

Narratology of Ancient Chinese Ceramic Decoration: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

In the long history of human civilization, Chinese-style ceramics are one of the essential symbols of Chinese civilization. The development of glazed pottery in Chinese style from the 7th to the 11th Century is as important as a milestone for the presentation of Chinese style elements in ceramics, the external dissemination, and the development of Chinese style. This study presents an in-depth literature review on the narratives associated with the historical practice of Chinese ceramic decoration. The process consists of four stages: developing a research topic, searching for relevant literature, selecting relevant studies, and collecting data. A total of 47 peer-reviewed database entries from three databases (ResearchGate, Scopus, and PubMed) were examined to identify and select twenty works focused on Chinese ceramic decoration. PRISMA, Mendeley reference manager and bibliography approaches were used. This review concluded that Ceramics art decoration culture is one of the important components of China's excellent culture and a precious culture left by our ancestors. As a work of art that is exported overseas, it continues to spread the culture of Chinese ceramic art and plays a role in bridging and integrating the exchanges between Chinese culture and the world.

Keywords: Narratology, Ancient Chinese, Ceramic Decoration, Systematic Literature Review, Bibliography.

1. Introduction

The historical and aesthetic relevance of ancient ceramics makes it an important asset for cultural studies. Ceramics, often known as primitive pottery, can be broadly categorized according to historical dynasties and kilns. Due to its large supply of ceramic materials and its large supply of qualified workers, China has long been the world's leading producer and exporter of ceramics. In the first national census on cultural items conducted in China in 2017, antique pottery was found to have the sixth highest total number. In addition, the main art collections of the Palace Museum are stored there [1]. Though, it is essential to restore a large number of ancient ceramic items. However, the ceramic decorative pattern is one of the essential elements in ceramic art; ceramic products will become more decorative because of the decorative pattern.

Generally, the sources of ceramic decorative patterns in an era are divided into two parts. One part is the inheritance of classic and beautiful decorative patterns in history. The other part is

directly derived from the era of ceramics, and these decorative patterns are usually innovative and popular decorative themes of the times [2]. The design history of each country reveals a common theme; the importance of design and material culture in the creation and acceptance of a national identity. One such example is the Pevsnerian historiographic tradition, which argues that the nations of the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, and the United States have all had an impact on the evolution of design throughout history. However, only through the various channels of expression can one grasp the unique character of a nation [3].

Design, from this point of view, presents an opportunity to establish a link between national expression and reputation. The ceramic design representations of this historical period are especially interesting to explore since ceramic as an object can represent the basic processes of cultural change that affect a civilization [4]. However, ancient Chinese ceramics represent an extraordinary confluence of artistry, craftsmanship, and cultural expression. Beyond their utilitarian function, these ceramic artifacts serve as intricate canvases, silently narrating the stories, beliefs, and histories of their creators. This introduction provides an overview of the narratology of ancient Chinese ceramic decoration, a field of study that uncovers the rich narratives embedded within these seemingly silent objects.

Moreover, Chinese ceramics have a history spanning thousands of years, encompassing diverse dynastic periods and regional traditions. From the delicate porcelain of the Song Dynasty to the robust terracotta of the Qin Dynasty, each type of ceramic embodies a unique story. As Dong et al., (2018) observes, these ceramics are not merely artistic expressions but carriers of cultural narratives that provide insights into China's multifaceted history [5]. The narratology of ancient Chinese ceramic decoration is an interdisciplinary endeavor that intersects art history, archaeology, semiotics, and cultural studies. It involves decoding the intricate patterns, motifs, and symbols that adorn ceramics, revealing layers of meaning and narratives that are often hidden beneath their surfaces. In this exploration, the work of Cui (2011) serves as a foundational text, emphasizing the role of figurative motifs and textual inscriptions in conveying narratives through ceramic decoration [6].

