



RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Study on Floral Patterns and their Cultural Symbolism in Qing Dynasty Enamel Porcelain

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ABSTRACT

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This paper, through a literature review, delves into the cultural symbolic meanings of floral patterns in Qing dynasty enamel porcelain, analyzing them from various dimensions such as religion, social class, and artistic style. The study finds that these floral patterns are not only a reflection of aesthetic demands but also symbolize social identity, religious beliefs, and cultural values. By deeply interpreting typical floral motifs like the lotus and chrysanthemum, the paper reveals their multiple cultural connotations within Qing society. Additionally, this paper explores the transformation and application of Qing dynasty enamel porcelain floral patterns in modern design, proposing strategies to integrate traditional elements with contemporary design, offering new insights for the inheritance and innovation of traditional culture.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

In the brilliant artistic treasury of Qing dynasty porcelain, floral patterns stand out like shining pearls, captivating countless researchers and enthusiasts with their unique charm and profound cultural connotations. These floral patterns, whether intricate and exquisite or simple and elegant, not only enhance the visual appeal of the porcelain but also carry rich historical information and cultural values within the long river of history. They serve as silent witnesses to history, quietly narrating the customs, aesthetic pursuits, and social transformations of Qing society.

As the last unified imperial dynasty in Chinese feudal history, the Qing dynasty exhibited a diverse and complex social and cultural character. During this period, Qing palace enamel porcelain, as an important material cultural carrier, featured floral patterns that were not merely decorative but vivid representations of the social and cultural backdrop of the time. From the imperial court to the common people, and from religion to secular life, floral patterns, with their unique symbolic meanings, spanned various aspects of Qing society, serving as an important link between different social classes and cultures.

In terms of artistic style, Qing dynasty porcelain floral patterns demonstrated an exceptionally high aesthetic level and superb craftsmanship. From the natural simplicity of the Kangxi period, to the refined delicacy of the Yongzheng period, and the extravagant complexity of the Qianlong period, the evolution of floral patterns reflected the continuous development and innovation of Qing porcelain art styles. These patterns not only reached the peak of color usage but also displayed remarkable

artistry in their form. Whether it was the grandeur of peony, the purity of chrysanthemum, or the transcendence of lotus, each floral motif showcased the unique charm of Qing porcelain.

From a cultural perspective, floral patterns were important symbols of Qing dynasty society. They were not just simple representations of natural flowers but also concentrated expressions of social identity, religious beliefs, and cultural values. In imperial porcelain, complex floral patterns often symbolized the supreme power of the emperor and the strict division of social classes; while in folk porcelain, simpler floral patterns reflected the common people's longing for a better life and love for nature. Moreover, the widespread influence of religions such as Buddhism and Taoism also endowed floral patterns with deep religious symbolism. For example, the lotus, an important symbol in Buddhism, was widely used in Qing dynasty porcelain, reflecting the society's recognition of Buddhist culture and the close integration of religious and secular life.

Through the study of floral patterns in Qing porcelain, we can gain a deeper understanding of the social and cultural context and aesthetic preferences of the time. These patterns not only reflect the social hierarchy, religious beliefs, and cultural values of Qing society but also showcase the unique charm and cultural connotations of Qing porcelain art. This paper aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of floral patterns and their cultural symbolism in Qing dynasty enamel porcelain, revealing their multifaceted cultural meanings in Qing society and exploring their transformation and application in modern design. Through the modern transformation of these traditional elements, we can inject new life into contemporary ceramic design and offer innovative pathways for the inheritance of traditional culture. This study not only enriches our understanding of Qing porcelain art but also has significant practical implications for promoting the modern development of traditional culture.

2.1 FLORAL PATTERNS AND THEIR CULTURAL SYMBOLISM IN QING DYNASTY ENAMEL PORCELAIN

2.1.1 Religious symbolism and cultural connotations

Floral patterns in Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain not only embody visual art but also serve as profound carriers of cultural and religious symbolism. These patterns carry rich religious significance, closely linked to the beliefs of Buddhism and Taoism, and became an important bridge connecting the secular and religious worlds in Qing society.

2.1.1.1 The lotus symbol in Buddhism

The lotus, as a significant symbol in Buddhism, was extensively used in Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain. Its cultural connotations are deep and varied, symbolizing purity, enlightenment, transcendence, and the overcoming of worldly limitations, thus reflecting Buddhist philosophical thoughts. The lotus grows in muddy water but rises above it untainted, symbolizing the liberation of Buddhist followers from the troubles of the mundane world in pursuit of inner purity and enlightenment. In Buddhist belief, the lotus not only represents the Pure Land of the world but also serves as the symbolic flower of Buddhist gods and bodhisattvas, frequently appearing in Buddhist scriptures and rituals.

In Qing imperial porcelain and porcelain pieces used in temples, the lotus pattern often appears in decorative motifs, demonstrating the profound influence of Buddhist culture on royal art. During the Qianlong period, as Buddhism gained further prominence, the lotus became a common element in imperial decorations. Wang Hong (2018) noted that in Qianlong-era enamel porcelain, the lotus pattern not only represented a symbol of religious faith but also embodied societal hierarchy, imperial power, and imagery of purity and sanctity. For instance, in the private and ceremonial porcelain of Emperor Qianlong, the lotus motif was frequently endowed with imperial symbols, representing the concept of supreme imperial authority.

