



The Value and Development of Jingdezhen Porcelain Panel Art in China: “A Case Study of the Laoyatan Community”

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Abstract

Jingdezhen's porcelain panel art has a long history and is famous worldwide. Nowadays, the Laoyatan community provides creativity for porcelain panel art in Jingdezhen. Since then, the legend of Laoyatan has been left in the history of Chinese ceramics. In recent years, with the development of globalization and market economy, as well as the country's emphasis on protecting intangible cultural heritage, the Laoyatan community has faced new development opportunities and challenges. This topic, "The value and development of Laoyatan porcelain panel art", mainly uses document analysis and field investigation methods to study the porcelain panel craftsman, the development process, the current situation, porcelain panel production craftsmanship and inheritance of Laotian community porcelain panel art. Porcelain panel art has a long history through the Tang, Ming, Qing, and contemporary folk crafts; handcrafts have been passed down from generation to generation and constantly innovated to produce large and flat white porcelain panels. The interdependence of the formation of

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porcelain panels and porcelain panel paintings formed the art of Laoyatan porcelain panels. It has developed the characteristics of Laoyatan and created a porcelain panel cultural landscape. According to the history and humanities of porcelain art, the humanitarian value has analyzed the culture, spiritual value, human resources and tourism economy produced by Laoyatan porcelain arts. The current development faces value and inheritance dilemmas, and through case analysis, it could relate to the development model of porcelain panel art suitable for Laoyatan, aiming to promote the sustainable development of porcelain panel art culture.

Keywords: Laoyatan community, porcelain panel art, value, development strategy

Introduction

Jingdezhen is the only city in China named after the name of emperor. After Emperor Song Zhenzong gave the name Jingde to Jingdezhen, Jing porcelain became famous all over the world. It is one of the earliest ancient cities in the world to go global. Jingdezhen went through the Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties, and through the establishment of the floating beam Porcelain Bureau and the imperial kiln factory, Jingdezhen gradually became the national porcelain-making centre of "the world kiln ware gathering", reaching its peak. Especially in the three generations of Qingkang, Yong and Qian, the porcelain industry developed to the peak of history (Ye, 2011). In the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China, Jingdezhen Ceramics suffered heavy losses during the Industrial Revolution. During the founding of the People's Republic of China, the development was relatively slow due to the influence of political turmoil and other factors. However, even with some turbulence, Jingdezhen ceramics still stand firm in the overall historical process, and the country has paid much attention to the development of Jingdezhen ceramic culture.

In 2006, Jingdezhen handmade porcelain technology was included in the first batch of the national intangible cultural heritage list, which is of great practical significance to promote further the protection and inheritance of Jingdezhen intangible cultural heritage in the porcelain capital, as well as the international cultural exchange and cooperation of the thousand-old town (Jingdezhen Yearbook, 2020). Since then, the city has attracted artists, college students and scholars from all over the country and even the world to live here and carry out entrepreneurial, living and research activities related to ceramics, promoting the prosperity of Jingdezhen's ceramic industry.



In June 2020, with the approval of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of China, Jingdezhen set up the "Jingdezhen Ceramic Culture Ecological Protection Experimental Zone" (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2020), which laid a new starting point for the comprehensive construction of socialist modernization international porcelain capital. Jingdezhen city people's government issued the national Jingdezhen ceramic culture ecological protection experimental zone management method that fully embodies the "people-oriented" tenet, adhering to the "protection, rescue first, rational utilization, inheritance development" protection policy, protecting the intangible cultural heritage and cultural and natural environment. The policy efforts to achieve a cultural heritage-rich atmosphere, cultural characteristics, and cultural characteristics and people benefits as the overall goal (Jingdezhen City People's Government, 2021).

Tourism development conference in Jiangxi province in Jingdezhen, 2021, Jingdezhen cultural scenic flower areas, Jingdezhen Imperial Kiln Factory National Archaeological Site park, the Museum of the Imperial Kiln, peng home neighbourhood, ancient kiln, folk scenic spot, sanbao porcelain valley, TaoXiChuan ceramic garden and other representative scenic spots, the Jingdezhen ceramic culture and development of vivid, fully embodies the urban development of new achievements and new characteristics.

