

**EXPLORATION, CREATION AND EVALUATION
OF PLANT IMAGE IN CERAMIC ARTWORKS
IN JINGDEZHEN CITY, CHINA**

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**EXPLORATION, CREATION AND EVALUATION
OF PLANT IMAGE IN CERAMIC ARTWORKS
IN JINGDEZHEN CITY, CHINA**

by

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LIST OF SYMBOLS

A	Number of PICA
a	PLS regression coefficient
L	Number of Level (L=1,2,3,4,5,6,7)

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PICA	Plant image ceramic artworks
2D	Two-dimensional
3D	Three-dimensional
DIY	Do It Yourself
AD	Anno Domini
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
USM	Universiti Sains Malaysia
UK	United Kingdom

LIST OF APPENDICES

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**PENEROKAAN, PENCIPTAAN DAN PENILAIAN IMEJ TUMBUHAN
DALAM KARYA SENI SERAMIK DI BANDARAYA JINGDEZHEN, CHINA**

ABSTRAK

PICA kontemporari menggabungkan media seramik dengan sejarah panjang, motif tumbuhan dan pemikiran inovatif moden. Perubahan ketara telah berlaku berbanding dengan masa lalu. Walau bagaimanapun, mengenai teori, penyelidikan mengenai motif tumbuhan, makna budaya, teknik penciptaan, dan bentuk aplikasi tidak mencukupi di China. Mengenai amalan, motif tumbuhan sudah lapuk, dan artis seramik mesti cuba melaksanakan inovasi dan mengemas kini mod penciptaan tradisional. Oleh itu, penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk meneroka aplikasi, penciptaan, dan inovasi imej tumbuhan dalam karya seni seramik kontemporari. Pertama, menemui ciri-ciri estetik, makna budaya, bentuk aplikasi dan ciri ekspresif imej tumbuhan dalam karya seni seramik melalui penyelidikan dan pemerhatian kesusasteraan. Kedua, menggunakan kaedah tinjauan soal selidik dan temu bual pakar untuk menyelidik dan mengumpul data. Perisian SPSS digunakan untuk menganalisis data secara kuantitatif 103 responden, bertujuan untuk memahami persepsi dan keutamaan orang ramai terhadap PICA dan korelasi varian dan mempengaruhi hubungan. Perisian NVivo menjalankan analisis kualitatif kandungan temu bual 6 pakar seramik dan meneroka kebimbangan utama dan sudut pemikiran penciptaan. Ketiga, gunakan kaedah penciptaan eksperimen untuk melaksanakan amalan, mengumpul pelbagai imej tumbuhan untuk pemodelan dan tekstur, kolaj dan hollowing, eksperimen warna, dan penciptaan bahan yang komprehensif. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa: (1) 46.6% responden lebih suka motif bunga, makna budaya menunjukkan jangkaan peribadi, bahan semula jadi, bentuk abstrak dan kreatif, sayu

atau tekstur yang kaya, buatan tangan, dan digunakan dalam hiasan rumah. Hubungan korelasi dan pengaruh juga didapati antara keadaan peribadi dan pembolehubah seperti keutamaan dan niat penggunaan. (2) Hasilnya mendedahkan idea dan fokus kreatif pakar seramik, penyelesaian kepada masalah kreatif ditemui melalui refleksi dan latihan. Artis seramik kontemporari mempunyai motif inovatif, makna budaya, bahan dan teknik. (3) Hasil ciptaan eksperimen menunjukkan kesan akhir dan penerangan ciptaan karya seni. 18 orang pakar seramik telah dijemput untuk menilai PICA, hasil penilaian mencerminkan kejayaan dan kesahihan aplikasi dan penciptaan PICA dan menyediakan rujukan baru. Sumbangan tesis ini adalah kajian komprehensif dan sistematik PICA Cina kontemporari daripada pengetahuan teori kepada penciptaan praktikal. Pada masa hadapan, saya akan terus melakukan lebih banyak kajian untuk menambah baik kesan imej tumbuhan dalam karya seni seramik kontemporari.

EXPLORATION, CREATION AND EVALUATION OF PLANT IMAGE IN CERAMIC ARTWORKS IN JINGDEZHEN CITY, CHINA

ABSTRACT

Contemporary PICA combines ceramic media with a long history, plant motifs, and modern innovative thinking. Significant changes have taken place compared with the past. However, regarding theory, the research on plant motif, cultural meaning, creation technique, and application form is insufficient in China. Regarding practice, the plant motif is outdated, and ceramic artists must try to implement innovation and update the traditional creation mode. Therefore, this research aims to explore the application, creation, and innovation of plant images in contemporary ceramic artworks. First, discovers the aesthetic characteristics, cultural meanings, application forms and expressive features of plant image in ceramic artworks through literature research and observation. Second, uses questionnaire survey and expert interview method to research and collect data. The SPSS software was used to quantitatively analysis the data of 103 respondents, aiming to understand people's perception and preference for PICA and variant correlation and influence relationships. NVivo's software conducted a qualitative analysis of the interview content of 6 ceramic experts and explored the main concerns and thinking angles of creation. Third, apply experimental creation method to implement the practice, collecting various plant images for modelling and texture, collage and hollowing, colour experiment, and comprehensive material creation. The results show that: (1) 46.6% respondents prefer flower motifs, culture meaning showing personal expectations, natural materials, abstract and creative shapes, rich glaze or texture, handmade, and used in home decoration. Correlation and influence relationships were also found between personal

circumstances and variables such as preference and consumption intention. (2) The results revealed the ceramic experts' creative ideas and focus, solutions to creative problems were found through reflection and practice. Contemporary ceramic artists have innovative motifs, cultural meanings, materials, and techniques. (3) The results of experimental creation show the final effect and creation description of the artworks. The 18 of ceramic experts were invited to evaluate PICA, the evaluation results reflect the success and validity of the application and creation of PICA and provide a new reference. The contribution of this thesis is a comprehensive and systematic study of contemporary Chinese PICA from theoretical knowledge to practical creation. In the future, I will continue to do more studies to improve the effect of plant images in contemporary ceramic artworks.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The first chapter in this thesis provides the background of the studies, presents a brief introduction to the development and current situation of plant image ceramic artworks in China, problem statement, research questions, research objectives, the significance and limitations of the research, and the outline of the thesis.

1.2 Background of the Study

1.2.1 Overview of the Development of Ancient Plant Image Ceramic Artworks

China's ceramic production has a long history, the made and fired of ceramics is very early. Various plant images often appear as modelling and decorative patterns in ceramics, the style and characteristics of ceramic in each historical period are very different, typical, and on the basis of the previous process of new innovations, we can easily see the change in museum observe and study in China (Table 1.1).