Moreover, the widespread use of lotus motifs extended beyond imperial porcelain to ceramic objects in Buddhist temples. In these settings, lotus patterns were often combined with Buddhist images, scriptures, and altars, serving as significant decorative elements in religious rituals. Jiang Yinghe (2008) pointed out that in Buddhist temples, lotus patterns on enamel porcelain not only served as artistic embellishments but also held symbolic meanings within religious ceremonies, representing

prayers for purity, transcendence, and the Buddhist doctrine of liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

2.1.1.2 The chrysanthemum symbol in Taoism

The chrysanthemum also carries rich religious symbolism in Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain, particularly in connection with Taoist culture. In Taoism, the chrysanthemum is regarded as a symbol of longevity, seasonal cycles, and spiritual transcendence, holding a highly significant position. The "September chrysanthemum" is one of the symbols of longevity in Taoist culture, closely linked to the seasonal change of autumn, reflecting Taoism's "unity of heaven and humanity" and respect for the laws of nature.

Peng Xiaoyun (2022) pointed out that the chrysanthemum pattern not only symbolizes Taoist concepts of longevity but also relates to Taoist health and wellness culture, embodying the Taoist philosophical pursuit of immortality and the unity of body and spirit. During the Qing Dynasty, the chrysanthemum pattern was frequently seen in enamel porcelain, especially in Qianlong-period seasonal porcelain, where it served as an important decorative element embodying Taoist philosophical thoughts on longevity, wellness, and the cosmic cycles of nature.

The use of chrysanthemum patterns in Qing Dynasty seasonal porcelain is particularly notable during the Qianlong period. As part of seasonal porcelain, the chrysanthemum pattern conveyed Taoism's reverence for nature and its philosophical reflections on life. Emperor Qianlong paid great attention to the design of seasonal porcelain, especially where the chrysanthemum pattern was often associated with autumn, expressing Taoist respect for seasonal transitions and the pursuit of longevity and spiritual transcendence. Liang Miaotai (2002)'s study indicates that Qianlong-period seasonal porcelain was not only refined in color but also intricately designed, with the chrysanthemum pattern's use being especially delicate. Through contrasting colors and varying shapes, the chrysanthemum pattern was not only decorative but also imbued with profound cultural symbolic meaning.

2.1.2 The intersection of social class and artistic style

Floral patterns in Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain not only reflect religious beliefs but also deeply embody the intersection of social class, cultural ideals, and aesthetic preferences of the time. These patterns exhibit significant differences in design style, form details, and symbolic meanings between imperial and folk porcelain, becoming a key marker of social class divisions.

2.1.2.1 Differences in floral patterns between imperial and folk Porcelain

Floral patterns on imperial porcelain were typically more complex and refined, reflecting the nobility of the emperor and the elevated cultural status. These patterns exhibited high artistic quality in their use of color, linework, and form, exuding a strong imperial atmosphere and symbolizing both royal power and Buddhist culture. Zhan Xinyu (2012) noted that the lotus pattern, as a symbol of Buddhist culture, was frequently used in Qing imperial porcelain and often combined with other noble symbolic elements such as dragon and phoenix motifs, creating intricate and sophisticated designs.

In contrast to the intricate patterns of imperial porcelain, floral patterns on folk porcelain were simpler and more stylized. Due to the strict social structure of the Qing Dynasty, commoners had no access to the elaborate and luxurious patterns and porcelain used by the nobility. As a result, floral patterns on folk porcelain were generally simplified. While still symbolic, these patterns lacked the finer details and technical sophistication seen in imperial porcelain. For instance, lotus patterns in folk porcelain were often represented with simplified lines and varying shades of color, whereas imperial lotus patterns were more refined, with rich color layers and often combined with luxurious decorative techniques like gold and silver powder, showcasing the royal exclusive symbolism.

2.1.2.2 The intersection of social class and artistic style

During the Qianlong period, the artistic expression in porcelain was not merely a matter of aesthetic preference but also a reflection of social hierarchy. Complex floral patterns, such as overlapping lotus or chrysanthemum motifs, were typically designed for the imperial court, symbolizing supreme imperial authority. In contrast, simpler patterns were popular in folk porcelain, reflecting the social

divide between different classes. This difference not only demonstrated varying artistic styles but also underscored the Qing Dynasty's social stratification in terms of material wealth and spiritual symbolism. Zhang Jing (2013) argues that the design of floral patterns was not only an embodiment of court culture but also a direct reflection of the political system's portrayal of social rank.

Moreover, the use of floral patterns reflected the cultural ideals and aesthetic tastes of the time. Floral patterns in imperial porcelain often paid more attention to detail and artistic expression, embodying the societal pursuit of refined art and the preservation of traditional culture. On the other hand, floral patterns in folk porcelain emphasized practicality and symbolism, reflecting the common people's aspirations for a better life and their recognition of religious philosophy. This distinction not only illustrated the division of social classes but also highlighted the cultural diversity and differing aesthetic preferences of society during the period.

