**Chinese Pottery**

**中国的陶瓷**

China has one of the world's oldest continuous civilizations—despite invasions and occasional foreign rule. A country as vast as China with so long-lasting a civilization has a complex social and visual history, within which pottery and porcelain play a major role.

尽管中国曾受到入侵，偶尔被外国统治，但是她仍然拥有世界上最源远流长的文

明。中国是一个拥有悠久文明的大国，而陶瓷在其复杂的社会历史以及视觉历史

中扮演了极为重要的角色。

The function and status of ceramics in China varied from dynasty to dynasty, so they may be utilitarian, burial, trade-collectors', or even ritual objects, according to their quality and the era in which they were made. The ceramics fall into three broad types—earthenware, stoneware, and porcelain—for vessels, architectural items such as roof tiles, and modeled objects and figures. In addition, there was an important group of sculptures made for religious use, the majority of which were produced in earthenware.

在中国，每一个朝代陶瓷的功能和地位都是不同的，所以，根据它们的质量和制

作年代的不同，可以是实用器物、陪葬品、贸易收藏品，甚至是礼器。对于容器、

瓦片等建筑材料、模仿的物体或人物，陶瓷可以被分为三大类：陶器、炻器和瓷器。另外，瓷器中还有很重要的一类就是宗教用途的雕塑，它们多数是陶质的。

The earliest ceramics were fired to earthenware temperatures, but as early as the fifteenth century B.C., high-temperature stonewares were being made with glazed surfaces. During the Six Dynasties period (AD 265-589), kilns in north China were producing high-fired ceramics of good quality. Whitewares produced in Hebei and Henan provinces from the seventh to the tenth centuries evolved into the highly prized porcelains of the Song dynasty (AD. 960-1279), long regarded as one of the high points in the history of China's ceramic industry.The tradition of religious sculpture extends over most historical periods but is less clearly delineated than that of stonewares or porcelains, for it embraces the old custom of earthenware burial ceramics with later religious images and architectural ornament. Ceramic products also include lead-glazed tomb models of the Han dynasty, three-color lead-glazed vessels and figures of the Tang dynasty, and Ming three-color temple ornaments, in which the motifs were outlined in a raised trail of slip- as well as the many burial ceramics produced in imitation of vessels made in materials of higher intrinsic value.

尽管最早的陶瓷是在陶器的温度下烧制的，但是早在公元前 15 世纪，就已经产

生了上釉的高温炻器。六朝时期（公元 265-589 年），中国北方就有窑炉在生产

优质的高温瓷器。从 7 世纪到 10 世纪，河北以及河南省产的白瓷逐渐的演变成为享有盛名的宋代瓷器（公元 960-1279 年）——长久以来被认为是中国陶瓷业历史中的巅峰时期之一。在大部分历史时期中都延续了宗教雕塑的传统，但是没有炻器和瓷器质地的雕塑描绘的那么清晰，因为它包含了一种古老的习俗，就是将刻着新的宗教形象和建筑装饰的陶器作为陪葬品。瓷器制品还包括汉朝的铅釉随葬陶俑，唐朝的三彩铅釉器皿和人物，明朝的以泥釉凸纹展现轮廓的三彩寺庙装饰物以及很多用来模仿用更贵重的材料制成的器皿的陪葬瓷器。

Trade between the West and the settled and prosperous Chinese dynasties introduced new forms and different technologies. One of the most far-reaching examples is the impact of the fine ninth-century AD. Chinese porcelain wares imported into the Arab world. So admired were these pieces that they encouraged the development of earthenware made in imitation of porcelain and instigated research into the method of their manufacture. From the Middle East the Chinese acquired a blue pigment—a purified form of cobalt oxide unobtainable at that time in China—that contained only a low level of manganese. Cobalt ores found in China have a high manganese content, which produces a more muted blue-gray color. In the seventeenth century, the trading activities of the Dutch East India Company resulted in vast quantities of decorated Chinese porcelain being brought to Europe, which stimulated and influenced the work of a wide variety of wares, notably Delft. The Chinese themselves adapted many specific vessel forms from the West, such as bottles with long spouts, and designed a range of decorative patterns especially for the European market.

西方国家和繁荣稳定的历代中国之间的贸易促使双方互相引入了新的形式和不

同的技术。其中一个意义最为深远的例子是公元 9 世纪出口到阿拉伯世界的精美中国瓷器所带来的影响。阿拉伯人非常仰慕这些瓷器，于是他们鼓励发展陶器以模仿瓷器，并激励人们对生产方法开展研究。中国人从中东获得了一种蓝色的颜料——一种当时在中国还没有的精制氧化钴，其中只含有少量的锰。中国自己的钴矿石含有大量的会产生暗蓝灰色的锰元素。17 世纪，大量的中国装饰类瓷器通过荷兰东印度公司的交易活动而流入欧洲，这刺激和影响大量各式各样的瓷器的生产，特别是代尔夫特。中国人自己改良了很多种来自西方的特殊器皿，比如带有长壶嘴的瓶子，并专门为欧洲市场设计了一系列的装饰性图案。

Just as painted designs on Greek pots may seem today to be purely decorative, whereas in fact they were carefully and precisely worked out so that at the time, their meaning was clear, so it is with Chinese pots. To twentieth-century eyes, Chinese pottery may appear merely decorative, yet to the Chinese the form of each object and its adornment had meaning and significance. The dragon represented the emperor, and the phoenix, the empress; the pomegranate indicated fertility, and a pair of fish, happiness; mandarin ducks stood for wedded bliss; the pine tree, peach, and crane are emblems of long life; and fish leaping from waves indicated success in the civil service examinations. Only when European decorative themes were introduced did these meanings become obscured or even lost.

正如希腊的壶罐上所绘的图案，今天看来也许纯粹是为了装饰用，然而事实上在

当时它们都是被精心仔细的制作出来的，它们的意义在当时非常明确，中国的瓷

器也是如此。以 20 世纪的眼光来看，中国制造的陶瓷也许仅仅是装饰品，但是

对于中国人来说每个物件的形式及它的装饰都有含义和意义。龙代表了皇帝，凤

代表了皇后；石榴意味着多子，双鱼意味着幸福；鸳鸯代表了婚姻的幸福美满；

松树、桃树以及鹤都是长寿的象征；鱼跃出水面意味着科举考试会高中。但是当

欧洲的装饰主题被引进后，这些寓意就变得不再那么流行甚至丢失了。

From early times pots were used in both religious and secular contexts. The imperial court commissioned work and in the Yuan dynasty (A.D. 1279-1368) an imperial ceramic factory was established at Jingdezhen. Pots played an important part in some religious ceremonies. Long and often lyrical descriptions of the different types of ware exist that assist in classifying pots, although these sometimes confuse an already large and complicated picture.

从很早的时候壶罐就被用于宗教和日常生活中了。朝廷分派了制作工作，并于元

朝（公元 1279-1368 年）在景德镇设立了一座官窑。壶罐在一些宗教仪式上也有着重要的地位。壶罐上有很多长篇的关于不同类型的壶罐的并且通常是抒情性的描述可以帮助我们对其进行分类，虽然这些描述有时候使一幅已经大而复杂的画面显得凌乱。