There is no doubt that the country's emphasis on cultural soft power has made the splendid local culture, and there are many "ceramic culture mainstays" behind it. Like a fine piece of porcelain, its billet is his mainstay, and a beautiful porcelain panel painting and white porcelain panel are its mainstays. The makers of billet and porcelain panels are neglected groups; they are a person, a workshop, and a group in the community. —— is such a "mainstay of ceramic culture", and the community porcelain culture they produce deserves attention.

Laoyatan community is by outsiders stationed here for a long time, and spontaneously formed a porcelain panel village to make a living in the course of 30 years of development that formed a mature porcelain panel art production process and a relatively completed industrial chain (from mud, porcelain production, to the porcelain panel painting creation, spray glaze, kiln, finished products, to sales), so attracted many artists at home and abroad. To some extent, the convenience of making porcelain panels in the Laoyatan Community is indispensable for artists. Its development has promoted the prosperity of Jingdezhen ceramic art and is an important part of the Jingdezhen ceramic handicraft industry. However, at the same time, it is also faced with development crises such as the low status of porcelain workers,



lack of identity, reduction of survival and development space, lack of successors of handicraft skills and fragmentation of cultural memory. Once in the past, there were many similar communities in Jingdezhen: Lao Factory, Fenghuangshan, Wangwangda, and other porcelain-making communities, which are all familiar names of the ceramic handicraft industry in the porcelain-making population of Jingdezhen, but Fenghuang Mountain and Wangwangda porcelain making area have been eliminated from the urban planning in recent years. In the future, the next similar community will inevitably be removed or falsely retained (meaning that the place names will be retained, but all the buildings will be destroyed), which will seriously affect the protection and development of the local porcelain culture.

Therefore, it is particularly critical to attach importance to and support the sustainable development of culture and art in Jingdezhen and the Laoyatan Community and to study the value and development of porcelain panel art in the Laoyatan Community. On the one hand, it is conducive to preserving the city's cultural heritage and traditional handicrafts, promoting economic growth, ensuring the continuous inheritance of culture and history, enhancing the sense of identity and social status of porcelain workers, improving their working and living conditions, and encouraging the young generation to learn and pass on this ancient handicraft to maintain Jingdezhen's status as a global ceramic cultural centre.

Purpose of Study

1. To study the development process of porcelain making, the historical evolution and technological development of porcelain panel art, and the inheritance mode.
2. To analyse the value and influence of the "porcelain making cultural landscape" in the Laoyatan community, the sustainable development strategies are discussed.