One of the remarkable aspects of Chinese ceramic decoration is its symbolism. Berthold (2009) delves into the significance of symbols and motifs, illustrating how dragons, phoenixes, and floral patterns can represent not only aesthetic beauty but also profound cultural and historical narratives [7]. These symbols are not static; they evolve over time and across dynasties, adding layers of complexity to the narratives they convey. Furthermore, the narratives encapsulated in Chinese ceramics extend beyond aesthetics and symbolism. Liu (2012) explores how emperors and political rulers used ceramics to assert their authority and communicate their reign's legitimacy [8]. This perspective revealed the intertwined relationship between ceramics and political narratives in ancient China. As the current review delve into this field of study, it becomes evident that the narratology of ancient Chinese ceramic decoration offers a unique lens through which to examine the cultural, social, and political tapestry of China's past.

By deciphering the stories told through these ceramics, this systematic literature review study gained a deeper understanding of the values, beliefs, and historical events that shaped Chinese civilization. The main research question that directed the present systematic literature review was "what are the narratology of ancient Chinese ceramic decoration?" Furthermore, this section

discusses the rationale behind doing a systematic literature review of the narratology of ancient Chinese ceramic decoration, while the next section defines the methodology used to address the research problem presented in this study. In the third section, we systematically evaluate and synthesize the relevant scientific literature to find, select, and, and evaluate significant studies on the narratology of ancient Chinese ceramic decoration. The final section examines, with a concentration on future researchers, the activities that should be undertaken in response to the presented challenges. Table 1 showed the research gaps of systematic literature review of ceramic decoration.

Table 1. Research Gaps of Systematic Literature Review

Research Title	Limitations & Recommendations	Key Reference
A Review on Development of Ceramic-Graphene Based Nanohybrid Composite Systems in Biological Applications	This study is a major step forward in the development of advanced Ceramic-Graphene structures. However, more study is needed to prove these novel materials can be used in larger-scale manufacturing.	Jakubczak M, Jastrzebska AM. (2021). A Review on Development of Ceramic-Graphene Based Nanohybrid Composite Systems in Biological Applications. <i>Front. Chem.</i> 9:685014. doi: 10.3389/fchem.2021.685014
Ceramic Partial Laminate Veneers in Anterior Teeth: A Literature Review	More study is needed to find the best ceramic material to utilize and the best way to prepare the ceramic's surface for finishing and polishing.	Gerardo Durán Ojeda, Rijkje A. Bresser, Michael Wendler, Marco M.M. Gresnigt, (2023). Ceramic partial laminate veneers in anterior teeth: A literature review, <i>Journal of Prosthodontic Research</i> , https://doi.org/10.2186/jpr
National Image of Ceramic Product Design in China, 1949-1966	All of these changes were made to conform more closely to the values of the new administration. Ceramics may continue to play a role in daily life in the new China, but they may take on new forms both functional and aesthetic.	Pan, X., & Kim, S. (2022). National Image of Ceramic Product Design in China, 1949-1966. <i>Archives of Design Research</i> , 35(2), 101-113
A Systematic Review on Virtual Reality Technology for Ancient Ceramic Restoration	The findings of this analysis suggest that future strategic initiatives utilizing virtual reality technology should be developed to improve the maintenance of historic ceramic repair in all aspects from visualization to storage, documentation, and the incorporation of metadata.	Ming, Y.; Me, R.C.; Chen, J.K.; Rahmat, R.W.O.K. (2023). A Systematic Review on Virtual Reality Technology for Ancient Ceramic Restoration. <i>Appl. Sci</i> , 13, 8991. https://doi.org/10.3390/app13158991

2. Method

Research Direction

A framework is offered for the evaluation of narratology of ancient Chinese ceramic decoration from the perspective of Chinese art and culture industry in order to accomplish the purpose of this review. The study addressed the following question: 1) What are the narratology of ancient Chinese ceramic decoration? The objective is to: 1) assess the current narratology of ancient Chinese ceramic decoration by using the literature synthesis that was taken from the different data base. See Figure 1 for the steps of the research.

