

Research on the Inheritance, Innovation and Development of Wenzhou Intangible Cultural Heritage in Colleges and Universities

-- Taking Ou Kiln as an Example

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Abstract: Wenzhou, formerly known as Ou or Dong'ou, has been prosperous in handicraft industry since ancient times with various types, exquisite techniques and numerous practitioners. It has long been renowned as the "Hometown of Hundred Craftsmen". Wenzhou has 4 items included in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List of Humanity, 35 national-level intangible cultural heritage items, 159 provincial-level items, and 779 municipal-level items, ranking among the top prefecture-level cities in China. With the development of society, more and more intangible cultural heritage inheritance projects have gradually disappeared from people's daily lives, and many projects are even facing the embarrassing situation of lacking successors. Taking the inheritance and development of Ou Kiln in colleges and universities as an example, this paper aims to retrieve the lost Ou Kiln techniques through a series of studies, inject new vitality into the rekindled kiln fire, and enable the ancient Ou Kiln to bloom new flowers in the contemporary cultural soil.

Keywords: Ou Kiln; Hundred Craftsmen; Inheritance; Innovation.

1. Introduction

"Hundred Craftsmen" emerged when handicrafts were separated from agriculture during the second major division of human society. Throughout the long history of development, Hundred Craftsmen have always been the representatives of advanced productive forces and the main force driving social progress. The term "Hundred Craftsmen" first appeared on the bronze vessel Yi Gui in the Western Zhou Dynasty and has been used since the Spring and Autumn Period as a general term for handicraftsmen. "The Artificers' Record" records that "The wise create things, and the skillful describe, inherit and preserve them. People call them craftsmen. All the works of Hundred Craftsmen are the creations of sages." [1]

Wenzhou has been prosperous in handicraft industry since ancient times with various types, exquisite techniques and numerous practitioners, thus enjoying the reputation of "Hometown of Hundred Craftsmen". "Wenzhou Prefecture Annals of Hongzhi Reign" records that "Wenzhou is located in muddy and saline-alkali areas with thin and barren land, making life difficult. However, the people are diligent and use their strength to overcome difficulties. Therefore, although the land is not suitable for mulberry cultivation, there are many textile workers; although it is not suitable for millet and wheat, there is sufficient japonica rice; although it is not suitable for lacquer production, there are complete utensils." [] The lack of land and resources did not affect the development of Wenzhou's handicraft industry. Wenzhou has 4 items included in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List of Humanity, 35 national-level intangible cultural heritage items, 159 provincial-level items, and 779 municipal-level items, which is rare in the country in terms of quantity. Historically, Ou Kiln, lacquerware, painted sculptures, embroideries, brick carvings, wood carvings, etc. in Wenzhou were all famous and prosperous. [2]

Behind each intangible cultural heritage technique is the perseverance and inheritance of Wenzhou craftsmen. Currently, Wenzhou has 37 national-level intangible cultural heritage inheritors, 230 provincial-level inheritors, more than 933 county-level and municipal-level inheritors, 14 representative inheritance groups, and 20 representative inheritance collectives. However, with the development of human civilization, the progress of production technology, the increasingly refined social division of labor, and the great improvement of productivity, more and more intangible cultural heritage inheritance projects have gradually faded out of people's daily lives, and many projects are even facing the embarrassing situation of lacking successors. [3]

"Half of the history of ceramics lies in Zhejiang." Zhejiang is the hometown of porcelain. The celadon produced in Wenzhou is called Ou Kiln, which is an important intangible cultural heritage in Wenzhou. A thousand years ago, Ou Kiln celadon, together with Yue Kiln celadon and Longquan Kiln celadon, were exported overseas as commodities, witnessing the prosperity of Wenzhou in the Song and Yuan Dynasties, and Chinese culture was spread to all parts of the world, forming the East Asian cultural circle centered on China. Most of the research on ceramic inheritance education in Zhejiang focuses on Yue Kiln and Longquan Kiln, while Ou Kiln has received little attention. [4] Since the Nineteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China, under the policy of strengthening the country through culture, the porcelain-making technique of Ou Kiln, as a provincial-level intangible cultural heritage project, has gradually revived in Wenzhou and gradually entered colleges and universities. Ou Kiln has been highly praised by literati and officials since ancient times due to its unique shape and elegant glaze color. It is also one of the most important commodities exported by Wenzhou, a millennium commercial port, carrying the important mission of Wenzhou culture's external output and reflecting the spirit of Wenzhou people who "travel thousands

of miles, try every means, persuade with countless words, and endure countless hardships". Ou Kiln is an important carrier of Wenzhou's material and intangible culture, and has extremely high value for the study of Wenzhou's cultural and economic development. [5]

2. The Historical Evolution and Achievements of Ou Kiln

Ou Kiln, also known as Dong'ou Kiln, generally refers to the southern Zhejiang region, centered around ancient Wenzhou and mainly distributed in the Oujiang River Basin. It originated in the Neolithic Age, matured in the middle and late Eastern Han Dynasty, widely used the brown color decoration technique in the Jin Dynasty, and gradually replaced by Longquan-style porcelain in the middle and late Southern Song Dynasty. [] So far, more than 200 kiln sites have been discovered, making it one of the larger porcelain kiln systems in ancient China.

