
**INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CERAMICS AND PAINTING TECHNOLOGY
IN MODERN ART**

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ABSTRACT

The pictorial imagery on ceramic wares and other surfaces is an enhancement to the wares as well as the paintings on the walls or canvas and other surfaces. The two areas in focus are associated with colours for aesthetic function. Colours in ceramics are uniquely achieved from various glaze compositions and varying approaches in heating ceramic wares. The colour changing attitude of chameleon is occasionally noticed in ceramic colour (glaze) firing exploration. Oxidation firing is exposed to changes in colour from the intended colour when the firing technique changes to reduction firing, as well as influence from other factors. Painting technology engages in applying colours to various surfaces such as wood, metal, canvas, cement walls and other surfaces for aesthetic function or beautification. Ceramics is a three dimensional art while painting is a two dimensional art, but they interrelate in various ways such as the issue of colour expression on the surfaces to enhance beauty of the products. Pablo Picasso and Michelangelo were great and successful Painters who were renowned in colour application on surfaces to promote aesthetic function. Equally, inner and outer surfaces of some ceramic wares require colour by such form surfaces to boost aesthetic value, even though the wares have utilitarian function also. In this study the five visual images of ceramics and five painting works were perceived and described, interpreted and assessed. Each has the capacity to fulfill either utilitarian or aesthetic functions or both of them. The paper addressed the interrelationship of ceramics and painting technology and a simple survey research designs was adopted, where data were analyzed and summarized considering predetermined themes. Ceramics and painting technology are interrelation and also play immense role in the development of mankind and the society.

Keywords: Aesthetics, Utilitarian, Glaze, Ceramics, Painting, Visual images colour, oxidation, reduction, beautification.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Ceramics and Painting in Contemporary Arts

The language and practice of ceramics have a lot in common with painting technology in the contemporary art endeavours. The factor of appearance which culminates into aesthetic concept is applicable to both painting technology and ceramics. The function of painting technology on any material surface, such as canvass, concrete walls, metal plate or stone is the same when executed on the ceramics surface such as tiles, vases, dinnerware and others.

Although the pictorial imagery employed on ceramics wares or surfaces of other materials connotes the aesthetic function as exemplified in modern or contemporary art, the imagery could also be for documentary or historical purposes.

According to Rawson (1971:174), "No ceramic decorator, of course, ever employs any motif for the sake of mere pictorial completeness. The pictorial image is employed for its positive symbolic value."

The pictures or images on ceramics wares speak just like paintings on walls or canvas. Ceramics from the ancient period is known to be associated with colours.

According to Mordi (2018) “to this extent, some ceramic ancient cultures as well as contemporary potters have come to be known by certain colour or combination of colours. Some examples are; colour associated with celadon glazes, blue, green and red, associated with Persian ceramics among others”. Ceramic wares are also identified by the colours which in some cases are from the compound of iron oxide content available in the clay from its original source of formation. Colours in ceramics are derived from the various glaze composition as well as the different approaches in firing the ceramic wares.

Rhodes (1976) views some early Japanese stoneware pots as first “unglazed and undecorated but frequently bore coloration from the flame and ash which complicated their surfaces in unpredictable ways”. The application of colours on ceramic wares require patience before the predictable outcome is realized after gloss firing. The natural colours from the clay bodies which are not intentional in some ways also require the same approach of giving reasonable time come by such colour after firing the wares. The combination of natural colours as a result of earth colours from iron oxide with compounded glaze colours could be compared to mix-media technique in painting technology in modern art.

It is exciting to apply certain physically known glaze colours on the wares, but realize other shades of colours after firing. This is in contrasts to painting technology which gives the known applied colours from the on-set of colour application.

In ceramics firing procedures and techniques play vital role in colour foundation. For instance, a particular colour applied on wares and given oxidation firing is bound to change in

colour when the firing technique changes to “reduction firing” Chameleon changes its colour depending on the mode and place to adapt to the colour circumstances at that particular time and place. Coloration in ceramics changes due to circumstances encountered especially during clay body preparation, glaze preparation and firing technique.