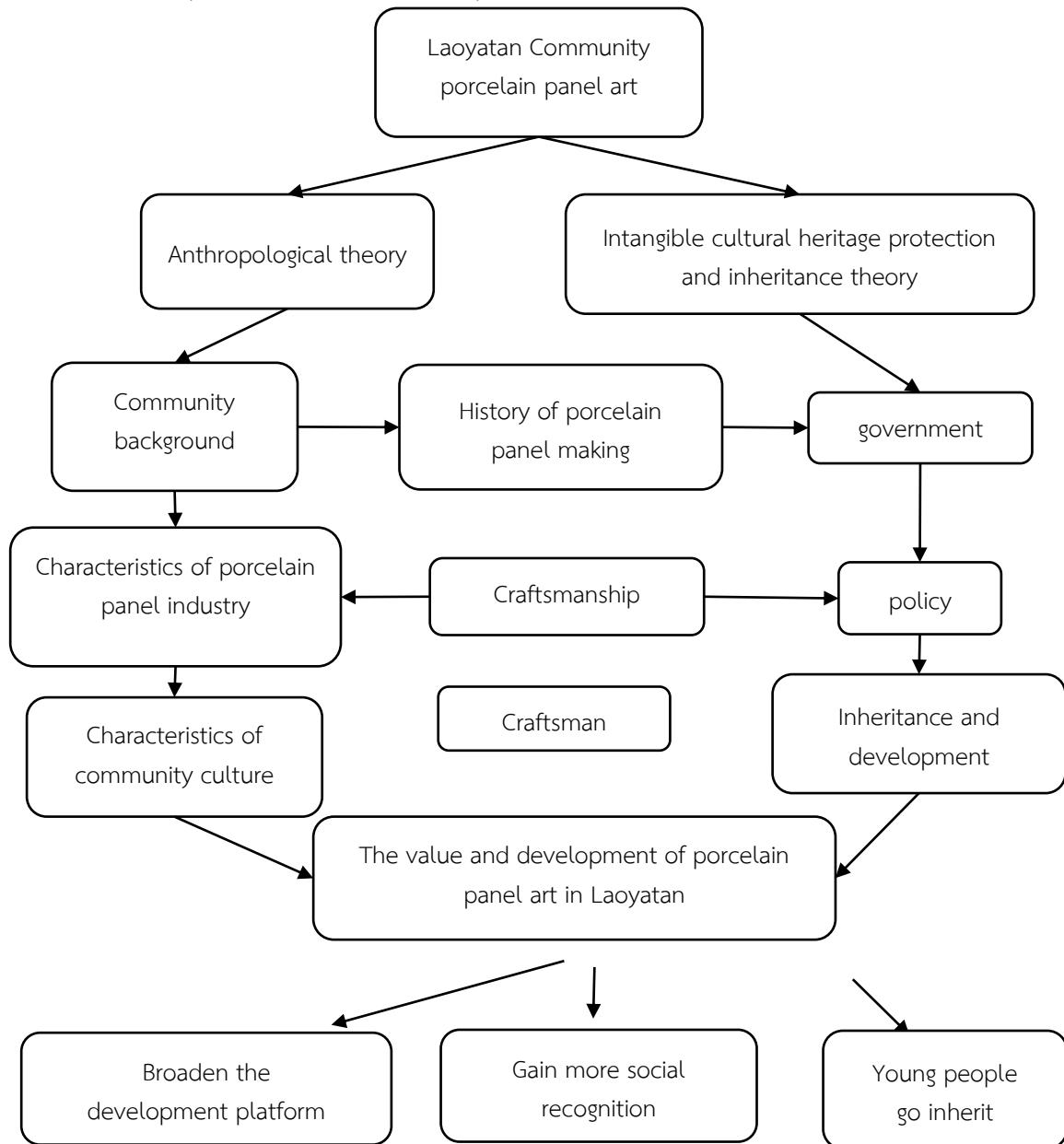
Scope of Research

This study takes the Laoyatan community as an example; in research on the value and development of Jingdezhen porcelain panel art, researchers use various approaches as follows: anthropological theories and principles, community sociology theories and principles, theories and principles of intangible cultural heritage protection and inheritance to study the historical background of the community, the characteristics of porcelain making industry, porcelain panel making craft skills, artisans, to obtain porcelain panel making skills, artisans and community cultural characteristics and their value. Then, the government policies were examined to obtain the following details: policy support conditions for the inheritance and development of the Laoyatan community handicrafts, further analysis of the development direction suitable for



Laoyatan porcelain panel art in order to broaden the development platform of porcelain panel handcrafts, gain more social recognition, promote the inheritance and sustainable development of this handicraft. The specific framework is as follows (Figure 1):

Figure 1 A Conceptual Framework Guide Map



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On this basis, the specific contents are determined as follows:

1. Research objectives: The scope of this study includes the evolution and current situation of the Laoyatan community, the historical development and value embodiment of



porcelain panel art, and the craftsmen of the Laoyatan community (porcelain panel-making craftsmen, artists, etc.).

2. Regional scope: The Laoyatan community of Jingdezhen city, located in the village in the city, is the largest porcelain panel-making community in Jingdezhen, located in the south of Jingdezhen city. The researchers conducted a selective survey of the porcelain panel handicraft workshops in the Laoyatan Community and understand the history and culture of porcelain making in the Laoyatan Community through representative workshops.

3. Time range: From 1988 to now, the time node of the first generation of porcelain panel-making craftsmen of the Laoyatan community entering the community was around 1988, so the time range is set from 1988 to now.

Research Methodology

The research used literature analysis; researchers collected, sorted out, summarised, and summarised Jingdezhen porcelain-making culture, porcelain panel-making handicraft, and academic papers through CNKI, library, and other functional channels to constitute the theoretical basis.