2.1.3 The integration of Chinese and western cultures

The floral decorative patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain were not only a continuation of traditional Chinese art but also a typical representation of the fusion of Chinese and Western cultures. From the Kangxi to the Qianlong periods, with the introduction of Western techniques, the floral motifs on Qing porcelain gradually began to reflect different artistic features and cultural meanings. Western painting techniques, color treatments, and decorative methods had a direct influence on the floral patterns of traditional Chinese porcelain, resulting in a unique "Sino-Western fusion" style.

2.1.3.1 Preliminary integration during the Kangxi period

The Kangxi period marked a significant historical juncture in the middle Qing Dynasty and also served as a period of initial integration between Chinese and Western cultures. As Emperor Kangxi strengthened diplomatic ties with the West, Western art and craftsmanship gradually made their way into China, particularly Western enamel techniques. Western painting techniques, color treatments, and decorative methods had a direct influence on the floral motifs found on traditional Chinese porcelain [9,10]. In Kangxi-era porcelain, floral patterns were still dominated by traditional Chinese themes, such as peonies and lotuses, which held important symbolic meanings in Chinese culture. The peony symbolizes wealth and prosperity, while the lotus represents purity and nobility. The integration of these traditional floral motifs with Western techniques resulted in unique visual effects in Kangxi-period porcelain.

Zhang (2021) notes that the floral patterns from the Kangxi period exhibited more rich and layered colors, a characteristic closely linked to the Western enamel technique. Western enameling is known for its distinct use of color layers and delicate painting techniques, which were introduced into Chinese porcelain. This not only enhanced the visual effects of the porcelain but also endowed the floral motifs with greater artistic expression [11]. For instance, floral colors in Kangxi-period porcelain became more vibrant and layered, resulting in a more vivid artistic effect.

Additionally, the Western techniques of light and shadow and spatial representation influenced the artistic methods in Chinese porcelain, particularly in the enamel work of the Old Summer Palace (Yuanmingyuan). The fusion of Western and Chinese craftsmanship created a distinctive artistic style. Li Hui (2017) mentions that the enamelwork at Yuanmingyuan is a prime example of the integration of Chinese and Western techniques, showcasing exquisite court art while reflecting the early trends of cultural fusion. While the floral patterns of this period mainly featured traditional Chinese subjects, the influence of Western artistic techniques had already subtly permeated, signaling the beginning of Sino-Western cultural integration.

2.1.3.2 The expressive style of the Yongzheng period and the fusion of western techniques

During the Yongzheng period, the design style of floral motifs underwent significant changes, particularly with the influence of traditional Chinese freehand (*xieyi*) painting. As an important form of traditional Chinese art, freehand flower-and-bird painting emphasizes the rhythm of brushwork and the conveyance of artistic moods. In this period, the design of floral motifs was no longer solely focused on the natural forms of the flowers but increasingly incorporated the artist's emotional expression and subjective imagery. The style of flower-and-bird painting by Yun Shouping, especially

in the decoration of porcelain, greatly contributed to the artistic and freehand qualities of floral motifs during the Yongzheng period.

Duan (2019) highlights that the floral patterns of the Yongzheng period paid more attention to the depiction of natural forms, with colors becoming softer and more layered, especially with the widespread use of lotus motifs. The lotus, as a symbol of Buddhism, represents purity and wisdom, and its use was closely tied to religious beliefs as well as the era's cultural focus on spiritual matters. The design of lotus motifs during this period displayed a more concise and refined style, aligning with the artistic temperament of the Yongzheng era.

At the same time, the influence of Western artistic techniques became increasingly evident, particularly in terms of painting techniques. Western methods of perspective and light-shadow effects were gradually introduced into the design of floral patterns on porcelain, enhancing the dimensionality and expressiveness of the artwork. Floral patterns from the Yongzheng period became more refined, with clear layers and smoother transitions in color, showcasing artistic innovation resulting from the combination of Chinese and Western techniques.

2.1.3.3 Sino-western fusion during the Qianlong period

The Qianlong period represents the pinnacle of Qing Dynasty art and culture, and it was also a time when the fusion of Chinese and Western cultures reached its peak. Emperor Qianlong placed great importance on Western culture, particularly Western painting and craftsmanship, and actively invited Western artists to participate in court art creation. The inclusion of court painters like Lang Shining further deepened the influence of Western artistic techniques on Qing Dynasty porcelain. The floral patterns of Qianlong-era enamel-painted porcelain not only inherited the symbolic meanings of traditional Chinese auspicious motifs but also integrated Western artistic expression, resulting in an artistic style that exemplified "Sino-Western fusion" [12].