Painting technology according to the Oxford Advance Learner (Hornby) Dictionary is “the graphic art consisting of an artistic composition made by applying paints to a surface. It is creating a picture with paints. The act of applying paint to a surface” Pablo Picasso and Michelangelo were great painters who applied colours of surfaces. Michelangelo painted Monalisa and Media in the Medici Chapel. Painting is a means of communication, documentation and beautification. Pevsner (1974:21) indicated that “The artist withdrew in disgust from such philistinism or squalor. It was not for him (William Morris) to condescend to the taste of the majority of his fellowmen, to meddle with the “Arts Not Fine”. During the Renaissance, artists had first learned to consider themselves superior beings, bearers of a great message. Leonardo da Vinci wanted the artist to be a scientist and a humanist, but by no means a crafts man”. Painting as an art is means of communication from the early days irrespective of the surface used. Ceramic wares surfaces whether the inner or outer surfaces are highly paintable surfaces, although the techniques and the materials differ. The painting on ceramic wares equally bear great message for preservation, documentation and aesthetic appreciation. The interrelationship between ceramics and painting technology in the contemporary art is enormous and worth investigating to engender new frontiers in the concerned areas of art.

The dream of Leonard da Vinci who wanted the artist to be a scientist and but by no means of a craftsman, requires a rethink. The process and techniques of realizing changing colours from a particular material in ceramic endeavours during firing using different methods is very crucial. The

sourcing of organic and inorganic materials for colours to suit the relevant areas deserves considerations in order to achieve good and lasting painting which properly communicate to the relevant consumers and cultures.

1.2 Ceramics Decoration and Painting

The decorations and paintings on ceramic wares surfaces are unique and also require relevant specialized techniques. The different stages of ceramic products such as green wares, bisque wares and glosswares have the capacity to undergo application of decoration and paintings on the surfaces, with consideration to their suitable techniques. The products of ceramics are special, and Peters (2001:5) observed that “ceramics are wares made partly or wholly from clay. It is shaped in ordinary temperature and unless forcibly deformed, it keeps

this shape and after heating (firing) to a sufficient maturity temperature, the shape is permanently retained”. The surfaces of ceramic wares adapt to the use of glaze with oxides which are also earthy materials like clay and clay bodies. The various decoration techniques on ceramic wares which include; spraying, dipping, stenciling, transfer, engobe, incising, relief modeling and painting technique. This paper is considering the painting technique on ceramic wares among other methods of decoration, and its comparison with general painting technology executed on other surfaces.

1.3 Painting Technique on Ceramic Wares

It is well known that any form of decoration on ceramic wares, including painting application simply enhances the aesthetic value of the ware but never hinders the function of the ceramic ware.

The arrangement of elements of designs to form patterns is usually to enhance the beauty of the piece. It is not part of the structure of the piece that gives function. The ceramics ware can properly function well without the decoration”. Painting on ceramic wares does the work of beautifying the ceramic ware and adds more value and enhancement. Peterson (2000:102) observed that “clay artists especially know that form, line and colour can produce symbols that evoke emotions”. The issue of painting on ceramics wares speaks of the application of relevant colours which boost the interest of the ceramic wares consumers. Peterson further indicated that “artists for whom symbolism and narration are important make huge efforts to find the best way to project ideas for the viewer”. The painting expression on ceramics wares goes beyond single symbol to series of storey narration visuals, which accord the consumer to enjoy the utilization function, beauty and the captured message on the wares. Mordi (2018) also reacted on the importance of surface embellishment of such wares by saying that “very often, the huge effort is actually motivated by surface: geared at enhancing visual sensibility of the form and contributing absolutely nothing to function or the basic form itself. The current scenarios and stories would better be documented through paintings on ceramic wares which are generally regarded as precious wares and kept with extra care since they are fragile.

The early Chinese painted ceramic and surface decoration in Greek Attic ceramic and classical, and they give good report of the extent of civilization. The reflection of African culture, technology and other endeavours as obtained in the general painting on other surfaces should also be displayed on ceramic wares for posterity.

1.4 Impact of Ceramics and Painting Technology

Enormous impact through ceramics and painting technology in contemporary art has been created won various surfaces of objects and walls, floors, structures among others. It is not disputed that in many places where colours and design derived from general painting technology are realized,

Ceramics decorations have also been applied, such as architectural structures, fences, and others. Glazing in ceramics has been a monumental discovery which cuts across art technology and science for the benefit of humanity.

