

# Research on Ceramic Cultural and Creative Product Design Based on Traditional Creative Thought - Taking Guilin Plum Vase as an Example

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## Abstract:

This paper studies the combination of traditional creative thought and modern ceramic cultural and creative product design, discusses the embodiment of traditional creative thought in ceramic cultural and creative product design, and designs products with modern aesthetics and practical functions on the basis of inheriting traditional culture. Taking Guilin plum vase as an example, this paper analyzes the traditional creation thought contained in Guilin plum vase, and further excavates its essence. Through the research, the traditional creation thought is integrated into the ceramic cultural and creative design with Guilin plum vase as the carrier, and the feasibility of the traditional creation thought in the modern ceramic cultural and creative design is verified by the way of design practice.

## Keywords:

Traditional Creation Thought, Ceramic Cultural and Creative Products, Guilin Plum Vase

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## 1. Introduction

As the theoretical support of ancient Chinese creation activities, Chinese traditional creation thought not only contains the life wisdom of our ancestors, but also contains rich humanistic thought, which is also an inexhaustible spiritual treasure for future generations. Guilin plum vase is praised by experts and scholars as "national treasure and unique in Guilin". The traditional creation thought contained in it is worthy of contemporary inheritance and dissemination. Inheriting culture is one of the important responsibilities of the Chinese nation. We should not only adhere to cultural inheritance, but also think about cultural innovation. Re-explore the connotation behind the traditional creation thought, inherit and carry forward the Chinese traditional creation spirit, keep up with the pace of the times, make the modern design concept and Chinese traditional creation thought integrate and permeate each other, and truly realize the organic combination of traditional culture and modern design.

## **2. The Combination of Traditional Creation Thought and Ceramic Cultural and Creative Products**

Culture and design are intertwined, so the evolution of culture not only reflects but also determines the development of design [1]. With the increasing attention of the public to Chinese traditional culture, ceramic cultural and creative products are increasingly pursued and loved by the majority of consumers. However, most ceramic cultural and creative products in the current market directly copy the traditional cultural symbols. This too straightforward design has lost a certain cultural connotation and can not resonate with consumers. Therefore, at present, if China's ceramic cultural and creative design wants to maintain its cultural characteristics and competitiveness under the wave of market globalization, it needs to integrate Chinese traditional creation thought into its product design.

### ***2.1. “Unity of Heaven and Man” - the Principle of Harmony of Ceramic Cultural and Creative Products***

As the overall feature of Chinese traditional culture, the thought of “unity of heaven and man” emphasizes the relationship and indivisibility between man and nature, which also affects Chinese traditional creative thought [2]. This thought was first put forward by the Taoist Zhuangzi, and after continuous improvement, Dong Zhongshu in the Han Dynasty gradually formed a philosophical ideological system.

The harmony principle of ceramic cultural and creative products is the essential requirement of design. The creation thought of “unity of heaven and man” should be vividly reflected in the process of design and creation. It is the origin of Chinese traditional culture. To reflect this thought, we must deal with the relationship between creation materials, process links, creative skills and structural principles, so as to achieve the harmonious unity of people, things and culture. Therefore, when designing cultural and creative products, we need to repeatedly refine the characteristic culture, take culture as the foundation and products as the carrier, grasp the relationship between culture and products, and finally ensure the harmonious unity of consumers, products and culture. We should make it clear that traditional culture is the core element of ceramic cultural creation. Therefore, in the design of ceramic cultural creation products, we should combine traditional creation ideas with modern design ideas to design products that can not only reflect cultural connotation but also conform to modern aesthetics.

### ***2.2. “People-oriented” - the Principle of Agreeableness of Ceramic Cultural and Creative Products***

“People-oriented” comes from the book *Guanzi*. “People-oriented” emphasizes the important position of “people” in the struggle, and gradually extends the “fundamental” characteristics of “people”, that is, “people” is always in a core position. This thought can be reflected in the creation activities by paying attention to the mastery of the scale of “man”, that is, taking the all-round development of “man” as the core [3].

The pleasant principle of ceramic cultural and creative products is the starting point of design. The lasting attraction of ceramic products in history comes from their practicability and aesthetic value. This unique charm is irreplaceable by other products, and it is also an important reason to attract consumers [4]. With the continuous progress of society, in addition to the practicability of products, people

pay more and more attention to advanced pursuit, such as spiritual enjoyment. However, most of the current ceramic cultural and creative design, whether in modeling or pattern, is still relatively conservative and can not meet people's advanced needs. Therefore, whether a product can touch consumers or not, humanistic care in design is indispensable. We should adhere to the "people-oriented" principle in the traditional creation thought, and take consumers as the center of design and the object of service. Only when it is pleasant can it benefit people.