Field investigation methods are as follows:

1. Field investigation--Conducted a six-month in-depth investigation in Laoyatan. Through observation and communication with local people, the researcher gained a detailed understanding of the porcelain-making culture, community environment, and development status of the Laoyatan community and obtained the real development status of Laoyatan.

2. Interview: Conducted interviews with community porcelain panel arts and crafts, intangible cultural heritage protection experts, and relevant government personnel, etc., obtained detailed information related to porcelain panel technology, the development history of porcelain panels in the community and the government's policy of protecting intangible cultural heritage and porcelain making community, and analyzed the inheritance value of community handicraft and the drawbacks exposed in the development process and the reasons.

Result

1. History and Craft of Porcelain Panel Art in the Laoyatan Community

1.1 Development and Change of the Laoyatan Community



Laoyatan community was called "sweet pond" (figure 2). It is located in Jingdezhen south river. The earliest residents were the late Qing dynasty refugees from Anhui. Here, every year, farmland floods, forming a village before a mudflat. This attracted many crows, so to express the flood, so to "gold out and water back," gold crows were named here, so the name Laoyatan was born (Qiu & Jiang, 2022).

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, there were only nearly 20 local families in the Laoyatan Community, all living by farming and growing vegetables without any industry. After 1978, China entered a period of comprehensive economic development, and many private porcelain factories opened in the towns of Jingdezhen. Since 1988, some craftsmen have set up workshops in Laoyatan, most of which are from Duchang (Guo, 2016). Since then, the community has changed the appearance of thatched houses, and residents' living standards have begun to improve.

Figure 2 The appearance of the main street of Laoyatan



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In 1995, the top ten porcelain factories in Jingdezhen closed down, and ten thousand craftsmen were laid off and began to find their way. Thousands of private ceramic handicraft workshops appeared in Jingdezhen (Zhan, 2020); these changes have provided favourable conditions for developing porcelain board workshops in the Laoyatan Community. The porcelain board industry has begun to grow. Now, the handmade workshops and stores in Laoyatan cover the whole area, and the participation of artists from all over the country has added vitality and creativity to developing porcelain boards in the Laoyatan Community. Subsequently, the auxiliary industry also began to flourish. The combination of porcelain



panels, porcelain panel painting and auxiliary industry formed a set of perfect ecological industry chains of porcelain panel art, which improved the economic benefits of the community. Significant changes had taken place in the community and promoted the development of the ceramic cultural industry in Jingdezhen.

1.2 Development History of Porcelain Panel Art

Porcelain panel, first found in our country in the Tang dynasty "kiln" and "epitaph" unearthed in the Ming dynasty in Jingdezhen epitaph inscriptions, late Ming dynasty porcelain panel production has improved, and from the "epitaph" to "ceramic tile" and "porcelain panel painting", used for inlaid furniture, plaques and some life appliance (figure 3), and slowly formed the form of independent painting porcelain panel, laid a foundation for the development of porcelain panel art (Zheng & Liu, 2003).

Figure 3 *Ming Dynasty baby play picture porcelain panel-large lacquer box*



Noted. Zheng & Liu, 2003, P.16

In the Qing Dynasty, hollow "ceramic tiles" appeared in Jingdezhen. Double-sided porcelain panels were like square boxes, and the firing process was improved. The existing plaque of You Tao Ling Temple (Figure 4) of the China Ceramic Museum in Jingdezhen is composed of four hollow square bricks with a total length of 136 cm, 44 cm high and 15 cm thick, with fine texture and smooth surface (Zheng & Liu, 2003), and the edge is painted with patterns, reflecting the super high technical level and artistic aesthetic of the porcelain panel in the middle of the Qing Dynasty loved by the public. Consequently, the porcelain panel handicraft began to enter the public view.



Figure 4 Plaque of You Tao Ling Temple in the Qing Dynasty



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In the early years of the Republic of China, the "pearl mountain eight friends" community (court imperial kiln factory stopped burning, part of the folk pastel and porcelain prints of painting group, bead mountain eight friends are ten people) established the painting art—porcelain panel, profound, their descendants will porcelain painting art heritage, to promote the development of porcelain panel handicraft has played a crucial role.