Yin (2022) suggests that porcelain art during the Qianlong period reached a new height, with the introduction of Western painting techniques, especially the realistic depiction of plants, which diversified the floral motifs. The inclusion of Western plants enriched the floral patterns on porcelain, introducing not only traditional Chinese flowers, such as peonies, lotuses, and chrysanthemums, but also many Western plants, such as roses and carnations. This incorporation of Western flora not only increased the variety of patterns but also showcased the fusion and collision of Chinese and Western cultures.

Additionally, the floral patterns in Qianlong-period enamel-painted porcelain placed greater emphasis on intricate detail and innovative artistic expression. Western techniques of perspective and light-shadow effects were skillfully applied to the floral designs, creating more vivid and three-dimensional representations. This technical innovation endowed the floral patterns of Qianlong-period porcelain with higher artistic value and visual impact [12,13]. Zhang Yi (2009) argues that this cultural fusion was not only an innovation in technique but also reflected Emperor Qianlong's open attitude toward Sino-Western integration. Through the design of floral patterns on porcelain, he demonstrated the inclusiveness and creativity of Chinese culture.

In Qianlong-period porcelain, the design of floral motifs not only carried the symbolic meanings of traditional Chinese culture but also reflected the influence of Western naturalistic art. Emperor Qianlong's open-mindedness and emphasis on art fostered the deep integration of Chinese and Western cultures. The floral decorations on enamel-painted porcelain no longer adhered to a single cultural background but exhibited a more diverse and open artistic style. The combination of Western plants with traditional Chinese flowers not only enriched the patterns on porcelain but also made the symbolic meanings of the flowers more complex and multi-layered, serving as a vivid testament to the exchange between Chinese and Western cultures.

In conclusion, the floral patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel-painted porcelain were not only reflections of the artistic styles of the time but also profound representations of the social and cultural context, religious beliefs, and power structures. These motifs, through their intricate artistic expressions, reveal the intersection of religion and culture, the division of social classes, and the integration of Chinese and Western cultures. A deeper study of these patterns allows us to better understand the

cultural atmosphere of Qing society, its artistic styles, and their interaction with the political backdrop.

3.1 SEMANTIC STUDY OF FLORAL DECORATIVE PATTERNS ON QING DYNASTY ENAMEL PORCELAIN: APPLICATION ANALYSIS OF THE KANO MODEL

3.1.1 Theoretical framework and applicability of the Kano model

The Kano Model was proposed in 1984 by Japanese scholar Noriaki Kano and his colleagues, initially applied in the field of marketing. It aims to analyze the diversity of customer needs and their complex impact on product satisfaction. By categorizing customer needs into different levels, the model provides valuable theoretical guidance for product design and optimization. In recent years, with the advancement of interdisciplinary research, the application of the Kano Model has gradually expanded to the fields of cultural heritage studies and design, becoming an important tool for analyzing the relationship between the extraction of cultural elements and design requirements.

In the field of cultural heritage research, the Kano Model provides researchers with a new perspective, enabling them to delve into the intrinsic value and significance of cultural elements from the standpoint of user needs. By analyzing different levels of needs, researchers can better understand the evolution of cultural elements across different historical periods and social contexts, as well as their inheritance and development in modern society. In the field of design, the Kano Model serves as an effective analytical framework, helping designers better grasp user needs for cultural elements and, in turn, achieve an organic integration of cultural inheritance and innovation in the design process.

The application of the Kano Model in the semantic study of floral decorative patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain holds significant theoretical and practical value. As an important part of Chinese traditional culture, the floral motifs on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain carry rich historical information and cultural connotations. By analyzing the semantics of these patterns, not only can the cultural meaning and social function of these patterns in their historical context be revealed, but valuable insights can also be provided for modern design. The introduction of the Kano Model offers an effective framework for this research, enabling the analysis of the multi-dimensional semantic features of floral patterns from various levels of user needs and revealing their profound impact on cultural inheritance and modern design applications.

The core of the Kano Model lies in classifying user needs into three levels: basic needs, expected needs, and excitement needs. This hierarchical classification provides researchers with a systematic analytical framework, allowing them to explore the meaning and value of cultural elements from different angles. In the study of floral decorative patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain, basic needs usually refer to those related to the fundamental cultural connotations and symbolic meanings of the patterns. These needs reflect users' basic understanding and recognition of traditional culture, forming the foundation for the widespread acceptance and inheritance of floral patterns. Expected needs refer to users' expectations regarding the artistic expression and aesthetic value of floral patterns. These needs reflect users' personalized demands and aesthetic pursuits, playing a key role in meeting the needs of different user groups. Excitement needs refer to those needs that exceed users' expectations, bringing them surprise and pleasure. These needs reflect users' expectations for innovation and uniqueness in cultural elements and are crucial for the rejuvenation of floral patterns in modern society.

Through the application of the Kano Model, researchers can gain a clearer understanding of the cultural meaning and social function carried by the floral decorative patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain in different historical periods. This multi-dimensional analysis approach not only helps to deepen the understanding of the cultural connotations of floral patterns but also provides valuable insights for modern design. In terms of cultural inheritance, the application of the Kano Model can help researchers better understand users' needs for traditional culture, thereby developing more effective strategies for cultural transmission. In modern design applications, the Kano Model serves as an effective tool for designers, helping them better understand users' demands for cultural elements and, in turn, achieving a harmonious integration of cultural inheritance and innovation in the design process.