As early as the Neolithic, plants as a carrier that was picked or used by early humans, it was painted on the colour pottery with various simple plant patterns (Pu Songnian, 2008). Plant colourful pottery is mainly petal pattern, and the diamond flower belt composed of petal-shaped patterns, has reasonable space arrangement and beautiful style. During the period of the Southern and Northern Dynasties in China, which lasted from approximately 420 to 589 AD, due to the popularity of Buddhism, lotus and curly grass patterns were applied to Chinese ceramic decoration (Chinese Silicate Society, 1982), the celadon lotus uses techniques such as stacking, plastic, and carving to shape the lotus's petals according to the ceramic's shape. It is gorgeous with a strong sense of three-dimensional and rich layers. About 618-907 AD during the Tang Dynasty in China, the emergence of tricolour glaze pottery reflected the innovation

of kiln crafters, using the secondary firing method, this low-temperature lead glaze was easy to flow in the firing, showing a kind of glaze and soluble colour, that effect of the flower is rich in colour and gorgeous. The variety of ceramic artworks and plant images has increased with the development of the times. The patterns include lotus, peony, chrysanthemum, and pomegranate, etc (Zhang Xiaoxia, 2010). The decorative techniques include engraving, printing, and picking flowers, which have the effect of shaking, the style is fresh and has folk characteristics. The decorative lines of the painting's flowers are delicate, smooth, rigorous, exquisite, gentle, elegant, and rich in layers. During China's Yuan Dynasty, from 1271-1368 AD, with the dissemination of smalt pigment produced by Persia, Chinese blue and white porcelain improved, and new features appeared to meet the needs of society, blue and white use painting as a decorative technique. The plant motifs include peony, plum, pine, bamboo, etc, and the design has a sense of decoration, the colour is pure, fresh, elegant, and hearty artistic effects (Pu Songnian, 2018). By 1636-1796 years, the ceramic crafters innovated new ceramic varieties such as pink, under-glaze, and enamel colours. There were many plant image decorations on the porcelain bottle, the colour is gorgeous (Chen Qi, 2005). Plant image ceramic artworks from this period have been extensively exchanged worldwide, and plant shapes and decorative styles have affected each other.

The abstract or figurative form of plant images in each period is used as a decoration, analogy pattern, or engraved on ceramic artworks. However, every time in a historical period, the era style of the plant forms in the ceramic will be changed with the times. When the limitations of ceramic craftsmanship and materials have gradually stagnated in the late development of the dynasty, but the new ruling class, new technical materials, new plant motif, and new cultural caused the new style continue to develop, which are also the similarities of the development of East and Western art. The artistic revolution has a never-ending formula. When a kind of art gradually becomes a dying board and can no longer show the trend of the times, we must return to nature and learn the inspiration of new art (Fu Lei, 2016). After a long

stage of historical development, ceramic artworks have summarized the rich ceramic design and production skills from ceramic experiments and practice, creating a brilliant and splendid plant image ceramic work. These ceramics show the enthusiasm for life, observation of nature, rich imagination, and pure aesthetics of human beings in different periods of Chinese history, which reflects the endless spirit, the cultural significance and artistic value of contemporary ceramic artworks cannot be ignored, provide people with art, culture and living materials.

Data Collection: The implementation and changes of plant image as an expression of ancient ceramic art in China.

Table 1.1 Ancient Chinese plant image ceramic artworks

Type of ceramic artworks	Name/ Year	Culture Meaning	Techniques	Size	Sources
	Yang Shao cultural pottery/ Neolithic age	Decorate	Drawing, painting	High 11.7 cm, caliber 26.2 cm	Zhengzhou museum collection in Zhengzhou City, China
	Green glaze raised over the lotus/ 3~6th Century	Holy, pure and auspicious	Drawing, carving, glaze, relief, moldy, plastic	High 63.6cm	National museum collection in Beijing City, China
	Tricolor glaze pattern Tibetan/ 7~10th Century	Wealth and rank	Drawing, glaze painting	Unknow	Tokyo national Museum collection Chinese PICA in Japan
	Ru kiln celadon lotus bowl/ 11~12th Century	Lotus is like a gentleman, with high behavior and integrity	Drawing, glaze	Height 10.1 ~ 10.5 cm, diameter 15.9 ~ 16.2 cm	Taipei palace museum collection in Taipei City, China
	Blue and white mandarin duck lotus pattern plate/ 13th Century	Harmonious , and love	Drawing, under-glaze painting	Height 7.3 cm, caliber 46.4 cm, foot diameter 29.8 cm	Taipei palace museum collection in Taipei City, China
	Pastel peach celestial orb bottle/ 18th Century	Propitious and happiness	Drawing, on-glaze painting	Height 51.5cm	Beijing palace museum in Beijing City, China

1.2.2 Development Status of Contemporary Plant Image Ceramic Artworks

Contemporary plant image ceramic art is based on the development of ancient ceramic techniques, ceramic art is a new art category which combines ancient ceramic craft with modern art concept. Form the continuous expansion of the plant image from the inheritance of techniques and materials to the innovation, the profoundly affect the aesthetic and style characteristics of the contemporary plant image ceramic art. In the 1950s, the modern ceramic artworks occurred innovation in the United States and Japan, which was a significant event in ceramic art worldwide. The United States and Japan ceramic artists promoted the turning of ceramic creation and aesthetic concepts to modern times, prompting ceramic artworks to formally become an active modern art category, marking the actual rise of modern ceramic art (Zhang Hongxia, 2012). That significant ceramic event has deeply enlightened and influenced the development of contemporary Chinese plant image ceramic art, which successively promoted the transformation of Chinese artists creation and aesthetic concepts to modernity, and contemporary Chinese ceramic art began to appear. The concept has evolved into "art jar" instead of "jar art", and ceramic artists are no longer just decorative artworks, but a language of pure artistic expression after 1980 (Beijing Ceramic Art Museum, 2021).

Since 2004, Jingdezhen International Ceramic Fair has been held every year in China, the transportation and communication with social media has become very convenient and daily, contemporary ceramic art in the world mutual influence and learning, the development of contemporary ceramic art has become a multi-cultural exchange and its own characteristics of the exploration process. The contemporary ceramic artists consciously update the traditional decoration mode of plant image, and show their perception and thoughts with new experience and understanding. Ceramic artists are freer to express the aesthetic expression and cultural meaning of plant image, try a variety of new art forms, materials, and technical means to create more innovative ceramic artworks. Ceramic art has continuously broken through the technical mode, and entered the field of modern art with the pure artistic aspect highlighting the aesthetic

and spirit, more and more artists try to create ceramic art, express ideas in different creative ways, cross boundary integration and artistic innovation, so as to make the plant image ceramic artworks more thoughtful, creative and personalized, explore the beauty of materials and shape, and express the image beauty of plants, from tools, composition methods, lines, colours, textures to visual effects that coexist with materials..