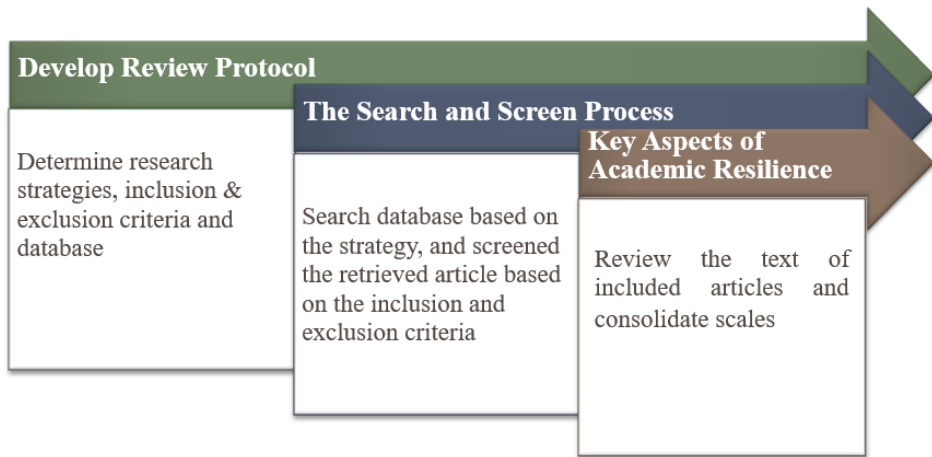


Figure 1. The Steps of the Research

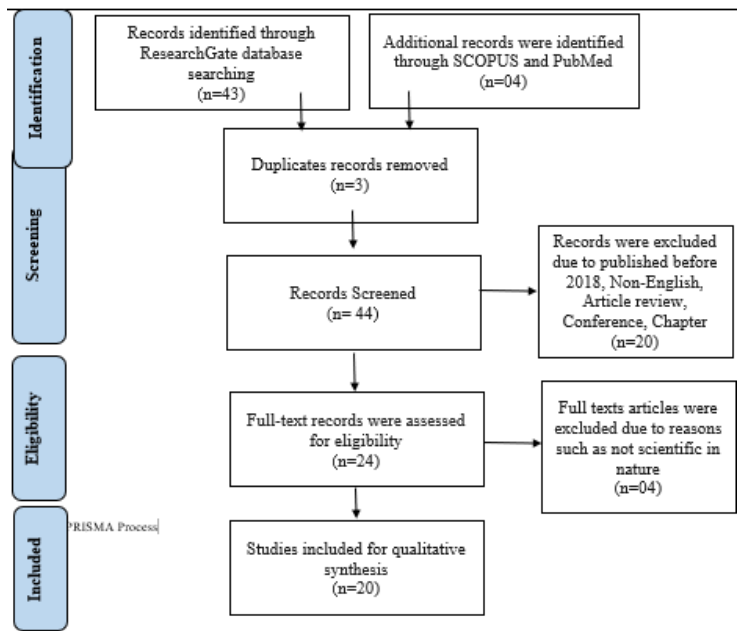
Methodological Approach

To accomplish the research objectives, a planned strategy of performing a literature review was adopted. Finding and gathering the relevant data systematically helps one arrive at an objective decision with the least degree of biasness [9]. The integrated literature review in this study used a systematic review, a qualitative synthesis, and the creation of a review procedure [10]. Bibliography analysis approach was used in this systematic literature review. This review study adhered to a set of guidelines to make sure all of the research goals were properly addressed. The process includes database searches, using data from studies that qualified, analysing the previous studies, and establishing a review protocol defining the review approach (Figure 1).

It is essential to explain the search terms, databases, and screening procedure because they constitute the basis of the review technique. Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) was used to evaluate and choose studies from the database based on the most up-to-date inclusion and exclusion criteria (See Figure 2). This study is a quantitative study review that includes quantitative articles that meet the following criteria: studies concentrating on evaluating ceramic decorations, studies focusing in art and cultural industries, and studies focusing on peer-reviewed publications in English. The chosen records were subjected to the following exclusion standards during the abstract and text assessment procedures.

Studies that didn't meet these requirements were disqualified: 1) Studies that used duplicate data that was taken from several sources, 2) Studies that have a lacked of clear research process, and 3) Studies that lacked supporting information, sources, or a theoretical foundation for their conclusions [11]. The second phase of the review methodology requires selecting the databases to search in order to get the articles. Data for this review was mainly sourced from Scopus, Research Gate, and PubMed. According to the study conducted by Okoli and Schabram (2010),

an additional retrospective and prospective literature search technique was used to identify more relevant and useful research articles [12].



Studies selected the records that have been retrieved are narrowed down based on eligibility criteria to focus on relevant studies [13-14].