3.1.2 Application of the Kano model in cultural semantic analysis

The Kano Model categorizes user needs into three levels: basic needs, expected needs, and excitement needs. The application of this framework in cultural semantic analysis effectively deconstructs the meaning of traditional cultural symbols and provides theoretical support for their innovative applications in modern design. By analyzing the cultural connotations of floral decorative patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain and their applications in modern design and education, this section further explores the specific applications and significance of the Kano Model in cultural semantic analysis.

3.1.2.1 Basic needs: the fundamental function of cultural symbols

Basic needs refer to users' fundamental recognition and understanding of cultural symbols. In the case of floral decorative patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain, basic needs are typically related to the basic cultural connotations and symbolic meanings of the patterns. These needs reflect users' foundational understanding of traditional culture and are essential for the widespread acceptance and inheritance of floral patterns. For example, the peony pattern, as a symbol of wealth and prosperity in Chinese traditional culture, was widely applied in Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain. The peony not only symbolizes wealth and prosperity but also reflects the society's aspiration for a better life at that time. This fundamental cultural connotation forms the basis for users' understanding and acceptance of the peony pattern and is one of the key reasons for its widespread inheritance and application.

Through the analysis of basic needs, researchers can better understand users' foundational recognition and understanding of traditional cultural symbols, thus providing valuable insights for cultural inheritance. In modern design, designers can meet basic needs by ensuring that the core cultural connotations of traditional symbols are preserved and passed on. For example, in modern ceramic design, designers can distill and reinterpret the basic cultural meaning of the peony pattern, allowing it to continue to convey the symbolism of wealth and prosperity in contemporary designs, thereby achieving the transmission and development of traditional culture.

3.1.2.2 Expected needs: integration of cultural connotations and artistic expression

Expected needs refer to users' expectations regarding the artistic expression and aesthetic value of cultural symbols. These needs reflect users' personalized demands and aesthetic pursuits and are key to satisfying the diverse needs of different user groups. In the case of floral decorative patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain, expected needs are typically related to the artistic form and aesthetic value of the patterns. For example, the lotus pattern on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain not only holds profound religious symbolic meaning but also captivates users with its unique artistic expression and aesthetic value. The lotus pattern's refreshing, elegant, and pure aesthetic characteristics made it an important cultural symbol in Qing society.

By analyzing expected needs, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of users' personalized demands and aesthetic pursuits, offering valuable insights for modern design. In modern design, designers can meet these expected needs by enhancing and innovating the artistic expression and aesthetic value of traditional cultural symbols. For instance, in contemporary ceramic design, designers can innovate upon the artistic form of the lotus pattern, ensuring that it continues to convey its refreshing, elegant, and pure aesthetic qualities in modern designs, thus satisfying users' personalized needs and aesthetic desires for cultural symbols.

3.1.2.3 Excitement needs: innovative design and the re-creation of cultural symbols

Excitement needs refer to those demands that exceed users' expectations and provide them with surprise and pleasure. These needs reflect users' anticipation of the innovation and uniqueness of cultural symbols, which is a crucial factor for cultural symbols to regain new vitality in modern society. In the case of floral decorative patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain, excitement needs are often associated with the innovative design and re-creation of cultural symbols. For example, the floral patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain not only inherited traditional cultural connotations and artistic forms but also gained unique charm and appeal through innovative designs and the re-creation of cultural symbols. Some floral patterns, by integrating with other cultural elements,

formed unique cultural symbols, providing users with new visual experiences and cultural sensations.

Through the analysis of excitement needs, researchers can better understand users' expectations for the innovation and uniqueness of cultural symbols, offering valuable guidance for modern design. In contemporary design, designers can meet these excitement needs by reinvigorating traditional cultural symbols through innovative design and the re-creation of cultural symbols. For instance, in modern ceramic design, designers can innovate floral patterns to continue surprising and delighting users, thereby ensuring the innovation and development of traditional cultural symbols.

3.1.2.4 Specific application and significance of the Kano model in cultural semantics analysis

Through an analysis of the cultural connotations of floral decorative patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain and their application in modern design and education, the specific application and significance of the Kano model in cultural semantics analysis are further explored. The application of the Kano model provides researchers with an effective analytical framework, allowing for an in-depth analysis of the multidimensional semantic features of floral patterns from different levels of user needs. It also offers valuable insights and guidance for modern design. In terms of cultural heritage, the Kano model helps researchers better understand users' demands for traditional culture, enabling the development of more effective strategies for cultural transmission. In modern design applications, the Kano model serves as an effective analytical tool for designers, helping them understand users' needs for cultural elements, thus facilitating the organic integration of cultural heritage and innovation in the design process.

