

# Study on Design Characteristics of Child Pillow in Ding Kiln in Song Dynasty

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## Abstract

Child pillow is a kind of household implement with excellent design and artistic characteristics among all the types of porcelain fired in Ding Kiln in Song Dynasty. It not only has high aesthetic value, but also is one of the indispensable bedding for ancient people as well as it not only reflects the exquisite skill of Chinese traditional porcelain making, but also reflects the extraordinary aesthetic style of Song folk. This paper shows that the design characteristics of child pillow in Ding Kiln in Song Dynasty will be analyzed in detail from the following aspects: implement model paradigm, basic composition of pattern, typical form of glaze color, and artisan's French style.

## Keywords

Ding Kiln in Song Dynasty; Child Pillow; Design Characteristics.

## 1. Introduction

The Song Dynasty is an extremely prosperous period in the history of China's ceramic development, which can be called "the era of porcelain". Both the production scale and the production technology have reached a high level. There are kilns for firing porcelain, and the formation of a unique artistic style all over the China. In terms of porcelain, Ding kiln, Ru kiln, guan Kiln, Ge kiln and Jun kiln are often referred to as the five famous kilns of the Song Dynasty. The porcelain produced by the kilns around the region has covered most of the daily utensils needed in people's life from eating utensils to storage containers, even stationery and toys. Ding Kiln is one of the five famous kilns in Song Dynasty. The white porcelain produced is known as the crown of Song Dynasty. Its kiln site is located in Jianci Village and Yanshan Village near Lingshan Town, Quyang County, Baoding City, Henan Province. Since the Tang Dynasty, it has begun to make porcelain, and it has been gradually perfected by the Northern Song Dynasty. Among all the types of porcelains fired in Ding Kiln, the pillow in shape of faint is a household implement with artistic characteristics. It not only has high aesthetic value, but also is one of the indispensable bedding for ancient people. Its exquisitely exquisite design profoundly reflects the exquisite skill of traditional Chinese porcelain making and the extraordinary aesthetic style of Song folk.

## 2. The Shape Paradigm

The modeling design of porcelain pillow belongs to the three-dimensional modeling design art, mainly composed of quality, space, volume and other aspects. The design process of porcelain pillow is gradually formed by porcelain workers through continuous production practice, understanding and mastering the relationship between modeling and material properties, mechanics and other factors.

In the Song Dynasty, porcelain pillows in Ding kiln were widely used as bedding in summer. Porcelain pillow shape is very rich, mainly in the reality of specific images and geometric three-

dimensional modeling, such as silver ingot shape, ruyi shape, tiger shape, rectangle, round, oval and other forms, among which the "child pillow" style production is the most fine, won the love of everyone.



**Figure 1.** The Ding kiln child pillow hidden in the Palace Museum in Beijing

The Ding kiln child pillow (see Figure 1) now stored in the Palace Museum in Beijing is a typical style. It is a kind of xiangsheng porcelain that imitated the image of a child. The child pillow is shaped like a boy lying prone on a beautifully decorated oval couch. The boy's head rests on his folded arms and is slightly raised, with his side face turned to the left and his right hind foot raised. Using sculpture production technology, smooth and natural lines. The expression on the child's face is innocent and lovely, with big eyes, wide forehead and large ears, creating a traditional image of riches and honour. Children calm demeanor, image depicting lifelike, full of interest. At the same time, children dressed in a long gown, trousers, jacket a vest, foot pedal with cloth shoes, modeling technology is very exquisite. The meticulous structure of the child's body and folds, both inside and outside, not only shows the high level of song dynasty sculpture craft, but also provides a historical example of understanding the costume style of this period.

The modeling design of child pillow in Ding Kiln also contains practical functional elements. The child pillow cleverly makes use of the natural structure of the back spine of the human body. As the pillow surface of the porcelain pillow, the child's head and buttocks are slightly raised. Such a kind of two ends become warped, the modelling design of middle small concave, make integral modelling not only graceful and fluent, also can prevent user stiff pillow at the same time, accord with practical. And when the weather turns cool, when porcelain pillow is no longer used, its beautiful modelling also can serve as display implement.

The modeling design of Ding kiln child pillow in the Ding kiln of Song Dynasty is not only suitable for the pillow and neck to meet the practical function, but also fully consider to meet the aesthetic needs of people, which is an outstanding representative of the wisdom and technical integration of porcelain craftsmen in the Song Dynasty.

### 3. The Basic Composition of Pattern

Ding kiln child pillows in Song Dynasty not only have vivid shapes, but also use a variety of decorative techniques such as printing, engraving and drawing. They are decorated with a variety of patterns, which has strong artistry and expressiveness.

The child pillow collected by the Palace Museum in Beijing, on the oval couch under the porcelain pillow, uses the light decoration technique. The begonia flower pattern is carved first, and inside the light, the pattern of panchi is carved, and the pattern is in the form of bas-relief. Panchi stripe is a kind of traditional decorative pattern, the earliest appearance in bronzes. "Chi" is a kind of hornless dragon in legend, and "coil" means winding and winding. In the Northern Song Dynasty, panchi stripe was a common decorative pattern in Ding kiln. People believed that "chi" was a lucky beast, meaning longevity and warding off evil spirits. It is a traditional auspicious pattern, symbolizing successful career and smooth future. Between adjacent open light decoration is decorated with ruyi pattern, which is also a symbol of good intentions. The lines of decoration are smooth and graceful, just like floating clouds, giving people a sense of smart elegance. In addition, the child also holds an embroidered ball with exquisite decoration and clear patterns, which seems to be playing, showing more vitality and interest.