Since the emergence of COVID-19 in 2019 reflects the increasing threat to life, people's panic about the disease, anxiety about the economy, the troublesome ness of the closed urbanization life, and the concerns of ecosystems have become heavier. People urgently need to find exports from nature, artworks focusing on natural characteristics and motifs should be prominently displayed. The isolation of people from nature has enabled more plant image, and ceramic artworks to be displayed and considered in the electronic media. Ceramic artworks reflect society's current situation and the aesthetic expression of natural plants, pay attention to the natural and essential theme works of clay and plants. According to the theory of life, death, injury, and healing, it can express the essential vitality from the organic form (Mi, Lee Young; Seung, Chung, 2021). As a creature, plants have a strong vitality that has long been verified in biology and literary works, the pain of life from life and the sensitivity to the glory of plants in the four seasons make ceramic creators more inclined to exert the natural of the clay and material. The spirituality and vitality of the plant, contemporary ceramic artworks are presented in the development of contemporary society and reflect the ceramic artist's concepts and aesthetic of social thinking and aesthetics.

Therefore, the ceramic art of contemporary plant image attaches more importance to the creator's personality, aesthetic cognition, and ideological concepts and has a contemporary cultural context and spiritual connotation compared with traditional ceramic artworks (Table 1.2). The Chinese contemporary concept, thinking, emotions, and aesthetics expressed by plant imagery strengthened the emotions, connecting with modern life and space environment, pursuing the work's cultural and aesthetic values, and having an innovative era.

Data Collection: The implementation and changes of plant image as an expression of contemporary ceramic art.

Table 1.2 Contemporary plant image ceramic artworks

Types	Name/ Form/ Time	Culture Meaning (From the artist's introduction to their PICA)	Materials	Techniques	Ceramic Sources
	Decoration of plant image/ Vase/ Contemporar y	By abstracting and transforming the flowers and leaves of the plants, it makes them rich in decorative and natural beauty.	Porcelain clay, glaze	Drawing, carving, glazing	He Bingqin China/ He Bingqin's Studio
	Tri-colour art/ Peony plate/ Contemporar y	The tri-colour glaze re-creation, has the characteristics of "transparent, bright, flow", with rich colour, symbol of prosperity and happiness.	Porcelain clay, low temperature glaze	Underglaze painting	Guo Aihe/ China/ Luoyang Tri-color Art Museum
	Waiting for flowers to bloom / 2021	Small flowers made of coloured clay form the shape of a tree to express the beauty of nature, and the inspiration of flowers makes the work colourful.	Porcelain clay, ceramic pigment	Hand-pinch method	Su Xianzhon g/ China /Pearl Art Museum
	Shadow/ Ceramic art jewellery/ 2019	The craftsmanship of the work is very high, the leaves are made of flower silk technology, and the colour of the ceramic flowers is very beautiful.	Porcelain clay, ceramic paint, silver	Hand-pinch method, glaze colour, silver	Ning Xiaoli/ China/ Hangzhou

1.3 Problem Statement

Although the application of plant images in ceramic artworks appeared early and varied, the cultural meanings of plants are also very representative in traditional ceramic artworks. Current ceramic researchers have done too little research on plant imagery aesthetic, express and application form. The cultural meaning importance of plant images is reflected in many aspects, plant image is not only an important part of decorative art, but also a carrier of cultural,

religious, moral and emotional expressions, becoming an important representative element of Chinese culture. However, in the context of the development of contemporary culture and art, the cultural meaning of ceramic artworks has changed, but there needs to be more related research. It is an essential topic for researchers to verify the ideological, cultural, modern, unique and innovative expression of the cultural meanings of plant image in contemporary ceramic artworks (Li Jialiu, 2019).

Contemporary ceramic art is in its infancy, and some ceramic artists' artworks are unrestricted from the constraints of traditional decorative or practical principles in terms of form and decoration. Their creation of ceramic art is obsessed with the research of ceramic artist techniques and modelling and decoration, ignoring the observation of today's art development, lacking the communication and learning of a broad vision, and lacking the attention of emotion and humanity, resulting in backward thinking and disconnection with The Times. Also, because the motif of the plant image is too long history and traditional, according to the trend of contemporary ceramic art, ceramic artists need to maximize the innovation in the form and content of the plant image and get rid of the existing traditional ceramic form for design and creation by maximizing the materiality of ceramic materials. Although creative ceramic artworks have appeared successively, there is still a lack of in-depth theoretical research, such as the lack of changes between contemporary Chinese plant image ceramic and traditional plant image ceramic image, and the application and creation of contemporary Chinese PICA (Liu Runfu, 2020).

It is usual for a ceramic artist to use motifs and inspiration in the artwork. Various motifs from flora and fauna have been applied to the ceramic's artwork in 2D and 3D form from ancient times until today. Plant motifs like flowers such as lotus, peach, and peony are beautifully hand-painted on the ceramic artworks. The artist needs help finding specific reference documentation on plant motifs in contemporary ceramic art. The problem facing

ceramic artists is how to find specific references about plant images in contemporary ceramic art, and find references for creative thinking, motifs, materials, and techniques innovations. Specific research on plant motifs is crucial and benefited ceramic students, ceramic artists, and designers as references (Zhan Wei, 2021).

The ceramic artists produced 2D and 3D ceramic artworks with plant motifs frequently face technical problems. In terms of modelling and technique, ceramic artists often face problems of plant motifs, materials (plant materials, comprehensive materials, types of clay, glaze), kilns and firing temperatures (Luo Shuwen, 2020).

1.4 Research Questions

In order to achieve this goal, more research problems must be solved. These questions are divided into three questions that led to this research.

Research question 1: Research what to understand: What is the meaning, application forms, significance, and change of plant image as a form of expression of a theme in ancient and contemporary ceramic artworks?

Research question 2: Research how to implement: What are the innovations and problems faced by contemporary designers and ceramic artists when using plant images in the research of ceramic design and creation?

Research question 3: Research how to develop: How to realize the application of new findings of plant image based on the research on the design and innovation of ceramic artworks to provide enlightening value for the development trend and future development of contemporary ceramic artworks?

1.5 Research Objectives

According to the research questions, the following are the research objectives.

Research objective 1: To understand the implementation of plant images, the meaning, application forms, significance, and changes of plant images as an expression of ancient and contemporary ceramic artworks.

Research objective 2: To analyses the innovation and problem ceramic art faces in implementing plant images as a form of expression for designers and ceramic artists.

Research objective 3: To apply new findings of plant images based on the innovation and problem studies in ceramic artworks, thus enlightening and providing value on the trend and future development of contemporary ceramic artworks.

1.6 Research Significance

Theory significance: Through literature and observation, this thesis researches the knowledge of plants, the cultural meaning of plant images and their application in ceramic artworks, collects a large number of texts, data and picture materials, and studies the plant images that often appear in ceramic artworks by sorting out the representative plant motifs. This thesis studies, combs, analysis and summarizes the application form and characteristics of plant images applied in contemporary ceramic art and explores the development of contemporary plant image ceramic artworks. Use questionnaire survey to investigate what kind of plant image ceramic artworks are appreciated by contemporary people and grasp the public demand in contemporary ceramic art. The expert interview method is used to explore how contemporary ceramic artists apply and express plant images, innovations, and problems in materials and techniques. It is well known that there are few references for systematic plant image ceramic artworks so this research will provide a case for future research on ceramic art theory and creative practice.