According to Bryrant (2001) “the first attempt of glazing happened in prehistoric mining and metal working villages of central or south-eastern Europe some time during the 4th or 3rd millennium BC rather than Egypt or Mesopotamia”. He observes that the discovery of glazing technique becomes a major contribution to mankind technological endeavour from stone into the first metal age- the Bronze Age. The three major components of glaze include fluxes, stabilizers or viscosity agents and glass formers. Udoh and Okoronkwo state that “the absence or insufficient quantity of a component could result to glaze faults”. The glazing some time rather enhances the aesthetic quality of the ceramic wares. There are various types of glaze as well as many techniques of glaze application or decoration on ceramic wares. Pius (2008) observes that “any application that makes a ware more attractive is regarded as decoration. He further indicates that there are different types of ceramic decorations, and such decorations should be done while the clay is plastics, leather hard, bore dry, bisques or glazed.

Among the numerous types of ceramics decoration include direct glaze application, resist decoration, painting with bush, stenciling decoration, applied decoration, burnishing, inlaid decoration, intaglio, incised decoration, marbling, feathering, graffito, slip , dipping or pouring, slip trailing, engobe or slip painting/ banding, enamel application and combination of decorations techniques among others. Rhodes (1976) describes “glaze as a thin gloss-like coating which is fused into the body of a ceramic ware”. Glazing and decoration on ceramics wares enhance the inner or outer surfaces of ceramics wares for aesthetic purposes and this is the sole aim of general painting in the modern art. Mathieu (2010) sees “ceramics as the coming together of a form and surfaces”,

Form is generally articulated by volume by an empty interior space, while the surface remains distinct and separate, conceptually, from the form. The relations between form and surface so particular to ceramics in articulated around two main concepts: function and decoration, were the concept of functions is largely given by the volumetric form which empties the interior of the shape and renders

It particularly available for containment, and where the concept of decoration is largely given by the surface.

Every ceramic glazing and decoration is done on the surface just as the general painting in the contemporary art is executed on the surface. Although both painting and ceramic glazing/decoration consider the enhancement on surfaces, ceramics is unique since its decoration/glazing is only on the surfaces of ceramic wares and hitherto accompanied with heat application (firing). Ceramics is further concerned with functions where form and containment become very essential unlike the general painting in general art. The general painting looks at various colour media and many material surfaces also. The type of paint to be applied depends on the material surface acquired such as canvas, wooden board, metal sheet, cement wall, plastic surface, asbestos ceiling, and paper among others. They use are of poster colours, water colour, oil paint, emulsion paint, locally sourced colours from plants among others depend on the available surface materials, unlike ceramics which has customized decoration/glaze materials which must adequately pass through heat of certain relevant temptation such as 1000oc, 1100oc, 1150oc, 1300oc et cetra.

The world without ceramics and painting technology would be very boring and uninteresting. Most faces of human endeavours today have direct or indirect bearing with ceramics and painting

technology such as the architecture, transportation, commerce, religion, business, health, technology, and science, recreation, art, education socialization and culture among others.

2.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The designs of the study and data collection are involved in this section.

2.1 Significance of the Study

This research shows the related role of ceramics and painting technology and their impact in the development of the society. The utilization and aesthetic function of ceramics and the unique aesthetic function of painting technology have impacted greatly by enhancing the living standard of the people globally.

2.2 Research Model

A simple survey research design for investigation is adopted for the study. Data were collected in the areas of ceramics with a focus of investigating the interrelationship between them. The method considered field survey, secondary source of information, observation,

internet and interview. A qualitative research technique where documented or written information on the area of investigation was applied to analyze the data and summarized based on predetermined themes. The place of ceramics in the modern art as well as the role of painting have been investigated.

2.3 Research Documents

The research examined ten ceramics wares and ten paintings which reflect different utilitarian and aesthetics functions. The various materials and techniques relevant to decoration/glazing in ceramics and techniques in painting were considered while examining the basic areas of relationship between them. While examining the selected visual images and the surface appearances of both ceramics and painting products, the study was not involved in the actual making of the products.