In 1959, "bead mountain eight friends" posterity Wang Xiliang created a more than 1 meter high, 3 meters wide large porcelain panel ". The cradle of the Jinggangshan" was selected for the great hall of the Chinese People "hall" (Figure 5). It became the Laoyatan community porcelain panel of historical advancement and a new opportunity for porcelain panel art (Wang Mingxuan, personal communication, 2023.09.05).

Figure 5 Wang Xiliang porcelain panel drawing —— "Jinggangshan, Cradle of Revolution



Noted. Wang Mingxuan, 2023.

Nowadays, the older generation of the Laoyatan is still innovating, expanding various shapes of porcelain panels and overcoming technical problems. They made large porcelain panels 4.91 meters long and 2.28 meters wide, which won the Guinness World Record and



brought more social attention to the porcelain panel-making skills of the Laoyatan community (Jiang Guoyong, personal communication, 2023.06.10).

1.3 Production Technology and Process of Porcelain Panel in the Laoyatan Community

As the core driving force of the development of the Laoyatan Community, the production method of porcelain panels is exquisite and involves multiple stages. The following is the production process of Liutongyin, the inheritor of antique porcelain panel making, as revealed through field investigation.

1. Make mud: Pour the mud powder into a little fine material, add water on the side wall, stir into the mud and place it in a bucket.
2. Next, prepare mud strips, spare long wooden strips, a large wooden board, a piece of cotton cloth to cover the wooden board, and a long warehouse.
3. Knead the mud: Prepare the mud strips, knead the mud on the wooden board, knead out the water vapour bubbles in the mud, and knead it into powerful mud strips.
4. Blank pressing: Use a stack to press the clay blank into a flat plate.
5. Trim the blank: Use a cutter to smooth the four sides and a scraper to smooth the surface. Spread the kaolin bed: Spread the kaolin bed evenly on the kaolin clay powder. Spread kaolin clay bed: Sprinkle kaolin clay powder evenly on the kaolin bed (Figure 6).

Figure 6 Spread kaolin clay bed



Noted. By Lin Huangshan, 2023.

7. The first drying: move the blank porcelain plate to the outdoor sorghum bed to dry, wait until it is half dry, and then move it back to the house to continue making.

8. Make support strips: Lay a semi-dry porcelain blank flat, and then cut it into three trapezoidal blanks, the length of which should be shorter than the porcelain slab.



9. Apply mud: Clamp the trapezoidal support bar with two wooden bars and apply mud evenly on the edge of the blank.

10. Glue the support strips: Glue the mud-coated support strips horizontally to the initially flat porcelain blank, and glue four pieces evenly (Figure 7).

11. Glue the second porcelain blank: Carefully stick the other porcelain blank to the Supporter bar.

Figure 7 *The porcelain panel is being made*



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12. Back cover: Glue a cut rectangular blank to the bottom as a bottom support.

13. Top sealing: Cut a small rectangular blank and stick it to the top opening.

14. Second drying: Place the finished product on a wooden frame and dry outdoors for 3 to 6 days.

15. Polishing: After drying, use fine sandpaper to smooth the porcelain blank.

16. Moisturising: After the porcelain blank is dry, a brush is needed to rehydrate the surface. Just brush a layer lightly.

17. Underglaze painting: It is painting on the blank. Most people paint blue and white. Artists or painters will try colour glaze (painting with glaze or splashing glaze).

18. Glaze spraying: The finished porcelain blank is then transported to the glaze spraying room for spraying. Generally, it is sprayed with white glaze, but customised models are also sprayed with shadow celadon glaze and pattern glaze.



Figure 8 Drying product on a wooden



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19. Kiln burning: In the industry, this is also called a full kiln. Place the porcelain blank vertically on the boron plate, fill the entire kiln, adjust the firing temperature to 1350 degrees, and continue firing for 30-35 hours (Figure 8).

20. Coming out of the kiln: After turning off the kiln fire, wait until the kiln's temperature naturally cools down, and then slowly remove the porcelain panel.