Practical significance: The practical creation of plant image ceramic art is based on the perception of nature and life, the most vivid expression of academic thinking and artistic exploration. As a creative activity, the design and production of ceramic artworks with plant images serve people's daily lives, touch people's visual senses with beautiful images, and realize the unity of practicality and ornamental value. I will design and create by imitating, splitting, recombining, and transforming plants according to their characteristics. I will try to use different plant motifs, such as plant materials or types, use various techniques to express plant images in abstract or concrete forms with ceramic materials, record the steps and characteristics of creative techniques, and constantly experiment and innovate. I also to present unique style and creativity, then practice and summarize the plant image ceramic artworks, and increase the practice cases of plant image artwork creation. The application theory of plant image in ceramic art is studied in depth to produce some enlightening effects and values on the trend and future development of contemporary ceramic art, and then further explore the application of plants in ceramic art based on the current social development status and the development trend of the ceramic art field.

Academic significance: The findings of investigation, interview, and experimental practice provide methods, knowledge, data, results, artworks, and guidance for creation in contemporary ceramic artworks. Based on the implementation of theory on plant images and the problem studies, the research of this thesis will provide information for future researchers to explore the plant image ceramic art, increase the research results of plant image in the theory and practice of contemporary ceramic artworks, and inspire and help students and ceramic researchers to study the expression of plant image in ceramic art.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is the main content of the thesis, including problem statement, literature review, research methods and conclusions. There are three research

questions and objectives respectively, which are to study the status quo, implementation, problems and development of contemporary plant image ceramic artworks. The research methods used in the methodology include questionnaire survey, expert interview and experiment creation. Questionnaire survey is to investigate contemporary people's feelings, views and suggestions on plant image ceramic artworks; expert interview is to interview the creative problems and innovation results faced by ceramic artists; experimental creation is to explore the expressive force of plant image ceramic artworks by using different plant motifs, materials and different technical techniques. After the analysis and summary of the questionnaire survey data and interview content, the exhibition of the plant image ceramic artworks created by me and the invitation of experts to evaluate the ceramic artworks created by me, the conclusion is finally drawn, forming a complete research system. Through the design of the framework, the research ideas of the thesis are clearer. (Plate 1.1)

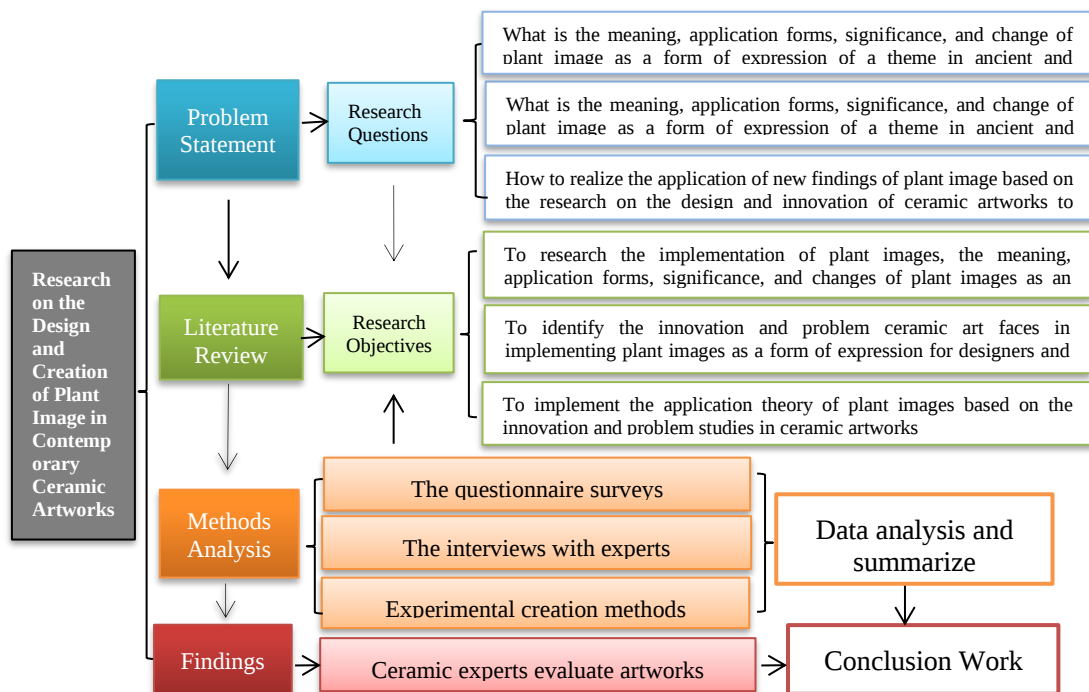


Plate 1.1 The conceptual framework

1.8 Limitation of Study

Limitations of research: This study will combine my professional theoretical research and professional practice. The main limitation is that during the COVID-19 outbreak, due to the impact of the spread of the epidemic, I was always confined to my home, which limited the scope and activities of the research. Although relevant literature and artistic works can be consulted online, there is no fixed site for ceramic art practice, and it is also influenced by domestic culture and artistic atmosphere to a large extent, coupled with the unfamiliar plant characteristics and ceramic art styles of foreign countries. Therefore, it is planned to focus on the application and innovation of plant images in Chinese ceramic art. However, it will also affect their professional vision, which is not international and not fully open to breakthrough innovative research. The limitation of the study is that it was affected in the early and middle stages of the study. In the later stage, the study could be carried out generally in USM.

Limitations of ceramic artists: Research of ancient ceramic artists who applied plant images. Ceramic artworks were also owned by the ruling class or collective, so it was difficult for them to sign their names on ceramic artworks. Thus, it is impossible to identify the creator of some classical ancient plant-image ceramic art artworks.

Research of contemporary ceramic artists who create plant images. Because of the pandemic in 2020~2022, most of my research on contemporary plant image ceramic artworks was completed in China. To understand contemporary plant image ceramic artists, I mainly studied through the internet, books, and periodicals and lacked the opportunity to meet ceramic artworks and ceramic artists. Therefore, there is a lack of knowledge of many experts on plant image ceramic artworks.

Limitations of the innovation of contemporary plant image ceramic artworks: The expression of plant images in ceramic art has formed mature expression techniques and humanistic meanings after a long history of practice and exploration. Each era has its aesthetic

characteristics. ceramic artists need to break traditional ideas and make innovations under the background of international development. It is a great challenge for individuals to innovate and make unique works and conclusions. Many experts have their criteria for defining innovation and what constitutes a good innovation. In this era of experimental creation, the limitation is how to face the expression of plant images on ceramic materials to make the plant images more vivid and innovative, make the characteristics of ceramic artworks more prominent and distinct, and become a more appealing form of artistic expression, giving ceramic art a richer spiritual connotation. Innovation is often faced with great difficulties and limitations, which are usually bound by environment as well as the academic accumulation of the creators themselves.