In modern design education, the application of the Kano model also holds significant importance. By introducing the Kano model, educators can help students better understand the diversity of user needs and their impact on design, fostering students' innovative thinking and practical abilities. For instance, in ceramics design education, teachers can guide students in deeply exploring the connotations and values of traditional cultural symbols through the explanation and analysis of the Kano model. Students can then learn how to transform these symbols into modern design language. Through project-based teaching, students can practice combining traditional elements with modern materials, techniques, and artistic styles, thereby promoting the transformation and innovation of traditional culture in contemporary design. This teaching method not only helps cultivate students' awareness of cultural heritage but also drives the development of modern ceramic design.

3.1.2.5 Conclusion

The application of the Kano model in the semantic study of floral decorative patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain provides researchers with an effective analysis framework, enabling them to explore the multidimensional semantic features of floral patterns from different levels of needs and revealing their profound impact on cultural transmission and modern design applications. By analyzing basic, expected, and excitement needs, researchers can gain a better understanding of users' demands for traditional cultural symbols, offering valuable guidance for both cultural heritage and modern design. In future research, the application of the Kano model will provide richer theoretical support and practical guidance for cultural heritage studies and design disciplines, promoting the transmission and innovation of traditional culture.

4.1 SEMIOLOGY OF FLORAL DECORATIVE PATTERNS ON QING DYNASTY ENAMEL PORCELAIN

4.1.1 Multiple semiotic meanings of floral decorative patterns

Floral decorative patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain, as important visual symbols, carry multiple layers of cultural significance. These patterns are not merely decorative elements on the surface of porcelain but serve as key carriers of social, political, cultural, and religious meanings. From a semiotic perspective, the symbolic function of floral patterns is not only reflected in their visual effects but also in the deeper cultural and societal meanings they convey.

4.1.1.1 Expression of auspicious culture

Among the most prominent cultural symbols in Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain, floral patterns express auspiciousness and good fortune. The concept of auspiciousness is deeply rooted in traditional Chinese culture and runs throughout the artistic creations of the Qing Dynasty. As symbols of good luck, floral patterns often convey wishes for wealth, longevity, prosperity, and harmony [16,17,20]. The use of patterns such as peony, lotus, and chrysanthemum not only satisfied the aesthetic needs of the Qing court but also conveyed the idealized visions of society.

The peony, often referred to as the "flower of wealth," was one of the most common floral decorations in Qing porcelain. The peony symbolized not only wealth and prosperity but also the flourishing of the state and the emperor's authority [21]. The frequent use of peony patterns in Qing court porcelain, particularly in the Kangxi and Qianlong periods, became a symbol of the imperial court's aspirations for national strength, public welfare, and royal power. Peony patterns were often combined with other symbolic elements such as auspicious clouds, dragon motifs, and phoenixes, creating a more elaborate cultural symbolism. The auspicious cloud patterns symbolized good fortune, while the dragon motif represented imperial power. These elements, when paired with the peony pattern, not only enhanced the visual appeal but also further reinforced its role as a symbol of authority. Thus, the peony pattern serves not only as an aesthetic expression but also as a cultural symbol deeply reflecting Qing society's aspirations for prosperity, wealth, and long-lasting stability.

In contrast, the lotus pattern represents another aspect of auspicious culture. The lotus has long been associated with the idea of "emerging from the mud without being stained," symbolizing purity, elegance, and gracefulness in traditional Chinese culture. The use of lotus patterns in Qing porcelain carries profound cultural significance. The lotus is often linked to the idealized character and moral integrity of scholars, especially in the court porcelain of the Yongzheng and Qianlong periods, where it symbolized the pursuit of an enlightened, pure social order. The lotus pattern, embodying concepts of "self-respect" and "solitary elegance," reflected the Qing Dynasty's emphasis on moral and spiritual ideals. The lotus not only served as a symbol of purity in religious contexts but also became an expression of the Qing court's desire to project the ideal personality and virtue.

4.1.1.2 The hierarchical and complex cultural significance

Floral patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain are not only expressions of visual art but also reflect the hierarchical and complex nature of cultural symbols. Semiotic theory suggests that symbols rely not only on their surface meanings but also on their interpretation within specific cultural and historical contexts. As symbols, floral patterns have undergone transformations in their symbolic meanings as history progressed, adapting to different cultural backgrounds. The floral patterns on Qing Dynasty court porcelain reflect the social demands and cultural changes of various historical periods.

For example, during the Kangxi period, floral patterns were primarily used to symbolize the hope for stability and prosperity of the empire. Emperor Kangxi focused on the restoration of the country and the unity of the people, and the use of floral patterns reflected these political goals. Patterns such as peonies, lotuses, and chrysanthemums not only had aesthetic value in terms of artistic style but also embodied societal ideals and political aspirations.

In the Yongzheng period, as the court experienced internal political shifts and social tensions, the symbolic meaning of floral patterns gradually shifted. During this period, the emphasis of floral patterns moved toward virtues such as moral integrity and noble character. Patterns such as the lotus and chrysanthemum were more frequently used to convey political ideals of incorruptibility and purity [4,8,16,20]. The lotus was particularly prominent during this time, closely linked with the prevailing societal ethos of integrity and the admiration for the idealized personality. Chrysanthemums, as symbols of longevity and resilience, became especially cherished by the scholarly class, particularly in mid-Qing intellectual circles.