2.4 Data Collecting Tools

In the research, the selected visual images in ceramics and painting were based on the relevance to the products with utilitarian and aesthetic functions envisaged in the study. Decorated or glazed ceramics such as gift items were for interior decoration to serve aesthetic function, while the dinner-wares floortiles, wall tiles and sanitary wares serve utilitarian function. Framed painting for interior walls as well as landscapes and other forms of paintings for exterior walls and recreational parks serve aesthetic purpose. The suitability of the ceramic or painting products to either utilitarian function or aesthetic function, or both give credence to how relevant the selected visual images are to the message and purpose of the study.

3.0 Findings, Discussion and Conclusion

A world without ceramics and painting technology would be a world with sadness and boredom. Ceramic wares ranging from dinner wares, wall and floor tiles, decorative wares, sanitary wares among other wares are decorated and glazed with exotic colours to achieve utilitarian and aesthetic functions. The selected ceramic products with exotic designs and colours are:

- (a) Pairs of Cockatoos. Shared Platter. (Plate 1)

- (b) Pair of Cockatoos: Exotic birds and strange fruits (Plate 2)
- (c) Gold luster Baluster Form vase (Plate 3)
- (d) Tea totem #2 (Plate 4)
- (e) Two Head Hermaphrodite Mural (1984) and others. (Plate 5)

Painting Products are:

- (f) No Fish 1 (Plate 6)
- (g) Scavenging in a lost Paradise (Plate 7)
- (h) Breast Feeding (Plate 8)
- (i) Thank God (Plate 9)
- (j) A familiar Dream (Plate 10)

Brown (2010) observes that “earthenware offers a glimpse of the tremendous range of imagination, innovation, and technical facility that characterizes contemporary use of the oldest ceramic medium” According to him an earthenware is distinctive not only for intrinsic properties as a clay body and the vocabulary of forms that can be readily adapted to it, but also for the broad spectrum of decorative strategies-from appliqué, incising, stamping, and modeling to painting, sponging, and glazing-that can be employed to embellish its surfaces”. Decoration and glazing of ceramic wares indeed enhance the wares as seen in the various selected ceramic wares to boast aesthetic function in addition to utilitarian function.

Ceramics is a medium for expressing man’s desires on needs by creating relevant forms. Forms created have to agree with the desire for containment. Mathieu (2010: 23 – 24) explains the concept of form by substantiating that “man’s native inertia is overcome only by desire, and nothing gets made unless it is desirable”. Creative ceramic forms are simply reflecting the endowment of one’s level of creativity to the benefit of mankind.

Equally different paintings selected for this study are enhance of interior and exterior or outdoor environment to boast aesthetic function. The psychology of good environment with beautiful works of art with charming themes and colours boasts joyful relaxation and good life. The use of colour in ceramics and painting technology as a common but unique attribute in the two areas is very crucial. Moidi (2018) states that “from ancient times, potters seem to have attached much importance to colours used in their ceramics.

To this extent, some ceramics ancient cultures as well as contemporary potters have come to be known by certain colours or combination of colours. Some examples are; colours associated with celadon glazes, blue, green and red, associated with Persian ceramics among others”. The aspect of colours in ceramics although executed in three-dimensional surface of ceramics wares and also on flat surface such as tiles achieve the same purpose of beautifying the wares. Colours used in general painting even though they are different from ceramic colours also play the same role.

Furthermore, Mathieu (2010:83) observes that “it is important to remember that any abstract pattern of form or even any use of colour was never merely decorative and used only for optical effect and seductive interest, but was always meaningful as a symbol that carried a

specific reading, related to the function and intended use of the object itself”. It is important to realize that there is much capacity in ceramics and painting technology in the modern art to enhance aesthetic and utilitarian functions. They are tangible means of expressing one’s creativity to boast useful cultural influence of a people. The two areas of focus accommodate adequate application of elements and principles of art and design to appropriately enhance visual form. Observing interrelationship between ceramics and painting technology is certainly interesting and the findings encountered very useful which could boost further investigations.

Ceramics and painting as areas of art and design have related content although ceramics is a three dimension art while painting is a two dimensional art. In analyzing the works of ceramics and painting, similar content became necessary and considerations were given to aspects such as subjects, theme, medium, product, functions, design and style to be in line with the modern or contemporary art.