1.9 Outline of the Thesis

In Chapter 1: Introduces this research and provides the design ideas of this study. The background of the thesis summarizes the development of ceramic artworks around plant images in ancient times and the exploration and development of contemporary ceramic artworks. The problem statement research of plant image ceramic artworks, the discussion of research questions and objectives, the research framework, the significance of the research, and limitation of study, etc.

In Chapter 2: Provides a literature review of plant images and ceramic artworks. The external characteristics, growth, and distribution of plants are investigated through a large number of literature and fields. The ceramic artists use for plants are studied, and the cultural meaning of plant images is presented in ceramic artworks. And the application of plant images in ceramic artworks, creation techniques, expression form, etc. This chapter analysis the changes in plant images in ancient and contemporary ceramic artworks, explains and lists them, and identifies the areas that need further study.

In Chapter 3: The content of this chapter is the methodology, which mainly includes the questionnaire survey, expert interview, and experimental creation method. Through a questionnaire survey, to investigate people's perceptions, views, preferences, opinions, and suggestions, which provided data for the research of plant image ceramic artworks, then analyses concretely with SPSS software combined with option answers, to understand people's perception and preference for contemporary plant image ceramic artworks, as well as the correlation and influence relationship between personal situation and consumption propensity. Then, I collect interview content of 6 ceramic experts and explore the main concerns and thinking angles of ceramic artists in contemporary plant image ceramic art creation. To analyses the contemporary ceramic artists' inspiration and creative ideas, to capture key concepts and reveal internal relationships. To summarizes the problems that ceramic experts have in the creation process. It also analyses the innovation in the application, techniques, and materials of plant motifs, gives new cultural meanings to plant images. Base on theoretical research, implemented experimental creation are used to explore various plants to do modelling and texture experiments, collage and hollowing, color experiments, and comprehensive materials. The experimental creation method is the detailed steps of my design and conception, material selection, preparation, and creation method of the plant image ceramic artworks.

In Chapter 4: Describes conclusion based on implementing the questionnaire survey, expert interview, and experimental creation. In this chapter, the data collection results are analyzed, explained, discussed, and summarized. Based on the questionnaire survey data, this research summarizes the experience of most contemporary people on watching, contracting, and purchasing ceramic artworks and concludes that they tend to choose the place of purchase, the type and the use of their favorites plant image ceramic artworks. Furthermore, it found a correlation and influence relationship between personal situation and consumption intention. The ceramic experts' attention to plant motifs, materials, techniques, and nature revealed their

creative perceptions. It also provided us with more possibilities to think about the combination of contemporary art and traditional craftsmanship. Ceramic experts have personalized and innovative thinking in selecting plant motifs and materials. Find solutions to creative problems often occur in creating plant image ceramic artworks through reflection and practice. Contemporary ceramic artists innovations in materials, techniques, plant motifs, and cultural meaning of contemporary plant image ceramic artworks. The results of the experimental creation of the burning are presented, and the design instructions and artistic effects of the ceramic artworks are presented to prove the innovation of the plant image ceramic artworks.

In Chapter 5: Experts in the field of ceramic artworks are invited to evaluate and make suggestions on the ceramic artworks of plant images created by I in the form of expert evaluation. There are two kinds of evaluation methods: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative evaluation is to invite experts with more than 30 years of ceramic experience to evaluate my plant image ceramic artworks in terms of plant motifs, ceramic materials, production technique, firing temperature, plant interest, plant aesthetics, and suggestions. Quantitative evaluation is done using aesthetic, color, value, strength, quality, pattern, technique, material, plant motif, innovation, and other standards, allowing experts with more than ten years of ceramic experience to score and evaluate the works to obtain relatively specific and accurate data and find out the advantages and disadvantages of the plant image works created for further research.

In Chapter 6: The sixth chapter summarizes the full text through the main content. This chapter will also discuss the findings, conclusions, and implications of the study. This chapter provides research contributions, suggestions for future research, and trends in contemporary plant image ceramic artworks, which involves a descriptive analysis of the survey and a discussion of predictive analysis of the future appearance and techniques of plant image ceramic artworks. Suggestions for further work and final summary.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research scope and structure are determined according to the title, theme, field, objectives and research content. According to the research motif, I will provide the knowledge of plants and plant images, value, aesthetic characteristics, influence on people, and cultural meaning of plant images in ceramic art. Then, to introduce the development of contemporary ceramic art, the classification, artistic characteristics, the creation techniques of plant image ceramic artworks, and to demonstrate the application form and expression of plant image in contemporary Chinese ceramic art creation. Finally, to compare the changes and innovations of ancient and contemporary Chinese plant image ceramic artworks through literature research. The research of this thesis mainly focuses on contemporary Chinese plant image ceramic art. Therefore, I have researched a large number of PICA in Jingdezhen, where a ceramic production area in China, and learned about the era style of contemporary plant image ceramic artworks. At the same time, I also studied literature on ceramic art in Qingdao's ceramic exhibition and museum, which build the foundation for the research of this thesis, most of the contemporary plant image ceramic artworks that I have collected date from 2004 to 2024.

The literature review on the selection of Chinese contemporary plant image artworks, and an overview of the argumentation of plant image in contemporary ceramic artworks through the relationship between the reviewed literature reviews (Table 2.1, 2.2, 2.3). Collect research materials on the application and innovation of plant imagery in Chinese contemporary ceramic artworks, research background, and focus on the keywords plant, The aesthetic characteristics and cultural meaning of plant image, the application form of plant image, the expression form in contemporary Chinese ceramic art, the general situation and creation technique of contemporary ceramic art and the contrast with ancient plant image ceramic artworks are explored.