In the Qianlong period, with the empire's growing strength and the opulence of the imperial court, the cultural significance of floral patterns expanded to include more diverse cultural symbols. The decorative patterns on porcelain from this period increasingly focused on luxury and refinement, and floral patterns were no longer limited to being mere symbols of good fortune but began to serve multiple cultural functions. On one hand, floral patterns continued to represent power and wealth;

on the other hand, their use began to evoke a call for traditional cultural and spiritual values. For example, while the lotus continued to symbolize nobility and purity, its form became more intricate, and its colors and compositions more elaborate. This transformation reflected both the aesthetic tastes of the Qing court and their profound understanding and expression of cultural symbols.

4.1.1.3 Social class and symbolism of identity

The use of floral patterns is closely tied to the social hierarchy and identity in Qing Dynasty society. In the Qing Dynasty, porcelain was not only a symbol of social status and power but also a reflection of an individual's or family's social rank and political identity. Therefore, the use of floral patterns often reflected the stratification of Qing society and its rigid social distinctions. Certain floral patterns, such as auspicious flowers and plum blossoms, were often reserved for the emperor and the imperial kilns directly under his command. These patterns, through choices in color, compositional details, and complexity, exhibited clear class distinctions. For example, the auspicious flower pattern often appeared on imperial porcelain, while the plum blossom pattern was commonly found on the porcelain of high-ranking officials. These patterns not only served an aesthetic function in art but also emphasized the differences in class and identity on a semiotic level [19,22]. The combination of auspicious flowers and plum blossoms created a more refined and noble design, with intricate color layers and complex compositions, often signifying a social status and political power far beyond that of ordinary civilians.

In Qing society, floral patterns not only symbolized the authority of the court but also manifested different meanings in folk ceramics and household items. While floral patterns used by the court and aristocracy were more elaborate and complex, floral motifs in folk ceramics also held deep symbolic significance. For instance, flowers like chrysanthemums and lotuses, though simpler in form, carried profound cultural meanings, symbolizing hopes for family happiness and social harmony.

4.1.1.4 Integration of religious and philosophical connotations

In addition to social and cultural symbols, floral patterns on Qing Dynasty porcelain also incorporated rich religious and philosophical meanings. The lotus pattern, which symbolizes purity and nobility, was profoundly influenced by Buddhist culture, becoming an important symbol within Buddhist teachings. The lotus's meaning of "emerging from the mud untainted" closely aligns with the Buddhist concept of "purity and detachment." Therefore, the lotus pattern in court porcelain also bore the influence of Buddhist culture, making it one of the symbols deeply linked to religious belief. The use of the chrysanthemum pattern, on the other hand, was more closely associated with Daoist and Confucian thought, particularly in Daoist culture, where the chrysanthemum was seen as a symbol of longevity and resilience. The chrysanthemum pattern not only reflected the integrity and character of the Qing literati but also conveyed Daoist ideals of immortality and transcendence from the mundane world.

4.1.1.5 Conclusion

Floral decorative patterns on Qing Dynasty enamel porcelain reveal a multi-layered cultural, social, political, and philosophical significance through a semiotic lens. These patterns are not merely expressions of visual art but also serve as multiple symbols of social identity, political power, cultural ideals, and religious beliefs. The use of floral patterns in Qing Dynasty porcelain reflects the social stratification and complexity of the era, while also showcasing Qing culture's pursuit of auspiciousness, ideal virtues, and the ideal society.

5.1 THE CLOSE CONNECTION BETWEEN FLORAL PATTERNS AND QING DYNASTY COURT CULTURE

5.1.1 Characteristics of Qing dynasty court culture

As a multi-ethnic unified empire, the Qing Dynasty underwent significant changes in its rise and decline, with court culture playing an important role throughout this process. Qing court culture not only inherited the traditions of the Ming Dynasty but also exhibited distinct characteristics of its era. During this period, various factors, including the emperor's political authority, religious beliefs, ethnic consciousness, and social norms, were expressed and reinforced through different cultural

forms. Court porcelain, as part of this cultural system, served not only as an aesthetic expression but also as a cultural symbol.

In the Qing Dynasty, the emperor was not only the political ruler but also the embodiment of national culture and social norms. Court porcelain, as a fusion of art and utility, carried these cultural symbols. In particular, the use of floral patterns in court porcelain conveyed the emperor's personal political ideas, expectations for national governance, and the ceremonial norms within the palace. These floral patterns, through intricate craftsmanship and symbolic choices, became an indispensable part of court culture.

5.1.2 The relationship between floral patterns and religious beliefs

In Qing court culture, religious beliefs were closely intertwined with national politics. The Qing era was marked by religious pluralism, with Confucianism dominating state governance, while Buddhism, Daoism, and the religious beliefs of various ethnic minorities also exerted varying degrees of influence in the court. In this context, floral patterns were not only decorative elements but also carried profound religious and philosophical meanings [2].