### ***2.3. Constant Reason Can't Be Followed - the Innovative Principle of Ceramic Cultural and Creative Products***

Huainan Wang Liu'an said: "constant reason can't be followed, and equipment can't be caused". That is to say, we should not follow the routine, stick to the rules and remain unchanged, and continue to innovate [5]. Design is just like this. If you blindly stick to your laurels, you will be eliminated by the society. "Common reasons cannot be followed, and instruments cannot be caused" is the ideological theory summarized by people in the development of creation since ancient times.

The innovative principle of ceramic cultural and creative products is the core element of design. Cultural and creative products must be continuously innovated and designed, so as to highlight the unique characteristics and cultural sales value of cultural and creative products [6]. The value of products is determined by their cultural and creative value. Chinese culture is broad and profound, and there are countless excellent cultural elements. Only by excavating good ideas and presenting these cultural elements one by one, can cultural and creative products have the soul. Ceramic cultural and creative design needs to transform culture through creativity, combine traditional culture with products in an innovative form, and endow products with cultural connotation, so that consumers can not only accept it willingly, but also feel the unique charm of culture when using it, so as to further inherit and carry forward Chinese culture.

## **3. The Artistic Characteristics of Guilin Plum Vase Shape**

The number of Ming Dynasty plum bottles unearthed in Guilin ranks first in China. Its abundance, variety and beauty of decoration are rare in the world. Through the analysis of the artistic characteristics of Guilin plum vase, it is not difficult to find its superb skill level, as well as the process of ancestors' pursuit of beauty and creation of beauty.

### ***3.1. The Vigorous and Steady Anthropomorphic Form***

Guilin plum has the characteristics of small mouth, short neck, abundant shoulder, thin bottom, encircling foot and so on. Looking at the characteristics of Guilin plum vase, we basically follow this modeling law. Even if there are changes, there are only slight changes in the parts of shoulder, neck, foot and so on. From the appearance, there are leg shape, rod shape, bullet shape, etc; The bottleneck is long and short, thick and thin, cylindrical and trapezoidal; The abdomen has a waist, a waist, a belly without a waist; The lower abdomen has adduction and external drum; The bottom has a ring foot and a flat bottom [7]. From a distance, the bottle mouth is like a person's head and the bottle body is like a person's body, showing the shape of rich shoulders and round abdomen, showing a sense of integrity and steadiness. It is not common for ancient Chinese ceramics to have such a highly anthropomorphic form.

### ***3.2. Mellow and Full Contour***

Plum vase is a completely symmetrical utensil, and its shape depends on its contour. Guilin plum vase has a stronger contrast between the curve and straightness of its contour line and richer twists and turns. The mouth and neck of Guilin plum bottles are mostly changed by short lines or short curves, and the bottle body forms different arcs with the smoothness of shoulder lines. This contour line is round and full, rich and solid, like a bow full of strings. It winds and turns from the caliber part, short and powerful, ready to go. Then the arc slides through the widest part of the bottle body from top to bottom, and the arc gradually slows down and retracts. When reaching the foot, the curve of adduction is obviously outward and neat. The whole contour line is continuous, relaxed and integrated, so that the Guilin plum vase can achieve a flexible and full artistic effect.

### ***3.3. The Decorative Patterns with Rich Levels***

Due to the small space for innovation in modeling, the ancestors pursued surprise in the decorative patterns of plum bottles. The decorative styles of Guilin plum vase are rich and diverse, which are mainly reflected in: freehand brushwork in painting; The decorative pattern is expanded from plant pattern to figure pattern; The glaze color has developed from blue and white to colorful and colorful; Ideologically, it mainly pursues individuality, pays attention to the expression of emotion and aesthetic taste, and pays attention to the embodiment of nature and self in art [8]. The decorative pattern of Guilin plum vase can be roughly divided into main pattern and decorative pattern. Decorative patterns mainly include rolling grass pattern, cloud shoulder pattern, brocade ground opening pattern, seahorse pattern, dragon and phoenix pattern, peacock pattern, cloud crane pattern, etc., which are mainly distributed on the neck and shoulder of plum vase and take care of each other. Painting decoration has become the most popular form of decoration of Guilin plum vase. Its abdomen is mainly the painting decoration area of the main pattern, which mainly includes figure pattern, flower and bird pattern, dragon and phoenix pattern and so on.