In evaluating the interrelationship between ceramics and painting which does not involve the making of the products, the relevant processes include:

- (a) Ability to perceive and describe the work of ceramics or painting adequately.
- (b) Interpretation of works of ceramics or painting appropriately.
- (c) Ability to assess or judge the works of ceramics or painting properly.

Ceramic wares and painting works are expressions of the artists which may reflect cultural motifs, certain symbols, familiar or abstract ideas and others in order to give birth to their desires.

The pictures or images executed on ceramics wares through glazing and other decorative techniques communicate equally like the paintings on canvas or on the walls for aesthetic purpose.

Paintings on walls and on canvas play only the role of aesthetic function, while ceramics wares which are known for durability, preservation and sustainability play both the utilitarian and aesthetic functions. The bond between ceramics and painting is also in enhancing visual sensibility of the form and surface for aesthetic purpose and this can hardly be separated.

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APPENDIX 1

CERAMICS PRODUCTS

PLATE 1

Artist: Stephen Bower

Title: Pair of Cockatoos: Shard Platter Medium: Wheel thrown; dipped glaze; under glaze brushwork; electric fired, cone 4 (Ceramics)

Year: 2008

Size: 2 ¾ x 22 13/14 inches (7 x 58 cm)

Courtesy: Masters Earthenware



PLATE 2

Artist: Stephen Bowers

Title: Pair of Cockatoos: Shard Platter Medium: Wheel thrown; dipped glaze; underglaze brushwork; electric fired, cone 4 (Ceramics)

Year: 2006

Size: 2 ¾ x 22 13/16 inches (7 x 58 cm)

Courtesy: Masters Earthenware



PLATE 3

Artist: Stephen Bowers

Title: Gold Luster Baluster Form Vase Medium: Wheel thrown; dipped glaze; underglaze brushwork; electric fired, cones 4 and 5 (Ceramics)

Year: 1998

Size: 35 x 24^{13/15} inches (89 x 63 cm)

Size: 2 ¾ x 22 13/16 inches (7 x 58 cm)

Courtesy: Masters Earthenware



APPENDIX 2

CERAMICS PRODUCTS

PLATE 4

Artist: Takayama-Ogawa Title: Tea Totem #2

Medium: hand built, Wheel thrown, slip cast, brushed, sprayed and airbrushed glaze; sprigging, underglaze brushwork, overglaze, luster, stains; electric fired, cones 04 and 0019 (Ceramics)

Year: 2000

Size: 22 x 15 x 12 inches (55.9 x 38.1 x 30.5 cm)

Courtesy: Masters Earthenware



PLATE 5

Artist: De-Fazio

Title: Two-Headed Hermaphrodite Mural Medium: relief sculpted; brushed glaze; carved, underglaze brushwork, overglaze; gas fired, electric fired, cone 04 (Ceramics)

Year: 1984

Size: 96 x 72 x 12 inches (243.8 x 182.9 x 30.5 cm)

Courtesy: Masters Earthenware



**APPENDIX 3
PAINTING PRODUCTS**

PLATE 6

Artist: Bridget Nwanze

Title: No fish 1

Medium: Oil on canvas (Painting)

Year: 2011

Size: 100cm by 92cm Courtesy: Asiemo, T. O.

Courtesy: Asiemo, T. O.



PLATE 7

Artist: Bruce Onabrakpeye

Title: Scavenging in a Lost Paradise Medium: Mixed Media (Painting)

Year: 2006

Size: 45cm by 60cm Courtesy: Asiemo, T. O.

Courtesy: Asiemo, T. O.



PLATE 8

Artist: Ochigbo Simon Best

Title: Breast Feeding Medium: Mixed Media (Painting)

Year: 2003

Size: 90cm by 45cm

Courtesy: Asiemo, T. O.



APPENDIX 4

PAINTING PRODUCTS

PLATE 9

Artist: Theresa Ovo Asiemo Title: Thank God

Medium: Mixed Media (Painting) Year: 2012

Size: 36cm by 24cm Courtesy: Asiemo, T. O.

Courtesy: Asiemo, T. O.



PLATE 10

Artist: Ogbangba Kelvin

Title: A Familiar Dream

Medium: Mixed Media (Painting)

Year: 2008

Size: 30cm by 36cm

Courtesy: Asiemo, T. O.

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