

Research on Cultural Production

Liling Underglaze Five-colored Porcelain

Shishi Xiang

Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute
Jingdezhen, China 333000
Hunan University of Technology
Hunan, China 412000

Abstract—With social reform, cultural concept is reflected on implements through cultural production. Implements boast features of the times and convey people's daily life style. Social change, needs of the time, production system and technological conditions influence forming and evolvement of implements' features. This paper is based on research on underglaze five colored porcelain. Through the macroscopical-microcosmic-macroscopical approach, namely research approach of "society-implements-society", it shows Liling kiln's ceramic ecological landscape in a three-dimensional way. It tries to explore the development law of Liling kiln's underglaze porcelain under social transformation, cultural shock *and* technological progress. It researches the way for Liling kiln's underglaze porcelain to transform from traditional handicraft industry to modern design and discusses the paradigm of Liling kiln's underglaze porcelain in shaping cultural image and cultural production.

Keywords—Liling kiln; underglaze five colored porcelain; implements culture; artistic characteristics

I. INTRODUCTION

Social transformation definitely brings about cultural transformation and clearly its key problem is cultural evolution. From social movement before the founding of the PRC to the reform and opening up after the founding of the PRC, Chinese society experiences the transformation from traditional handicraft industry to modern industrial production. During the cultural revolution surging forward with great momentum which is caused by integration of reform of social politics, introduction of western learning and the collision between Chinese and western cultures, underglaze five colored porcelain in Liling springs up and evolves, casting light on every key node in development process of early modern history of China.

Liling kiln's underglaze porcelain develops in China's social reform and transformation period. Our society faces three problems and opportunities: national crisis, social change and integration of and conflict between Chinese and western cultures. In the alternation of old and new cultures, Liling porcelain industry experiences mutual impact between local and foreign and the traditional and the modern. Westernization movement and the elite class search for the ideal of "Saving the nation by engaging in industry". New custom of age appears with people's life style and productive consumption updated constantly.

Development and transformation of Hunan's handicraft industry in early modern China follow the trend of change of time, taking on material production's social background, organization structure and living consumption in a three-dimensional way. Its development experiences two phases: "For civilian use" and "Save the nation by engaging in industry". Liling underglaze porcelain in Hunan in later Qing Dynasty and the Minguo develops from blue-and-white "coarse porcelain" produced by the public to the elite class contending against foreign foods and to the production of five colored "fine porcelain". After the founding of the PRC in 1949, with recovery of national industry, planned economy, ideology of cultural revolution, reform and opening up and influx of modern artistic ideological trend, Liling underglaze five colored porcelain develops from "collective consciousness" porcelain industry to "multiplex symbiosis" artistic creation, showing artistic features of different phases.

II. CULTURAL CLASH—RISING OF LILING UNDERGLAZE FIVE COLORED PORCELAIN

Appearance of underglaze porcelain can be traced back to the Three Kingdoms in the late Han Dynasty. Primarily, reddish brown pigment is used to decorate porcelain simply. In the middle period of Tang Dynasty in the 8th century, the copper pipe kiln in Changsha, Hunan produces the true high temperature underglaze porcelain. Underglaze color is one kind of porcelain glaze decorations, called "kiln color" as well. Relying on its greenish yellow glaze with the three colors of brown, reddish brown and green, Changsha kiln influences underglaze painted porcelain in northern Cizhou kiln and southern Jizhou kiln of Song Dynasty and underglaze color technology, like blue-and-white and underglaze red, in Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, opening up a way for development of overglaze color of porcelain.

Liling underglaze five colored porcelain inherits and carries forward Changsha kiln's underglaze decorative porcelain technology with the creation of five colors through research for high temperature underglaze in 1906, namely dark green, ocean blue, dark brown, carnelian and brilliant black. Its pigment separation technology also has unique features in underglaze decoration craft. Liling underglaze five colored porcelain has its own system of mud, glaze, color and firing method. After decoration, the green body is covered in lime soda and fired under the high temperature of 1380 degrees. Its high

temperature firing and brilliant color are rare in porcelain's underglaze color technology. Rising and evolution of Liling underglaze five colored porcelain in Hunan reflect changes in people's material and cultural life concept in different ages. Its artistic characteristics' development sequence reflects change of time and it is an epitome and reference of porcelain development history in modern time of China.