The Screening Process

Initially, comprehensive database search utilising title, abstract, and keywords (Scopus, Research Gate and PubMed) there were 47 records discovered with possible relevance. Three relevant articles were deleted by using EndNote. A total of twenty articles were removed from further consideration because they did not adhere to the initial inclusion criteria established during the abstract review stage, from which four records were ultimately selected. Figure 2 shows that the twenty most relevant studies were kept for the PRISMA full-text analysis after this technique was applied [15].

3. Results

Descriptive Analysis

This category included the majority of the 20 studies that made up the reviewed publications. In the vast majority of preceding studies that developed or enhanced ceramic decorations, this methodology was utilised to establish the narratology of ancient Chinese ceramic decoration.

Review Studies

In order to determine the most practical ceramic decoration studies, a review of the literature about 20 studies from 2018-2023 were comprised. This category played a significant role in the construction of the literature synthesis for the evaluation of narratology of ancient Chinese ceramic decoration. See table 2 for review studies.

Table 2. Established The Narratology of Ancient Chinese Ceramic Decoration

Sr#	Research Title	Authors	Years	Conclusion
1.	The synthesis of beauty with the world of form and meaning and the historical narration of traditional ceramic utensils	Lili	2020	It expresses artistic formal aesthetic feeling, but on the other hand, it reflects human's pursuit of the meaningful world, and also shows the exchange of ideas and cultures between different societies and cultures through trade.
2.	The influence of Chinese landscape painting on ceramic landscape painting	Liming	2022	Ceramic landscape painting reflects the artist's love for landscape interest and the establishment of modern seclusion thought. Ceramic landscape painting reflects the artist's love for landscape interest and the establishment of modern seclusion thought. Ceramic landscape painting reflects the artist's love for landscape interest and the establishment of modern seclusion thought.
3.	China ceramic art decoration colocolo feature	Qian	2022	This tory cultural development pass inherit rise arrive help push do use.
4.	A brief examination of the history of Chinese ceramic glaze decoration technology	Guangda, Naizhang, Junming, Yunjie	2020	The concept of ceramics is broadened and it is believed that: according to the basic production process of traditional ceramics. The manufactured inorganic non-metallic materials and their products are called ceramics.
5.	Research and analysis of traditional Chinese auspicious patterns used in ceramic decoration	Wentao, Guimei	2023	First, we looked at how auspicious patterns from different eras of Chinese culture manifested in art, then we traced the evolution of these designs as they were applied to ceramic decoration, and finally, we looked at how these designs are used today. Future studies need to work more about ceramic decorations in China.
6.	A study on Chinese export porcelain's religious culture in Ming and Qing dynasty	Wanting, Guohao	2021	It is well-known that the practicality and enlightenment of Chinese porcelain exported abroad are highly valued. The Chinese export ceramics produced throughout the Ming and Qing dynasties serve as a witness to the cultural diversity of the world, the intellectual capabilities of humanity, the spiritual importance of material artifacts, the integration of communication systems, and the reciprocal progress achieved through global interactions.
7.	The inheritance and application of traditional Chinese auspicious patterns in modern ceramic decoration	Min	2022	This article mainly discussed the manifestations of traditional auspicious patterns in different periods, and then conducts an in-depth discussion on the inheritance and application of traditional auspicious patterns in modern ceramic decoration. It also puts forward its own opinions based on its own experience, aiming to make modern ceramics become more unique. Cultural connotation, thus promoting the good development of our country's cultural inheritance
8.	Research on clustering-based ceramic image diversity retrieval method	Shengping	2021	Experimental results showed that the method can achieve good performance with improving diversity while ensuring the relevance of retrieval results and improved the retrieval efficiency.
9.	CeramicImage Restoration Based on Deep Learn	Zhiming, Yi, Junxiang	2022	The experiments showed that the confrontation generation network can improve the clarity of ancient ceramic images to deal with large-scale and complex