For example, the widespread use of the lotus pattern in Qing court porcelain was not merely due to its beautiful form and noble symbolism but also because of its special religious significance in Buddhism. The lotus represents purity, symbolizing cleanliness, wisdom, and the supreme power of Buddhist teachings. In the Qing Dynasty, especially during the reign of Emperor Qianlong, the lotus often combined with Buddhist concepts, symbolizing purity and the political ideal of wisdom. The lotus's purity and nobility, within the emperor's court, symbolized the ruler's clarity, transcendent political temperament, and moral ideals.

Additionally, the peony pattern had certain associations with Daoism. The peony, symbolizing wealth and prosperity, was also linked to the Daoist ideals of immortality and the pursuit of spiritual transcendence. In Daoist culture, floral patterns were often used to symbolize good fortune, longevity, and sanctity. When the peony pattern appeared in court porcelain, especially when combined with auspicious clouds and dragon motifs, it often conveyed the idea of immortality, reflecting respect for and pursuit of Daoist beliefs.

5.1.3 The integration of floral patterns with auspicious culture

Auspicious culture is an important ideological element in Qing court culture, essentially expressing the pursuit of a prosperous life, national flourishing, and social stability through symbols. Floral patterns, as visual symbols, are an indispensable part of this culture. During the Qing Dynasty, floral motifs such as the peony, lotus, and plum blossom were frequently endowed with auspicious meanings, symbolizing national wealth, public peace, and social harmony [11]. Among these, the peony pattern was especially prominent during the Qianlong period. It not only represented wealth and prosperity but also was closely related to the emperor's political ideas and governance strategies.

During his reign, Emperor Qianlong advocated the ideas of "harmony" and "prosperity," promoting societal unity and advocating for the use of institutions and culture to ensure social stability and national prosperity. In court porcelain, the peony pattern became an important manifestation of auspicious culture and a symbol of Emperor Qianlong's political ideals. Through the peony motif, Emperor Qianlong conveyed his pursuit of national flourishing and the happiness of the people, while also strengthening the image of the emperor as the central authority of the nation.

In addition to the peony, the lotus pattern was also a common symbol of good fortune in Qing court porcelain. The lotus's ability to emerge unsullied from the mud symbolizes purity, elegance, and the virtuous character of a gentleman. In court porcelain, the lotus, coupled with the values of "clarity" and "nobility," became a reflection of the ideal social order promoted by Emperor Qianlong. The lotus pattern not only conveyed the emperor's political ideals but also contributed to a unified system of cultural symbols within the palace, constructing the spiritual and aesthetic values of court culture.

5.1.4 The connection between floral patterns and the emperor's political ideals

Floral patterns in Qing court porcelain, particularly during the Qianlong period, profoundly reflect the emperor's political ideals and governance strategies. Emperor Qianlong championed the concept

of "harmony" in governance, advocating for the transmission of cultural arts and the establishment of ceremonial norms to maintain national unity and social stability. In this context, the floral patterns in court porcelain were not merely decorative but visually constructed a cultural symbol system that aligned with the emperor's vision for governance [12, 23, 24].

The peony pattern was especially prominent in the court porcelain of the Qianlong period. As the "flower of wealth," the peony represented social prosperity and national strength. Emperor Qianlong used the peony motif to reinforce his governance philosophy, expressing his goals for national prosperity and public well-being. The use of the peony pattern not only conveyed the emperor's political ideals but also reflected his personal political temperament and governance thinking: emphasizing "harmony" and "prosperity." Through careful selection and design of floral patterns, court porcelain became an important vehicle for transmitting national political ideals and cultural values.

Moreover, the lotus pattern became a significant symbol of "integrity" and "nobility" in Qing court culture. The lotus, symbolizing purity, cleanliness, and virtue, aligned with Emperor Qianlong's emphasis on "moral governance." Emperor Qianlong emphasized the moral cultivation of the ruler and sought to set an example through his actions and behavior. The use of the lotus pattern in court porcelain became a visual embodiment of this political philosophy. In court porcelain, the lotus was not just a decoration; it represented the emperor's pursuit of social morality, clean governance, and noble character.

5.1.5 Conclusion

The semantic features and cultural semiotic analysis of Qing dynasty floral decorative patterns reveal their multifaceted roles and profound significance within Qing society. Through a semiotic analytical framework, we can gain a more systematic understanding of the cultural, social, and religious meanings embedded in these patterns. Floral patterns are not merely expressions of visual art; they also serve as important carriers of cultural heritage. Their widespread application in Qing society reflects not only the cultural needs and aesthetic pursuits of the time but also conveys significant cultural values and social identity across generations. In modern design, the semantic features and cultural connotations of Qing dynasty floral patterns still hold important inspirational and practical value. By innovatively interpreting and modernizing these traditional symbols, designers can achieve a blend of traditional culture and modern aesthetics, bringing new creativity and inspiration to contemporary ceramic design. Future research should continue to focus on balancing the cultural connotations of traditional symbols with modern demands, advancing the protection of cultural heritage while fostering innovation in contemporary design, thereby providing a solid theoretical foundation and practical guidance for ceramic design education and practice.

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