Table 2.1 The relevant literature introduction

Keywords	References	Links between References and Thesis	The Sources
Plant profile	Classification and Geographical Distribution of Plants	This book mainly introduces the physical growth of plants, the distribution and geographical distribution system of plants in the world, and sorts out the influence of the distribution of each plant on its own growth conditions, climate and water source, so that I can understand the characteristics and life forms of plants.	Yang Yong. (2017). Taxonomy and Geographical Distribution of the World Gymnosperms. Shanghai Science and Technology Press. ISBN: 9787547833285.
	Plants	The book "Plants" starts from the most basic concepts, and gradually reveals the special life form of plants for us, and shows the wonderful exhibition of different plant groups on the earth in the context of biological evolution. It provides the basis for understanding the plant image in this thesis.	Timothy Walker. (2021). Plants UK. Yilin Publishing House. ISBN:9787544784375. 2p
	Origin of Species by Means Of Natural Selection	This book introduces the categories and life forms of plants, the types of plant differentiation, each type has different characteristics and their own unique beauty, which provides the aesthetic basis for the study of plants in this paper.	Charles Darwin. (1985). The Origin of Species by Means Of Natural selection. J.W. Burrow (ed.). repr. London. 1985, p. 172
	Plants Shape Human History	The author tells the story of changing plants for humans, from human diet to material life. The color of plants provides vitality for human life, plants are also the material basis of people's survival, have an important impact on human life.	Shi Jun. (2021). Human History Shaped by Plants. Modern Press: ISBN:9787514390100
	The Song of the Forest	Through the author's experiences, this book takes readers to understand the continuing influence of plants in nature, the way they influence the way we look at life, and the miraculous power they give us to heal.	Suzanne Simard. (2005). The Song of the Forest. Hunan Fine Arts Publishing House. ISBN:9787535694898.
	Nature Cured My Depression	This book is a thorough study of plants, explores the seasons with beautiful prose and charming plant illustrations, tells how plants affect people's emotions. Nature is a natural psychologist, returning to the wild, contact with plants, is beneficial to our physical and mental health, and has a considerable impact on natural psychological healing.	Emma Weil. (2022). Nature Cured My Depression, Sichuan Literature and Art Publishing House. ISBN:9787541163449.
Plant Image and Cultural Meaning	Research on Plant Image	The author's viewpoint of expression: Image is the core content of Chinese classical art theory, which contains rich and profound aesthetic thoughts and cultural meaning. It highlights the autonomy and creativity of the aesthetic subject.	Jia Jun. (2011). Research on Plant Image. Northeast Forestry University.
	The Beauty of Imagery	This document proposed the integration of aesthetics and art, transformed abstract aesthetics into poetic aesthetics, and constructed the aesthetic interpretation of image.	Gu Chunfang. (2022). The Beauty of Imagery. China International Broadcasting Press, ISBN:978750785192.
	Research on the Application of Plant Image in Chinese Furniture Design.	This paper research a traditional and modern design language through creative design method, describes the application of plant image in furniture design, the aesthetic sense of form, the relationship between plant theme and cultural implication, and provides reference for the study of plant image ceramic art.	Luo Xunxiang, Zhang Nan. (2022). Research on the application of plant image in Chinese furniture design. China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. ISSN: 2095--6711/Z01--2019-21-0235
	Plant Image in Female Ceramic	In the process of creating plant image ceramic artworks, female ceramists pay more attention to the expression of plant forms and details, and give the cultural meaning of plant image ceramic artworks more perceptual and delicate.	Han Xiangcui. (2019). Plant Image in Female Ceramic. Chinese ceramic Industry.
	Analysis on the Humanistic Meaning of Plants in Ceramic Creation	This thesis introduces the cultural meaning that Chinese potters often give to their ceramic works with plant image, which represents the conception of contemporary potters, the expression of emotion and creativity, and further discusses the cultural meaning of plants.	Fei Xiaorui. (2013). Analysis on the Humanistic Meaning of Plants in Ceramic Creation. Art Science and Technology. 2013 (05): 109.
	The History of Tree Art	The literature records the culture of plants and their application in artworks. Through the arrangement and interpretation of these plants, it provides some information about the planting situation, different cultural connotations in different parts of the world, which can be compared with the cultural connotations of plants in China.	Frances Carey. (2012). The History of Tree Art. Xiamen: Huijiang Publishing House. ISBN 978-7-559-1183-1.
	The Way of Craftsmanship	The creation process of ceramic craft works is a series of processes that combine with beauty, participate in life, relate to economy and reveal thoughts, craft will be concerned in the academic circle in the future.	Liu Zongyue. (2011). The Way of Craftsmanship, Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press. ISBN 9778-5495-0279-0.

Table 2.2 The relevant ceramic literature references

Keywords	References	Links between References and Thesis	The Sources
History of Chinese Plant Ceramics	Chinese Art History Course	The book "History of Chinese Art" is rich in artworks, introducing in detail the development and artistic characteristics of ceramic works in various historical periods in China, and providing the background for my research.	Pu Songnian. (2008). Chinese Art History Course. People's Fine Arts Publishing House. ISBN 978-7-5368-2188-0.
	History of Chinese ceramics	Mainly narrated from a historical point of view. This book discusses the emergence, development, style, characteristics, methods, achievements and contributions of Chinese ceramic art for thousands of years, which provides a basis for my research on ancient Chinese ceramic artworks.	Chinese Silicate Society. (1982). History of Chinese Ceramics. Beijing: Cultural Relics Publishing House.
	The Origin and Development of Ancient Chinese Plant Decorative Patterns	The development of plant image ceramic artworks in ancient China is the result of the development of history, politics, economy and culture at that time. The decorative patterns of plants have different aesthetic characteristics and cultural meanings in different historical periods. By studying the plant pattern ceramics of different historical periods, I can understand the technical level of ancient ceramics and people's inner expectations.	Zhang Xiaoxia. (2010). The Origin and Development of Ancient Chinese Plant Decorative Patterns. Shanghai Culture Publishing House, 15-33p.
	Ceramic Arts and Crafts	This book from the selection of pottery raw materials, a variety of moulding methods, the selection of glaze colour, into the kiln firing and so on to do a comprehensive and systematic description. My teaching practice and experience for many years, combined with the creation law of modern ceramic art, as a guide to the creation of materials.	Chen Qi. (2005). Ceramic Arts and Crafts. Beijing: Higher Education Press
	Form and Implication	As a form of expression of consciousness and behaviour, decoration is a form of expression of human's pursuit of beauty and modification of objects. This book expounds the graphic structure, form rules, style types, and the characteristics and artistic value of decorative aesthetics of ancient Chinese plant decoration.	Weng Jianqing. (2007). Form and Implication, Beijing: Peking University Press ISBN 978-7-301-10711-9. http://www.pup.cn .
Contemporary ceramic artworks	Contemporary Ceramic	This book illustrates that contemporary ceramic art pays more attention to artistic and aesthetic functions. Contemporary pottery is no longer considered merely decorative, it has moved away from display cases and is now becoming the focus of contemporary art galleries.	Charlotte vannier. (2020). Contemporary Ceramic. Publisher: Thames. Hudson. ISBN:9780500295786
	The motif and Expression of "Flower" in Female Ceramics	Contemporary Chinese female potters are more inclined to create plant image motifs, to express their aesthetics, emotions and sympathy for the market competition and contemporary society. The criticism of contemporary civilization also promotes the emergence of modern art trends and make their works more thoughtful. This book provides a theoretical basis.	Tang Ke. (2013), The MotifS and expression of "Flower" in Female Ceramics. Acta Ceramics Sinica.
	Modern Ceramic Art	Contemporary ceramic artwork is a combination of ceramic materials, technology and aesthetic concepts, and cross-container and sculpture, practical and non-practical works of art	Xia Dewu. (2002). Modern Ceramic Art. Anhui Fine Arts Publishing House.
	Study on Humanized Design of Daily ceramics	Daily porcelain is the ceramic often used in People's Daily life, including plates, cups, bowls and other ceramic utensils, which integrates practical functions and aesthetic functions.	Zheng Minglei, Zhao Juan. (2017). Study on Daily design of domestic ceramics. Northeast Normal University Press.
	Overview of World Modern Ceramics	The ceramic modelling of plant image is to transform the ceramic material into the morphological characteristics of the plant through certain methods or means.	Bai Ming. (1999). Overview of World Modern Ceramics. Jiangxi Fine Arts Publishing House.
Contemporary Ceramic Artists	Approaching the Ceramist	Contemporary ceramic art is a brand-new art field, it has its own special artistic language, with the help of which artists express their understanding of nature, and create ceramic artworks that express desire, understanding and fantasy of various desires, some works are still designed to simulate nature and explain nature, there are causal and associative relations with natural objects.	Qiu Gengyu. (2008). Approaching the Ceramist, Shandong Fine Arts Publishing House. http://www.sdmspub.com .
	Ceramic Product designers	The book of Ceramic product Designer edited by Jiang Yongjun introduces ceramic product analysis, modelling design, ceramic information sorting and market analysis, provides ideas for the research methods for my thesis.	Jiang Yongjun. (2016). Ceramic Product designers. China Labor and Social Security Press. http://www.class.com.cn .