## **4. The Traditional Creation Thought Contained in Guilin Plum Vase**

The social thought of an era can act on the product of this era, and the product of the same era can clearly reflect the creation thought of an era. We can explore the cultural connotation of artifacts by studying and analyzing them. The number of plum bottles of Ming Dynasty unearthed in Guilin ranks first in China. Nearly 100 plum bottles were found in Jingjiang King's mausoleum in the eastern suburb of Guilin. Their abundance, variety and beauty of decoration and glaze are rare in the world. Some experts call them "national treasures, unique in Guilin" and "Tibetan Chinese ceramic treasures, the most of plum bottles in Ming Dynasty". Therefore, through the analysis of the Ming Dynasty plum vase unearthed in Guilin, we can clearly observe how the bottle ceramic ware changes in shape, decoration and glaze color with the change of social system, and what traditional creation ideas are contained in it.

### ***4.1. The Creation Thought of "Using Tools to Hide Rites"***

"Ritual" is an important proposition of Confucianism. The ritual vigorously maintained in Confucius' speech expresses the social ethics and the hierarchical design of ritual system with "ritual" as the carrier [9]. It is a spiritual measure to maintain and maintain the feudal social order. An important feature of China's ancient creation thought is that the ancients would use utensils to reflect the moral and legal system, etiquette norms and social order. Therefore, utensils were endowed with extraordinary value, and even utensils could represent state power and social status.

For example, the plum vase in the picture of Wanli blue and white baby play in the Ming Dynasty (as shown in Figure 1) reflects the creation thought of “using utensils to hide rites”. The main pattern of the belly of this blue and white plum vase is a scene of children playing and frolicking. In the Ming Dynasty, most of the children’s toys were lotus flowers and lotus leaves, so that the children could learn honest ideas and social etiquette norms in the game.

#### ***4.2. The Creation Thought of “Gentle”***

Liu Xie used the word “wenzhibinbin” to represent the evaluation standard of the article in Wenxindiaolong, and explained the relationship between form and content: content determines form, and form reflects content. This form obeys function, and the principle that function determines form is deeply reflected in the creation thought of ancient ceramic art in China. Porcelain in the form, decoration, glaze color, texture and other formal beauty shows elegance, beauty, simplicity, simplicity and warmth; It is solid, exquisite, balanced, economical and pleasant in function, texture, material, firing and other internal beauty, which is achieved by the craftsmen under the guiding ideology of “gentle”. For example, the plum vase with blue glaze in Wanli of the Ming Dynasty (as shown in Figure 2), the main body of the abdomen is decorated with a picture of egrets and lotus. The white powder painting of lotus is in sharp contrast to the blue glaze. It is beautiful and elegant, simple and atmospheric, sparse but not empty, which is the vivid embodiment of the creation thought of “gentle”.

#### ***4.3. The Creation Thought of “Exchange of Mind and Material”***

“Rational thinking is wonderful, and mind should communicate with material” is a proposition put forward by Liu Xie in the book “Wen Xin Diao Long•Shen Si Pian” of the Southern Dynasty. “Traveling between God and things” refers to the relationship between the creator’s spiritual realm and the creation activities. Liu Xie believes that it is the acme of aesthetic creative conception activities, breaking through the limitation of space and realizing aesthetic freedom [10]. China is a smart country with a large number of good craftsmen. Good craftsmen of all ages emerge one after another precisely because they can achieve the selfless state of “traveling between God and things” in the process of creation and devote themselves to creation activities without distractions. For example, the Ming Wanli blue and white “four love plum vase made in the year of the great Ming Wanli” (as shown in Figure 3), the overall decoration level is clear, the color of blue and white is harmonious, the surface is fine and smooth, the shape is exquisite and regular, and the decoration is extremely exquisite. These exquisite patterns can never be made by ordinary craftsmen, nor can they be easily painted by others, but by outstanding painters.