The formation of one style actually makes preparations for the generation of another style and all the times evolves in uninterrupted development of "artistic will". Liling underglaze five colored porcelain's image format follows the traditional folk blue-and-white pattern, absorbs colored pattern of Jingdezhen and introduces Japanese decorative artistic style. In terms of image configuration, it has the features of generality, locality and stylization. In terms of single graphic combination, it has constitutive characteristics of shape modeling, integrated space-time and modularization. As to image function, it has functions of symbolism, lucky implied meaning and cultural image building. Organization and composition of images of these "ordinary things" obey the constitutive characteristics of shape modeling, integrated space-time and modularization and use the most ordinary things and the most straightaway method to express earthy national psychology and cultural identity.

The "material" and "technical" cultural production of Liling underglaze five colored porcelain is a materialized cultural concept and a materialized life style. It includes glaze arrangement, pug molding, color glazing and firing skills in practical production and attached social structure inside the procedure, like organization form, inheritance system and so on.

From material choosing, fuel supply to making a green body, glazing, painting and kiln firing, Liling underglaze five colored porcelain production is a whole system. There is high interdependency among various industries. Every link of production conforms to the standardized way in order to adapt to commodity transaction. Besides, standardization of image and size establishes unified production requirements. Different materials' processing and production procedure gets universal, making it easy to combine and have different styles. After the founding of the PRC, production mode and efficiency mechanism of Liling underglaze five colored porcelain take on the trend of modularization, universalization and serialization, thus establishing the internal rule for production mode and providing the gist for craftsmen's production. This kind of standardized assembly line production mode is defined as "modularized" production by Lothar Ledderose.

Westerners imitate natural objects while Chinese imitate the law of natural creation.

All things on earth consist of parts in limited forms and have endless variations. Liling kiln has more than 100 kinds of implements. Shapes of the same period are different in volume, size, proportion and form while similar in main style and structure. They take normalization and rationalization as the production standard and their modeling features are generally stylized. Through depicting nature and masters' oral teaching that inspires true understanding within, craftsmen repeatedly facsimile, imitate and improve in long-term accumulation of exercise, obtaining a universal shape gradually. As the concept of global design, decoration and modeling, especially different

decorative themes and use functions fall into different styles of implements. Although there is a profound theory for everything, changes bring it out.

Objects with module idea display natural features, which are similar to each other as different independent lives. As to Liling's traditional ceramic products, there are bowls, trays, pots, cups, small wine cups, spoons, jars, tins, earthen bowls, light stand and so on. Due to difference in modeling, size and decorative patterns, various products have various kinds. For example, as to products of bowls and trays, there is "fresh ware, good ware, Ke ware, coffin, working ware, jade ware and cloud ware". "Ke ware" is originally named as lotus ware, because there is a painting of dragonfly playing with lotus in underglaze blue on utensil wall. Later on, "He" is simplified into "Ke". "Coffin" has a decorative pattern combining longevity, deer and ancient coins in underglaze blue with an implied meaning of luck, wealth, longevity and happiness. That's why it gets such a name. "Glassware" gets this name because there is a decorative pattern along the mouth side with blue edge. In addition, shape of ware mainly falls into tea bowl and wine glass, known as "Liao Fan" and "Liao Yu".

All things on earth consist of parts in limited forms and have endless variations. Benjamin predicates: Modern times is "the time for mountable artwork". The social function of art changes. It is based on political foundation rather than the foundation of etiquette. Actually, the typical way of "power economy" modal breaks "exchange" principle of cultural production. In early years of the new nation, social environment is mainly guided by political activities and changes people's material and cultural life style under the ideology of "literature and art serving politics".

III. SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION—EVOLUTION OF LILING UNDERGLAZE FIVE COLORED PORCELAIN

In the early years of the new nation, due to the fact that economic development needs great support from foreign currency, extremely behindhand modern technology and industry and only national characteristics and exquisite craft of traditional handicraft industry can attract countries in southeast Asia, European and American countries, it becomes an important way to get foreign currency. Movement of handicraft cooperation demonstrates our nation's determination and strength in economic development and social transformation. Due to special historical background, artifacts culture originally belonging to manual skill in traditional economic society carries the ideal of social modernization and industrialization.

Under the social conditions of political guidance and economic recovery in the 1950s, Liling underglaze five colored porcelain experiences industrial renaissance and structural recombination. Some organizations are established, like Liling Construction Porcelain Factory with public-private partnership, Liling Porcelain Company, Hunan Ceramics Institute and so on. At the same time, old artists are called back to organize a creation team. Through porcelain industry recovery and technological improvement, Liling underglaze five colored porcelain technology tends to be mature, Liling kiln staring to produce "porcelain for three places"(nationalities cultural

palace, military museum and workers' stadium), state guest porcelain gift, "state banquet" porcelain, chairman cup for Great Hall of the People etc.

Advantages of traditional arts and crafts attract the nation's attention, thus arts and crafts recover, continue and develop forward. Establishment of cooperatives in handicraft industry achieves success based on the premise of national will. However, actually cooperation of handicraft experiences a complicated and twisted developmental process. Seeing from external phenomena, preliminary cooperation movement is relatively exploratory. However, when coming to its tide, it takes on "tempest type" social change.

From 1960s to 1970s, the Great Cultural Revolution causes artistic style revolution. Stylized, signified and model type presenting mode deviates from subjectivity of aesthetics and art becomes a tool of ideology and social change, playing the role of social and political propaganda. While catering to political needs, Liling underglaze five colored porcelain objectively pushes forward technological improvement. In order to achieve the effect of "white, thin and transparent" porcelain body, Hongjiang large ball mud is introduced to exclusively produce chairman porcelain. As to pattern, individual will oriented patterns are chosen, like plum blossom, orchid, Confederate rose, Chinese rose and so on. Material features and color forms of Liling underglaze five colored porcelain experience utmost technological improvement.

Since 1980s, transformation of political system and cultural system, reform and opening up in economy and influx of artistic ideological trend definitely have led to changes in Chinese people's concept of social value, people's thought turning from unitary to multivariant gradually and Liling underglaze five colored porcelain showing the new form of multiplex symbiosis. At the same time with diversified artistic porcelain, industrial production system gets mature, relevant cultural industries become strong gradually, social culture is in a state of multicultural coexistence and it presents different industrial patterns.

In conclusion, after the founding of the new nation, development and evolution of Liling underglaze five colored porcelain fall into three phases: nation founding period in the 1950s, the Cultural Revolution phase from 1960s to 1970s and diversified phase in 1980s. All these three phases show the new appearance of Liling underglaze five colored porcelain after the founding of the new nation. However, due to differences in political consciousness, social need, aesthetic features, production purpose and material technology of different phases, they show different artistic characteristics.

IV. CONCLUSION

Historical transformation of Liling kiln's underglaze is a modern growing process from traditional to modern transformation. Social theory of "transformation" runs through the whole paper as its time clue. The transformation in sociology refers to "social transformation", namely the social transformation process during which the society constantly develops from traditional to modern, has its own corresponding new system and update. Partition of artistic characteristics of Liling underglaze five colored porcelain in different periods is

historical, reflecting synchronicity. Diachronism and synchronicity coexist in the process of modernization. Culture type and life style under the framework of original features of implements evolve rapidly, with new culture types coming into being.

Before the founding of the new nation, Liling kiln's underglaze decorative porcelain research starts from social environment, cultural concept and life style, discussing artistic features and productive consumption of Liling kiln's underglaze decorative porcelain production. After the founding of the PRC, design and manufacturing of Liling kiln's underglaze five colored porcelain are used to shape national culture and image. There is mutual influence between society and implements, and they two contribute to the generation of each other. The first half part is research from the macro society to micro implements while the last half part is research from micro implements to macro society, thus showing the complete process of "society-implements-society".