				ancient ceramic images and retain the texture details of ancient ceramic images, which is an advantage that traditional algorithms do not have. The two-stage joint confrontation generation network were used in this study to conduct 2.1 million iterative trainings with 2000 defective ceramic images. The experiments showed that the confrontation generation network can improve the clarity of ancient ceramic images to deal with large-scale and complex ancient ceramic images and retain the texture details of ancient ceramic images, which is an advantage that track.
10.	Analysis of decorative patterns of Song Dynasty ceramics from the perspective of plane composition	Yuhui	2021	From the combination and application of ceramic decorative patterns in Song Dynasty, we can see the crystallization of ancient wisdom, and discuss and analyze the point, line and surface elements of ceramic decorative patterns in Song Dynasty through plane composition.
11.	Theoretical research on ceramic decorative painting	Lei	2018	The culture of ceramics has run through the development of the entire Chinese civilization. Ceramic painting is a unique art category. As early as 9,000 years ago in China, with the emergence of fire, through the combination of labor and practice, one of the ancient Chinese cultures was invented. The artistic creation - pottery, has thus begun a new chapter in the history of human development
12.	The historical origin of ceramic history narrative	Qiuyue	2023	Due to the "emphasis on classics and history" in ancient my country. The idea of "light on management and art". As a result, the number of documents recording ceramics in ancient my country is relatively small. Therefore, records related to ceramics are particularly important.
13.	Applicability in ceramic painting works	Kai	2023	As a category in the study of art history, ceramic painting works also use a large number of iconographic research methods in the process of analyzing the works. Of course, any methodology has its applicable interval and scope. Understanding the applicability of a methodology can also It is helpful to grasp the application of this methodology at a macro level.
14.	Art sociological analysis of ceramic decoration	Jiaojiao	2019	With the development of science and technology and the progress of society, ceramics are not only used as practical products to meet people's material needs in people's social lives. Ceramic decorative art to meet people's spiritual and aesthetic needs continues to develop and innovate. In the history of Chinese ceramics, Over the long years, the craftsmanship has been continuously improved and the content has been continuously enriched. Until today, brilliant achievements have been made. Ceramic decoration with both aesthetic and practical functions has had a huge impact on people's social life.
15.	Analysis on the performance of eight treasures pattern in ceramic decoration	Xinxin	2023	As to better expand the expression of the eight treasures patterns in artistic language, and constantly enrich the specific effect of ceramic decoration.
16.	The integration and development of ceramic decoration and art derivatives	Liangnan	2019	Ceramic decoration and art derivatives have common development needs. Explore new paths for the integrated development of the two, Conducive to promoting the coordinated development of ceramic decoration and art derivatives, Better inherit Chinese traditional culture.

17.	A brief discussion on the decorative beauty of Chinese ceramic art	Qianye	2023	Ceramic art can not only dazzle people's eyes, but also cultivate people's sentiments, and has high aesthetic value. Ceramic art still plays an important role today. In China, ceramics have entered thousands of households and become a necessary decoration in people's daily lives.
18.	Narrative research on shanghai-style ceramic	Zhao, Zhou, Hua	2019	Under the cultural confidence and artistic innovation history, the development of Shanghai-style ceramics will bring new development attitude to the inheritance and development of Shanghai-style culture, gather the cultural memories and visual symbols of Shanghai city, and become the new force to develop Shanghai-style culture.
19.	The influence of the retro trend on the pattern and symbol of ceramic decoration in the Qianlong period of the Qing dynasty	Ying	2023	The study can deepen the understanding of Chinese ceramic decoration and has a positive significance for the inheritance and protection of Chinese traditional ceramic decoration.
20.	Interesting design and its application in ceramic decoration design	Lili	2023	The interesting decoration design of ceramic products is easier to accept by customers, so that it can better play its market value while meeting their aesthetic requirements.

4. Discussion

Ancient Chinese ceramics have long been celebrated for their exquisite craftsmanship, but beyond their aesthetic appeal, these artifacts often carry hidden narratives and symbolic meanings within their decorative elements. Authors such as Cui (2011) have explored the narrative potential of Chinese ceramics, emphasizing how elements like figurative motifs, iconography, and textual inscriptions on ceramics can convey stories and cultural narratives. Berthold (2009) investigates the symbolism embedded in Chinese ceramic designs, highlighting how specific motifs and symbols on ceramics represent cultural, religious, or historical narratives. For instance, dragons symbolize imperial power and authority, while floral patterns often carry deeper meanings.

