird painting were explored, and each expert provided a unique perspective.

Lai Dequan, an expert, noted that people's environment and lifestyle have undergone changes, and the factors influencing the inspiration for porcelain flower and bird painting have also evolved. Ceramic paintings need to conform to the aesthetic style of modern people and can resonate with contemporary people after creation. His inspiration comes from natural scenery, such as the beautiful scenery of the Galsang flower, the desert, and Wutai Mountain. In addition, he absorbed the painting style of Western Impressionism and integrated Chinese and Western painting techniques and styles.

Expert Zhao Kun's creative inspiration comes from two aspects: 1. Natural scenery. He attempted to create new ceramic shapes, drawing inspiration from natural stones. The ceramic shape was made into a bionic stone shape, and then the front and back sides of the stone shape were cut and sprayed with different glaze colors. Create two different color contrasts, then paint on the front and back of each facet. 2. Chinese literature books and Chinese mythology stories. For example, the content of his paintings is inspired by the Chinese literature book "Dream of Red Mansions" and the "Dunhuang flying sky story" of Chinese mythological stories. The archetypes of these stories inspire the creation of paintings.

(Liu & Han, 2023) Wrote a book that said that, from the origin and function of the Dunhuang flying, it is not a god but a combination of Kana. Katharva is the transliteration of the Sanskrit word in India, translated as the God of heavenly songs and called the God of incense because of the fragrance emanating from his body. Chanara is a transliteration of the ancient Indian Sanskrit term, which translates to the God of heaven. Khatarva and Chutnara were originally the gods of entertainment, song, and dance, which are part of ancient Indian mythology and Brahmanism. Myth and legend say that they are a good song, a good dance, inseparable, harmonious, and a loving couple. Later, Buddhism absorbed it and became one of the two heavenly gods among the eight gods of the Heavenly Dragon.

Expert Shao Xue Tian mentioned that a large part of the creative inspiration for ceramic flower and bird painting comes from excellent works and painters. The painters learn the essence of their craft by copying excellent works and then innovating and adapting to create ceramic pieces in their own style. For example, Shi Tao, a renowned painter in ancient China, proposed the concepts of "borrowing from the past to open the present" and "brush and ink should follow The Times," meaning that painting should draw inspiration from excellent painters and works of the past. Still, the painting style should also change according to the changes in The Times.

Cheng Yu Qian experts mentioned that our traditional Chinese culture influenced the artist's creative inspiration; Chinese people like auspicious patterns, and picturesque bamboo symbolizes the gentleman, painting peach and crane represents longevity, especially in the Qing Dynasty, when the powder ancient color porcelain painting subject matter, are intentionally depicted in the painting, on behalf of luck. People still advocate for traditional Chinese culture in modern times, but painters have begun to innovate. Modern painters believe ceramic art needs to be merged with Chinese and Western cultures to bring Chinese culture to the world.

5.0 Conclusion

This study explored the key factors that influence both the aesthetic value philosophy and creative inspiration of porcelain flower-and-bird painting. Based on interviews with experts and analysis of book content, several important philosophical ideas were identified. These include the philosophy of contradiction, Taoist views on nature, the "five elements" philosophy from the I Ching, Tai Chi philosophy, Buddhist thought, and Vastu philosophy. These ideas shape how artists understand beauty, balance, and harmony in their works. The study also found that creative inspiration comes from a wide range of sources. These include natural scenery, Western painting styles, Chinese literature, Chinese mythology, influential Chinese painters, ceramic artworks, and traditional Chinese culture. These elements provide artists with visual, emotional, and cultural resources that guide their creative decisions.

Although the study provides meaningful insights, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the findings are based on a small number of expert interviews and a select body of literature, which may not fully represent all viewpoints in the field. Second, expert

opinions contain subjective interpretations influenced by each expert's artistic background, which may affect the completeness of the results. Third, the literature reviewed mainly focuses on traditional and mainstream theories, so new or alternative aesthetic perspectives may not be fully included. Finally, the results are based on qualitative analysis, which means they lack quantitative testing and cannot be generalized to all situations in ceramic art.

Future studies may expand the sample size and diversify expert backgrounds to enhance the representativeness of the findings. Quantitative or mixed-methods approaches could be employed to further validate the relationships identified in this study. In addition, examining contemporary aesthetic perspectives—such as digital art, cross-cultural influences, and modern reinterpretations of classical philosophy—would deepen understanding of the evolving aesthetic system of porcelain flower-and-bird painting. Comparative research across different cultural art forms and investigations into how educational and creative environments shape artistic philosophy may also provide valuable extensions to this field.

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Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study

The study's findings provide insight into the philosophical inspirations and offer a valuable resource for students and craftsmen. It also fills the knowledge of the aesthetic value, philosophical creation, and inspiration of ceramic flowers and birds.

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