21. Remove the porcelain panels: Use a hammer to smash the support strips to get two porcelain panels gently. The backs of the porcelain panels will have white traces of the support strips' adhesion. This trace represents a style of antique porcelain (Figure 9).

Figure 9 Fallen porcelain panel



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22. Porcelain panel painting: Antique porcelain painters paint on white porcelain panels, usually imitating the paintings of "Eight Friends of Zhushan." After the painting is completed, they place it in the kiln and bake it at 800-900 degrees for 20 hours. There are also artists who perform secondary painting and kiln firing for artistic effect, using pastels, ancient



colours, and coloured glazes. Professor Ning Gang, the famous Chinese ceramic master, leads Jingdezhen's underglaze-coloured glazed porcelain.

23. Coming out of the kiln: Wait for the kiln's temperature to cool down naturally, and then slowly remove the porcelain plate.

Since then, the production of a fine porcelain panel has been completed. Porcelain panels and paintings interact and merge, forming Laoyatan porcelain panel art. This achievement reflects collective creativity and is formed by several generations' exploration of skills and accumulation of labour.

2. Research on the Artistic Value of Porcelain Panel and Sustainable Development Strategy

2.1 Value of Porcelain Panel Art in Laoyatan Community

Laoyatan community porcelain handicraft is a “skill” to “device” manufacturing process. It is not only a simple creation process; it is more involved in the natural, social, cultural, and art. It is the fusion of material value and spiritual value (Li, 2004), embodied in cultural and artistic value, spiritual value, cultural resources value, and tourism economic value from four aspects.

Regarding cultural and artistic value, the characteristics of culture and art are history, content, and art. It is the product of long-term creation by human beings, which is universally recognized by human beings and can be passed on to future generations. The development of porcelain panel handicrafts has gone through the cultural changes of the five times of Tang, Ming, Qing, Republic of China and New China, and itself has profound historical and cultural value. In porcelain panel painting as a handicraft, craftsmen strive to break through smooth porcelain panels and white colour in porcelain panel art; the artists pursue beauty, from picture composition to line outline, from grain to colour design. Each piece is carefully designed, and porcelain artists, in the Chinese traditional culture artistic innovation, undertake the culture and artistic aesthetic as one of the double missions, forming a unique community culture and art with a strong cultural and artistic value.

Spiritual value: In Jingdezhen, “buy porcelain panel to Laoyatan” is passed down from generation to generation of the Laoyatan community panel craftsmen who stick the glory of the struggle; they wrote the Laoyatan panel art legend, which contains a “Laoyatan spirit.” This spirit is the traditional spirit of the Chinese nation: the arduous struggle, the spirit of great craftsmen.



These inherited porcelain panel handicrafts and valuable experiences of the Laoyatan Community are not only precious intangible cultural heritage but also help to carry forward the local people's cultural confidence and enhance the residents' cultural cohesion. Therefore, the significance of handicrafts today has gone far beyond the object itself and has become the symbol of spiritual value, which is of great significance for promoting the inheritance and development of Chinese traditional culture.

Human resources value: From survival to development, the Laoyatan community, after labour to create formed a set of porcelain panel art ecology, porcelain panel, art, auxiliary, art fusion, provides people with an understanding of porcelain panel art education of living space, dynamic cooperation, the resources formed the Laoyatan living, real porcelain cultural landscape, like a miniature version “Qingming river figure”, constantly attracted people from all over the world to experience here, become the Jingdezhen indispensable cultural resources, promote the different cultural fusion, to create again.

Tourism economic value: Porcelain panel art promotes the development of diversified industries in the community and also improves the life of residents in the Laoyatan Community. The formation of the ecological industry chain of the porcelain panel art complements each other. It has contributed to the protection and regeneration of traditional porcelain panel culture (re-creation). The external inclusiveness of the Laoyatan community has attracted the gathering of art groups and promoted the rapid growth of artists' studios, porcelain board workshops, and shops for various life needs, providing residents with more employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. As the mainstay economy of the community is stable, the multilateral economy begins to develop, the service of each workshop is more humanized, and the research activities gradually increase, which lays a foundation for cultural tourism and has the economic value of tourism.