It can be seen from the above that at the primary stage of development of Liling kiln's underglaze decorative porcelain, social structure, cultural concept and life style are reflected in the form of implements, and implements production and social culture together form the ecological landscape of Liling porcelain industry. However, at the mature stage of development of Liling kiln's underglaze decorative porcelain, production of implements has counteraction on shaping of cultural image. For one thing, under the conditions of cultural collision, social reform and technical improvement, firing of Liling kiln's underglaze decorative porcelain comes into being; for another thing, during the development of Liling kiln's underglaze decorative porcelain, national image, time prevailing custom and cultural concept are shaped.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ye Zheming. Analysis on Chinese Ancient Ceramic Science[M]. Beijing: Light Industry Press, 1982.
- [2] Chinese Ceramic Society. Chinese Porcelain History[M]. Beijing: Beijing Cultural Relics Publishing House, 1982.
- [3] Feng Xianming. Chinese Porcelain History[M]. Beijing: Cultural Relics Publishing House, 1982.
- [4] Rewi Alley(New Zealand). Porcelain Country Tour[M]. Beijing: Light Industry Press, 1985.
- [5] Xu Rong. Guides to the Literature of Chinese Porcelain[M]. Beijing: Light Industry Press, 1988.
- [6] Zuo Hanzhong. Folk Porcelain[M]. Changsha: Hunan Fine Arts Publishing House, 1994.
- [7] Shu Ding. Folk Artistic Porcelain[M]. Taiwan: Art Book Publishing House, 1994.
- [8] Du Bin, Ji Yuansou. Pottery Elegance[M]. Jinan: Shandong Pictorial Publishing House, 2010.
- [9] Han Baozhong. Review on Nanyang Commodity Exposition[M]. Xuantong, Qing Dynasty.
- [10] Wang Yan. Liling Ceramics Industry Survey[M]. Published by Hunan Banking Economy Research Department, 1942.
- [11] Deng Bai, Deng Wenke. Complete Collection of Chinese Ceramics Liling Kiln[M]. Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House + Beauty Co., Ltd, 1981.
- [12] Deng Wenke. Liling Underglaze Decorative Porcelain[M]. Beijing: China Light Industry Press, 1984.

- [13] Zhou Shirong. Changsha Kiln Porcelain Painting Art[M]. Shanghai: Shanghai People's Art Publishing House, 1994.
- [14] Zhou Qiuguang. Legend of Xiong Xiling[M]. Changsha: Hunan Normal University Press, 1996.
- [15] Li Jianmao, Ding Songlai, Liu Feng. Liling Underglaze Decorative Porcelain[M]. Fuzhou: Fujian Fine Arts Publishing House, 2002.
- [16] Luo Leiguang. Liling Underglaze Five Colored Porcelain Selections[M]. Wuhan: Hubei Fine Arts Publishing House, 2004.
- [17] Zhou Shirong. Hunan Ceramics[M]. Changsha: Hunan Fine Arts Publishing House, 2008.
- [18] Capital Museum. 2009 Beijing Capital Museum Liling Underglaze Five Colored Porcelain Collection Catalogs[M].2009.
- [19] Bao Yongan. Nanyang Commodity Exposition Report[M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Jiaotong University Press, 2010.
- [20] Tian Shen. Liling Porcelain[M]. Changsha: Hunan Fine Arts Publishing House, 2010.
- [21] Tang Qingbai. Contemporary Liling Ceramics Famous Works Collection[M]. Changsha: Hunan Fine Arts Publishing House, 2011.
- [22] The National Palace Museum, Central Liling Municipal Committee, Liling Municipal People's Government. Liling Kiln: Underglaze Five Colored Porcelain Treasures Collection[M]. Beijing: Palace Museum Publishing House, 2012.
- [23] Chen Qianshan. Liling Kiln Underglaze Five Colored Porcelain Catalog in the later Qing Dynasty and the Minguo Period[M]. Changsha: Hunan Fine Arts Publishing House, 2015.