Table 2.3 The relevant creation and application form literature references

Keywords	References	Links between References and Thesis	The Sources
Contemporary Plant Image Ceramic Art Creation	Ceramic Jewellery Design and Production	Ceramic jewellery is an expression of ceramic art, and the control of materials and techniques follows the rules of ceramic art creation or design.	Zou Xiaowen. (2023). Ceramic Jewellery Design and Production. Jiangsu Fine Arts Publishing House.
	Ceramic decorative Design and Production	This book systematically introduces the aesthetic characteristics and style characteristics of ceramic jewellery. Ceramic jewellery can be integrated with other materials for design and production, which is a combination of time-honoured ceramic art forms and innovative art design, and provides development space for creation.	Zhang Yushan. (2017). Ceramic decoration Design and Production. Publishing & Publishing Institute of Hunan University. ISBN: 978-7-567-1332-2.
	Design: A Very Short Introduction	Professor John Herscher is engaged in design education and research. He combines Eastern and Western philosophies and offers unique insights into complex design problems. He proposed that design comes from various decisions and choices of human beings, and design affects human life in many ways. Ceramic design affects people's life from the details of life.	John Heskett. (2013). Design: A Very Short Introduction. Oxford University Press. ISBN 987-7-5447-2975-8.
	Ceramic Art production techniques	This book records how contemporary technological developments have led to great advances and innovations in the way ceramics are made. This book introduces ceramic decoration techniques in detail, the decoration of clay and glaze in three different stages, reflecting the creation of contemporary Chinese plant image ceramic artworks.	Wang Xingyu. (2019). Fang Baiqin Pottery Production Techniques. Beijing: Architectural Industry Press. ISBN:9787112230808.
	Ceramic Creative Design	Ceramicist design uses artistic techniques to establish emotional links between the structure, performance and everyday use of products. Ceramic creation uses relevant theories and methods to select reasonable schemes from several possibilities and put them into practice, and finally forms meaningful creative results.	Jiang Lei. Dai Yuxiang. (2017). Ceramic Creative Design. Publication of China Academy of Art. http://www.caapress.com .
	Ceramic Firing and Coloring	The book "Ceramic Craft" from the kiln, ceramic, glaze, kiln and painted porcelain and other aspects of the content, a detailed review of the development history, analysis of the causes of defects in the process of ceramic firing, to provide concrete and actionable instruction to students of ceramic art and design.	Liu Xiaoming. (2024). Ceramic Firing and Colouring. China Textile Press. ISBN 978-7-522-90994-3.
	Comprehensive Experiment of Ceramic Techniques	The comprehensive experiment of ceramic craft is an important part of ceramic creation. Use the knowledge, hands, materials to make ceramic artworks. In the process of experiment, and the ability to analyses and solve problems has been improved.	Yang Hai-Bo, Zhu Jian-Feng. (2013). Comprehensive Experiment of Ceramic Technology. China Light Industry Press. ISBN 978-7-5019-9305-5.
	Integrated Material Jewelry Design and Production	This book has expanded my thinking in the application of materials. There are various techniques and materials, and through my own experiments, I have explored the creation skills and the possibility of applying materials.	Joanne Haywood. (2015). Integrated Materials Jewellery Design and Production. China Textile Press, ISBN 978-7-5180-1066-0.
The Application Form of Plant Image	The application of Plant Form in Ceramic	Figurative plant forms are the plants that the ceramist or ceramic maker sees through the intuitive senses, and the plant forms are reproduced one by one through long-term patient ceramic creation	Huang Li. (2015). Research on the application of plant Form in ceramic vessel Design. Jingdezhen Ceramic University.
	Ceramic Creative Design Cheats	From the introduction of creative ideas and operation techniques, this book introduces the details of various techniques in detail, and guides researchers to conceive more creative works. This book encourages creators to try and develop new materials and technologies, and effectively guides my creative practice works.	Jacqui Atkin. (2018). Ceramic Creative Design Cheats. People's Fine Arts Publishing House. ISBN 987-7-102-08020-8. http://www.renmei.com.cn .
	Introduction to Design	Applied in the creation of ceramic art in the form of patterns, there are many kinds of plants. When people create ceramic works, they extract the images and then design them into patterns to make the objects more beautiful.	ASIMOW M. (2012). Introduction to Design. New York: Prentice Hall.
	Application of Plant Forms in Modern Ceramics	The thesis introduces in detail that the planar ceramic art is the most intuitive form of expression, which is a two-dimensional plane space composed of artistic creation, design composition, pattern decoration, colour and other elements.	Xiong Longyao. (2018). Analysis on the Application of Plant Forms in Modern Ceramics. Wuhan University of Technology.
	Addition to Clay Bodie	Contemporary ceramic artists are committed to exploring the creative possibilities that additives can provide. Additions of ceramic work gives the viewer a visual experience that is both shocking and unique. my work is inspired by this book, which explores the combined comprehensive materials and ceramics.	Kathleen Standen. (2013). Addition to Clay Bodies. Shanghai Science and Technology Press, China. ISBN 978-7-5478-5224-8.

2.2 Description of Plants

2.2.1 Overview of Plants

Plants are often explained as immobile and green organic objects that can feed themselves through photosynthesis (Timothy Walker, 2021). Timothy Walker's book *Plants* starts from the most basic concept, gradually showing the viewer the special life form of plants, and shows the wonderful exhibition of different plant groups on the earth through the context of biological evolution. Every step forward in human's understanding of life, we will have a new understanding of the definition of plants. The study of plants can provide a foundation for human to better develop natural resources, and can help researchers better live-in harmony with plant life and draw spiritual power from plants. The study of plants has made me have a certain understanding of the growth characteristics of plants, and I have a strong interest in the study of plant images in ceramic artworks. Plants participate in the natural cycle of life, including the formation of clay, the migration of species, and the circulation of the atmosphere, so that we live in an environment with clean air, pure water, and delicious food, which is indispensable wisdom in the exchange of nature, in the silent growth of agreement, the pursuit of natural balance (Suzanne Simard, 2005). Plants are the material basis of human existence. Plants are the essential components of the biosphere; their evolution directly affects the evolution of animal life and the evolution of the earth's climate, and plants are the material basis of human survival (Shi Jun, 2021). Plants can provide food to humans, such as grains, vegetables, and fruits; Raw materials, such as wood and fibre. Plants like animals and inorganic substances, are one of the motifs of ceramic creation, plants are also one of the primary forms of life.