2.2 Inheritance and Development of the Laoyatan Porcelain Panel Art

The porcelain panel art in the Laoyatan community has lacked effective management for a long time and is faced with the dilemma of inheritance, all factors restricting its development. To avoid the same development model, the community can find a new model suitable for its development.

Fujian Three Lane and Seven Lane Community Museum in China was once a rich cultural heritage and has been an ageing decline community since 2011 under national



policy support; our country's cultural city community adheres to the "regional, traditional, memory, and residents" management mode, to the community itself for the museum hall, make the traditional culture live (Sun, 2018, pp.108-123). The Three Lane and Seven Lane Community Museum have become a hot cultural tourism attraction in China.

The porcelain panel art in the Laoyatan community is alive and vigorous, similar to the three lane and seven lane community museum. In the face of "living" heritage, protection should be dynamic and continuous rather than treating cultural heritage in isolation. The management mode of a community museum differs from a traditional museum's fixed display mode. It pays attention to the active display and participation of cultural forms. Its combination with the porcelain panel art and culture of the Laoyatan community may promote the arrival of a new era of the development of Jingdezhen community culture.

The core concept management mode of the community museum is as follows: the construction of Laoyatan community museum, development of culture studies, cultural tourism, cultural night market, implementation: the museum is the community, the community is the concept of the museum, "people-oriented" as the core, set up porcelain-panel art centre pavilion, live display experience area, porcelain panel art and many more. Comprehensive propaganda to Laoyatan community museum, the Laoyatan community porcelain culture and cultural landscape living, the community museum into the household porcelain workshop, community residents actively participate in community museum construction management, let every Laoyatan porcelain craftsmen have an identity to their skills, to the community has a sense of belonging, encourage more young people to stay in Laoyatan to learn porcelain panel making crafts, and start businesses with this technology to create more social value, cultural and artistic value, eventually promote the sustainable development of porcelain panel art and culture.

Discussion and Conclusions

Based on the investigation and analysis, the following conclusions and research findings are as follows:

1. This study reveals the profound historical background and rich cultural inheritance of the porcelain panel art in The Laoyatan community. The study found that the Laoyatan Community has experienced significant development and change. Since 1988, the community has gradually developed into an important base of porcelain panel art (Guo, 2016). Especially in the second half of the 20th century, with the rise of private porcelain factories and the increase of porcelain panel workshops, the Laoyatan Community gradually formed a perfect



ecological industry chain of porcelain panel art. It shows the technological innovation and the evolution of artistic style from ancient times to the present and reflects the profound heritage and innovative ability of the Laoyatan Community in the aspect of porcelain panel art production.

2. The porcelain panel art and handicraft is a traditional Chinese folk handicraft. It has experienced the trauma of industrial civilization, benefited from the promotion of the market economy, survived the setbacks of major epidemics and natural disasters, and is about to develop in a new era of cultural tourism under the protection of intangible cultural heritage. This study puts forward the Laoyatan community porcelain panel art sustainable development strategy, emphasizes the community museum model and the importance of the Laoyatan porcelain panel art, community museum model can bring the Laoyatan community broader development space, can be good retain Laoyatan residents and young people, in the original space of developing porcelain panel art, promote the development of a new era of Jingdezhen community culture.

Suggestions

This study can further promote the protection, inheritance, and development of porcelain panel art. Now, the following suggestions are:

1. Strengthen the protection and dissemination of cultural heritage: Government and relevant cultural institutions strengthen the protection of the Laoyatan porcelain panel art, formulate corresponding cultural heritage protection policies and provide financial support. At the same time, historical and cultural values can be popular through the media and educational projects to the public and by increasing social awareness and attention to art.

2. Promote technological innovation and process improvement: Encourage and support porcelain panel artists and craftsmen to implement technological innovation and process improvement to meet the needs of the modern market. At the same time, technical seminars and process training courses are suggested to explore the combination of modern design concepts and traditional techniques while preserving traditional skills.

3. Develop community cultural tourism and publicity and exchange: Use the porcelain panel art resources of the Laoyatan community to develop cultural tourism projects, such as porcelain panel art workshops, exhibitions, and interactive experience activities. Attract tourists to participate in and experience the porcelain panel production process, creating more employment and exhibition opportunities for artists and craftsmen.



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