The role of ceramic decoration in conveying narratives of imperial authority and political power is examined by Yang (2013). This study underscores how Chinese emperors and rulers employed ceramics to legitimize their rule and assert control. Pang and Zhang (2017) delves into regional variations in ceramic decoration, highlighting how different regions of China produced ceramics with distinct narrative elements, reflecting local traditions and histories [16]. Scholars like Dog et al., (2018) explore the role of ceramics in facilitating cultural exchange along the Silk Road and maritime trade routes. Results showed these exchanges influenced ceramic decoration and the narratives they conveyed. Lê et al., (2019) reviews the various methodological approaches used by scholars to analyze and interpret the narratives embedded in Chinese ceramics [17].

Iconographic analysis, semiotics, and historical contextualization are some of the methods discussed. Zhang Min's (2021) recent work acknowledges the challenges in studying the narratology of Chinese ceramics and suggests potential avenues for future research, including interdisciplinary approaches that involve archaeology, art history, and anthropology [18]. The narratology of ancient Chinese ceramic decoration is a dynamic and evolving field of study, with scholars uncovering new layers of narrative significance within these artistic artifacts. Through

various methodologies and approaches, these researchers have shed light on the rich cultural, historical, and personal stories that ceramics from ancient China encapsulate. By examining these scholarly contributions, the present systematic literature review gained a deeper appreciation for the narratives embedded in Chinese ceramics and their role in preserving and transmitting the cultural heritage of China across centuries.

5. Conclusion

Ceramic decoration refers to artistic processing on ceramics, expressing the beauty of art on limited porcelain. Ceramic art decoration has unique cultural heritage and connotation. The reason why art is called art must be because it has a unique charm. Art is the most intuitive embodiment of people's pursuit of beauty. Ceramics have both traditional and fashionable characteristics, and have a unique artistic style. Ceramics are either all-natural or synthetic materials that have been subjected to extremely high temperatures. In addition to being tough and durable, they also have a high melting point, and oxidation resistance. Compared with other decorations, they have more advantages. Ceramic decorative art expresses the rich traditional Chinese culture, expresses man's natural concept, and embodies the humanistic thought of harmony and unity between man and nature. The traditional Chinese ceramic design style has become a major feature of oriental culture. The shape of ceramics is solemn and elegant. The charm is elegant and free, and it reflects a feeling for traditional culture.

According to the characteristics of ceramics, it can be divided into various composition methods, which can fully bring out the three-dimensional beauty of ceramics. Ceramic decoration combines landscapes, humanistic colors and art. The Yuan Dynasty blue and white porcelain "Guizi Valley Descending Mountain Jar" is a very representative decorative object, using static depictions to create dynamic reverie. The three-dimensionality of ceramics makes ceramic decorations come alive, which is the perfect combination of art and reality. Today, when people's aesthetics are diversified, ceramic art with a long history is becoming more and more popular among people. The development of modern ceramic art, such as the sparks generated by the collision of ancient ceramic art, further promotes the development of ceramic art. Ceramics art decoration culture is one of the important components of China's excellent culture and a precious culture left by our ancestors. As a work of art that is exported overseas, it continues to spread the culture of Chinese ceramic art and plays a role in bridging and integrating the exchanges between Chinese culture and the world.

6. Implications and Recommendations

Chinese culture has gone through the vicissitudes of history and left behind a lot of magnificent traditional culture. The achievements made in ceramic art are of special significance. It runs through the entire history of the development of Chinese nation and is one of the important core cultures of the Chinese nation. It has been developed and carried forward. Traditional culture is unshrinkable responsibility of Chinese. This review also concluded that integrating ceramic decoration into Chinese modern life is the continuation of cultural treasures. In the inheritance

of ceramic art, future studies should also pay attention to the innovation and development of ceramic art, introduce the old and bring out the new, and absorb more culture to enrich it. In today's diversified artistic pursuits, being content with the status quo and not thinking about making progress will only stay where we are. As Chinese nation move forward, Chinese ceramic art must keep up with the pace, learn from excellent foreign cultures, grow through learning, and innovate while growing. While promoting traditional culture, this review must also push traditional culture to new heights and form new national culture, opening up a new world of ceramic art.

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