Plants can be divided into seed plants, bryophytes, ferns, etc., and seed plants are further divided into gymnosperms and angiosperms. Angiosperms are progressive in the process of heredity, development, stem, leaf, flower, and other structures, especially their role in the reproductive organ of flowers so that they can adapt to those harsh environmental conditions through their genetic variation but develop faster, differentiate into more types

(Charles Darwin, 1985), each type has different characteristics and their unique beauty. The flowering and falling of angiosperms decorate the earth with four distinct seasons. Buds grow on buds, and while life is still there, the branches are slanted, and new trees are spread out and derived from generation to generation. The earth's crust is filled with the withered branches of the tree of life, and its surface is covered with its eternally spreading charms (Charles Darwin, 1985). New buds and branches bloom, stretch and grow, rise in spring and fall, becoming the cycle of life and the source of creation in literature and art.

Common plants, such as trees, rattan, flowers, grasses, and other types, are in the form of vitality in nature. Plants in nature have given people much inspiration for creation. Since humans began to use plant images to consciously decorate ceramic artworks, the ceramic artists who use plant forms to create ceramic artworks today have been greatly inspired by plant images. As shown in the picture below (Figure 2.1), the sunflower photographed by me in Henan, China, is very beautiful in color and form from my perspective, and the flowers are large and have great tension and transport capacity. Therefore, I use it as the subject for preparing to create plant image ceramic artworks.



Figure 2.1 Plants located at farmland in Henan, China

2.2.2 Distribution of Plants

Humidity, light, and water are the basic needs of plants to survive. The distribution and geographical distribution of gymnosperms worldwide are systematically reviewed on the research results of global gymnosperms taxonomy. The distribution of each plant is affected by its growth conditions, climate and water source (Yang Yong, Wang Zhiheng, Xu Xiaoting, 2017). Plants are found throughout most of the world's hydrosphere, the lithosphere's surface, and the atmosphere's bottom, and vary in number and variety depending on the climate zone.

Many of Earth's biospheres are named after vegetation types because plants, such as grasslands and forests, are the dominant organisms in these biospheres, and plants adapt to different environments through genetic differentiation and plasticity (Timothy Walker, 2021). Different plant distributions exist in different zones, and there are apparent differences between boreal, temperate, and tropical plants. For example, spruce, larch, and moss grow in the boreal zone. Peonies, apples, and peaches are grown in temperate zones; Durian, banana, and coconut trees are distributed in the tropics, so the plant ceramic artworks created by artists in different regions also vary greatly. Different plants grow in different places, for example, aquatic plants grow in the water, grass and trees are scattered in the mountains, the field, the city, or the country, and humans widely cultivate ornamental plants in their beautiful forms. Ceramic artists generally use materials for plants from the mountains, woods, fields, parks, courtyards, and other places. Plant types that often appear in Chinese ceramic art include lotus, peony, pomegranate, peach blossom, apricot blossom, rattan, willow, bamboo, pine and other motifs of plants, which are widely cultivated and often appear in Chinese art and poetry, becoming an integral part of Chinese culture, it also reflects the regional and humanistic characteristics. Chinese ceramic art in a variety of common plant subjects, these subjects not only enrich the decorative content of ceramics, home profoundly reflects the unique charm of Chinese culture and deep meaning.

2.2.3 The Influence of Plants

The influence of plants on human beings is far beyond our imagination; plants dominate our food, writing, and social organization, and our economy and trade, as well as our exploration of the world, are supported by plants (Shi Jun, 2021). To some extent, plants have shaped human beings. Plants affect human beings' material living conditions, the spiritual world's construction, and the aesthetic shaping of human beings.

2.2.3(a) Plants Influence Human Life

Fossil studies show that land plants appeared about 410 million years ago. Primates appeared as early as 60 million years ago (Frances Carey, 2012). So, the origin of plants has a more extended history than that of human beings. The ancestors of human beings were closely associated with plants, especially the primitive jungles made up of trees, which were the homes where early human beings lived. Humans picked fruits in the jungle to satisfy their hunger and used plants as tools and dwellings to enable them to live and survive. During the agricultural period, humans had a deep symbiosis with plants. Humans judged their season in the long cycle of years by the coming of rain, wind, and snow and by the growth of grass and trees, and thus worked and harvested food, thus finding the opportunity to maintain a stable human population and a sense of stability in their lives, which resulted in a deep-seated dependence on and love for plants. In Shi Jun's book "The History of Human Shaped by Plants", he tells the story of plants shape the humans, from human diet to material life. Since the birth of humanity, there has been an instinctive reliance on plants, and humanity's clothing, food, housing, and traveling have all been deeply influenced by plants.

Plants are the basis of the connection between human and nature, and such a connection has become the source of humanity's material and spiritual well-being. In contemporary times, the influence of plants on human life is still profound, from the physical objects that humans eat to the planting of flowers and trees on the streets, all of which suggest the close connection between plants and human life.

2.2.3(b) Spiritual Impact of Plants on Human

The economy of modern society has accelerated the development of human society, and material interests have replaced spirit as the mainstream of the whole human society. However, the influence of plants in nature is still there, influencing how we see life and giving us miraculous powers to heal wounds (Susannah Simard, 2005). Nature is the natural psychologist, and returning to the wild and getting in touch with plants is good for human physical and mental health (Emma Weil, 2022). The book of *Nature Cured My Depression* by Emma Weil is a thorough study of plants. It explores the seasons with beautiful prose and fascinating plant illustrations, describes how plants affect human's emotions, and is a diary of how plants heal human's emotions. Even though most contemporary human live in cities which bring rich material wealth and comfortable living conditions, the aesthetic of plants has become increasingly scarce. Even with the universality of mechanical production, a modern society marked by scientific and technological progress has brought endless harvesting and demand for plants but also brought a competitive and anxious environment, destroying the peace of the human mind. In this sense, the plant image has been weakened in the living environment and has become a spiritual crisis in contemporary society. To eliminate the anxiety of urban life, the return of natural plants in the human spirit is increasingly urgent, and the environment with rich plants has the value of spiritual space for human.

The stretch of green leaves or blooming flowers always makes human happy and full of emotions, and it is because of the natural beauty of plants that people are intoxicated, associated with a lot of good things, and can relax their mental state. Plants' graceful shape and colourful colours can please people's bodies and minds. Plants' lush greenery and tenacious vitality have the power of life revelation for human beings (Susannah Simard, 2005). That brings an excellent opportunity for the appearance of plant images in many ceramic artworks. Therefore, making full use of everything endowed by plants is the material and spiritual need of human beings, the need for survival and development. Plant image is the source of artistic