***Figure 1.*** Wanli blue and white baby play picture plum vase.



***Figure 2.*** Wanli blue glaze pile powder egret green lotus picture plum vase.



***Figure 3.*** Wanli blue and white four love picture plum vase.

## **5. Ceramic Cultural and Creative Products Design Practice**

### ***5.1. Inspiration Source***

Guilin Longji terrace carries the Zhuang culture in northern Guangxi, and its magnificent and colorful national culture makes Longji Zhuang and Yao people carefully protect this treasure land. Looking around, the Dragon Ridge terraced fields are overlapping and rising like sea water, rushing in an overwhelming trend. Terraced fields form a incisive terraced world, showing a magnificent beauty. Longji rice wine is a koji made of traditional glutinous rice planted on Longji terraces and herbs in Longsheng mountain. It is a symbol of Longji culture. This set of ceramic cultural and creative design takes Guilin plum vase as the carrier, Longji terrace culture as the connotation, and integrates the traditional creation thought, so as to design the ceramic cultural and creative products with the characteristics of Guilin Longji.

### ***5.2. Design Ideas***

#### ***5.2.1. Modeling Style***

The ceramic cultural and creative design of the wine set adopts the people-oriented design method in the traditional creation thought. In terms of modeling, because the Guilin plum vase is characterized by wide at the top and narrow at the bottom, and the shin to foot is tilted out, the characteristics of its original plum vase are deformed to lengthen the neck appropriately, so as to control the flow speed of wine and facilitate dumping; Widen its abdomen, so as to make the volume of wine larger and pay more attention to the experience of consumer users. The focus of Guilin plum vase is on the upper part of the utensils, which is not stable enough. Therefore, the area of the bottom of the wine set is increased in the design to make it more stable and reflect humanistic care. The shape of the wine set is very full, which also reflects the beautiful implication of happiness and perfection.

#### ***5.2.2. Decorative Language***

In terms of color, blue and white glaze is used as decorative language, and the glaze is as beautiful as sapphire, which makes the whole set of wine set present a kind of elegant and simple artistic conception beauty. By extracting the geomorphic features of Longji terrace and using the traditional creation thought of image thinking, the original features are abstractly summarized, and the deformed terrace pattern is obtained. The pattern is painted on the wine set by the glaze brushing method. The pattern has both virtual and real, and the combination of virtual and real makes the level rich and full. This wine set looks like a fresh and elegant ink painting from a distance. The artistic conception beauty of the blending of feelings and scenes makes users have emotional resonance.

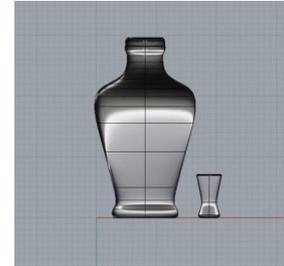
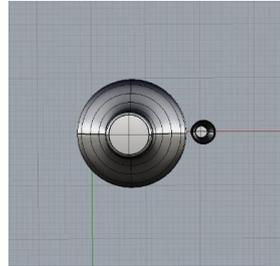
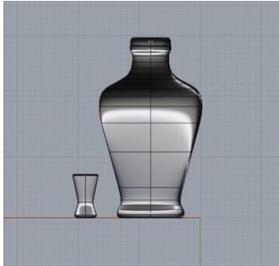
#### ***5.2.3. Material Beauty***

British critic Lide once said: “being faithful to materials is just like being faithful to nature, which is the dogma of aesthetics”. We should always be faithful to ceramic materials in ceramic cultural and creative design, so that the beauty of ceramic materials can be fully displayed. This wine bottle is made of underglaze colored porcelain. Its surface is smooth, soft, smooth and exquisite, and will never fade. The bottle cap is made of wood, and the liquor fully contacts the cork, so that the cork has elasticity and expansion after absorbing water, which can better seal the wine. At the same time, the wood has beautiful texture and rich color, which brings comfort to

people. Combining ceramics with wood, the warmth of wood neutralizes the cold of ceramics, making wine utensils full of vitality.

### 5.3. Effect Display

The following figure shows the front view (Figure 4), side view (Figure 5) and top view (Figure 6) of the wine set.



**Figure 4.** Front view of wine set.    **Figure 5.** Side view of wine set.    **Figure 6.** Top view of wine set.

The following figure is the display effect of wine set (as shown in Figure 7).



**Figure 7.** Effect drawing of wine set.

## 6. Conclusions

Taking Guilin plum vase as an example, this paper deeply understands the philosophical thought contained in ceramic art by analyzing the Chinese traditional creation thought contained therein, and runs through the traditional creation thought in the design of modern ceramic cultural and creative products. Then it discusses people's high-level demand for products under the current social trend of thought, and summarizes the traditional creation thought of harmony, agreeableness and innovation in cultural and creative products. Thus, people can not only feel the beauty of traditional culture in their daily life.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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