The children lying on the couch have few decorative patterns, only carving some natural folds of clothes to add a three-dimensional feeling. Children and couch form the artistic effect of change and unity. They are dense. While adding the sense of hierarchy of artifacts, they do not make people feel cumbersome and thorough. They are very fresh and elegant artistic features.



**Figure 2.** The Song Dynasty Ding kiln child pillow hidden in the Palace Museum in Taipei

In addition, the Song Dynasty Ding kiln child pillow (see Figure 2) now hidden in the Palace Museum in Taipei is almost the same as that in the Palace Museum in Beijing, except that the children wear different clothing patterns. The Song Dynasty Ding kiln child pillow at the National Palace Museum in Taipei is also decorated with numerous patterns such as Tuan Hua on the shoulder of the child, which is more exquisite and gorgeous.

The decoration on child pillows in Ding kiln in Song Dynasty not only improves the aesthetic value of utensils, but also integrates people's wishes for happiness. The decoration of the utensil itself is closely combined with its shape, which is very harmonious and natural. The primary and secondary patterns are clear and orderly. They complement each other with their good functions. They are life utensils with both artistry and practicability. Due to its material and cultural attributes, practical and aesthetic functions, Ding kiln child pillow occupies an important position in the history of Chinese creation.

#### 4. The Typical Form of Glaze Color

Ding kiln has a long history of firing white porcelain, which began in the Tang Dynasty and flourished in the Five Dynasties. By the Song Dynasty, porcelain artisans had a better grasp of the white glaze firing technology, and the Northern Song Dynasty was the heyday of the development of glaze and glaze color.

The porcelain factory in Ding kiln was the first kiln in history to use coal as the fuel for porcelain firing. The whole body of the baby pillow was glazed with white color, which contained trace iron and was fired in an oxide flame. After firing, the glaze color was white and slightly yellow, like ivory white. The glaze is glossy and smooth, the glaze is thick and uniform, and the color of the embryo can not be seen. And porcelain pillow bottom does not apply glaze, reveal white fetal bone, and open two air holes, so that the discharge of air when firing, to prevent deformation or burst.

In addition, the white glaze used in the child pillow of Ding kiln in the Song Dynasty also symbolizes purity and holiness. Porcelain craftsmen use this glaze color and combine it with children's modeling to make the viewer feel very natural and harmonious. Therefore, the glaze color used in the child pillow also plays an important role in the overall aesthetic feeling of the porcelain pillow.

#### 5. The Formula of Artistic Conception Creation

The Song Dynasty was a relatively weak period in Chinese history. Politically, it implemented the policies of "pacifying the inside and weakening the outside" and "emphasizing culture and restraining force", and took the Countermeasures of humiliation and peace against foreign aggressors. Social existence determines social consciousness, which also directly or indirectly affects the development of philosophy, literature and aesthetic thought in the Song Dynasty. Reflected in the field of literature, it is against obscene words and beautiful algae and advocates the style of ancient and simple writing. In the field of Arts and crafts, it pursues the beauty of light, and there are few complex decorative patterns to reflect the beauty of modeling and glaze of the utensils themselves. Therefore, the Song Dynasty formed a completely different artistic style from the previous generation. From the perspective of aesthetics, it has a very high aesthetic style.

Under such a historical background, the creation concept of Ding Kiln porcelain craftsmen is also deeply affected. Most of the firing of all kinds of porcelain is based on simple modeling. The simple and elegant artistic style of Ding Kiln child pillow in Song Dynasty is not only related to the design concept of porcelain craftsmen, but also based on the exquisite production and decoration skills of porcelain craftsmen. The porcelain pillow is applied with the ivory white glaze unique to Ding kiln, without complicated color painting decoration or a variety of complex color glazes, and the decorative processes such as engraving, drawing and printing are used to finally present the unique artistic characteristics of Ding Kiln child pillow. In addition, the porcelain pillow takes the image of children as the shape of porcelain pillow, and describes and shapes the innocent image of children, which is also the perfect embodiment of Song people's aesthetic taste and their unremitting pursuit of truth, goodness and beauty.

#### 6. Conclusion

One can't show high ideals without simple living; One can't have lofty aspirations without a peaceful state of mind which the Song Dynasty integrated its pursuit of "plain" into the style of the whole era. The simple literary trend of thought, the elegant aesthetic interest is contained in a poem, a piece of arts and crafts. The children's pillow, like every song dynasty handicrafts, is beautiful in shape and rhythm. Observe the artisans' accurate grasp of children's body shape,

and experience the ingenuity of the craftsmen in the Song Dynasty; Appreciate the children's carefully carved clothes on the pillow, feel the craftsman of the Song Dynasty. As the most representative of the Song Dynasty ceramic handicrafts, the children's pillow with the most "clean" glaze color against the most "fresh" children, "pure" and "white" show incisively and vividly. The child on the pillow has been lying in bed for thousands of years. It is the mutual perfection of time and craft, is the dialogue between history and time, is the song Dynasty left us, the most elegant feeling of beauty.

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