Tracing back to history, as early as the Neolithic Age, Ou people's ancestors had lived in groups here and fired pottery. In the Xia and Shang Dynasties, pottery craftsmen began to fire stamped hard pottery and black pottery. From the Shang and Zhou Dynasties to the Western Han Dynasty, with the development of social economy and technological progress, a large number of stamped hard pottery and primitive celadon were fired. In the middle and late Eastern Han Dynasty, mature celadon was successfully created, making it one of the important birthplaces of porcelain in China. In the Eastern Jin Dynasty, the pale celadon and brown color technique of Ou Kiln were both outstanding and famous all over the world, which was the first peak period of its development. The late Tang Dynasty and the Five Dynasties were the second peak period of its development. While continuing and innovating the glaze color of pale celadon and the brown color decoration technique, Ou Kiln used porcelain saggars and glaze sealing techniques, and some of its fine products could be comparable to the famous "Mise porcelain" wares. In the Northern Song Dynasty, with the development of the maritime ceramic trade, Ou Kiln ceramic techniques boldly absorbed foreign styles, innovated in vessel shapes, and made pattern and text innovations in the brown color technique. A large number of Ou Kiln celadon products were exported overseas and enjoyed a high reputation at home and abroad, which was the third peak period of its development. After the Southern Song Dynasty, with the prosperity of Longquan Kiln and other kilns, Ou Kiln gradually declined.

3. Research and Literature Records of Ou Kiln by Ancients

The porcelain produced in Ou area has been recorded in ancient literature. In "Chuan Fu" by Du Yu in the Western Jin Dynasty, it was written that "The utensils are carefully selected and come from Dong'ou", which is the earliest literature record of Ou Kiln, making it the earliest famous kiln with literature reference. Pan Yue wrote in "Sheng Fu" that "Open the yellow bud to offer sweetness, pour pale celadon to drink wine", revealing that the light blue porcelain produced by Ou Kiln is pale celadon. In "Jingdezhen Tao Lu" Volume 7, "Ancient Kiln Examination", the entry "Dong'ou Tao" by Lan Pu in the Qing Dynasty wrote that "Ou is Yue. It used to belong to Fujian and is now Wenzhou Prefecture, Zhejiang Province. It has been making pottery since the Jin Dynasty, and its porcelain is blue, which was highly regarded

at that time. What Du Yu said in 'Chuan Fu' that 'The utensils are carefully selected and come from Dong'ou' refers to this..." []. Zhu Yan in the Qing Dynasty said in "Tao Shuo" that "What Du Yu said in 'Chuan Fu' that 'The utensils are carefully selected' comes from Dong'ou", "Later, 'Cuifeng Tianqing' originated from here", "It was famous earlier than Yuezhou Kiln". Judging from the records in literature of various periods, Ou Kiln occupies an important historical position in China's ceramic history.

In modern times, the gentry in Wenzhou had many collections and researches on Ou Kiln. During the Republic of China period, in the poem "Jin Yixi Ancient Pottery Song" in "Tianlai Pavilion Poetry Collection" by Shen Fengqiang, a poet from Ruian, there were lines such as "Carefully read the raised patterns after scraping off the moss, and happily see the words of the fourth year of Yixi", "Determine the year as the Jin Dynasty ware, and shout with joy as if it were a gift from heaven", "Chicken-shaped vessels and phoenix-shaped zuns are rare in the world, and whose funerary objects are the golden bowls and jade fish", "There are six or seven wine vessels on the table, and the patterns are all like cinnabar", recording the discovery of the ceramic (chicken-head pot) of the fourth year of Yixi in the Eastern Jin Dynasty (408 AD) on Jiyun Mountain in Ruian. He also wrote "Begging Li Shumei and Shu Xian to Paint Tongxuan Pottery Appreciation Picture", invited painter Li Bingguang to paint "Tongxuan Pottery Appreciation Picture" for him, and wrote the poem "Self-inscription of Tongxuan Pottery Appreciation Picture", in which there were lines such as "I love bricks and pottery all my life", "The Ou Kiln of Yixi came from the northern suburbs, and I accidentally found it on Jiyun Mountain".

Since the 1930s, domestic archaeologists and cultural relics experts have successively launched investigations, researches, and writings on Ou Kiln, attracting the attention of the ceramic field.

In the summer of 1937, Mr. Chen Wanli, known as the "Father of Chinese Ceramic Archaeology", came to Wenzhou to conduct on-the-spot investigations of the Xishan Kiln Site in Wenzhou, wrote the report "Recalling the Ancient Kiln Foundations Discovered in Wuxing, Jinhua, and Yongjia", and included this article in the book "Porcelain and Zhejiang". In 1954, accompanied by Fang Jiekan and Gu Se (Chen Guozhen), Chen Wanli came to Wenzhou again to investigate the kiln sites, successively investigated many Ou Kiln kiln sites such as Xishan, Tantou, Puyang, Nan'ao, Tantou, Suoli Qianshan, and Xingguoling, wrote the investigation report "Zhejiang Wenzhou Xishan Kiln and Other Ancient Kilns", and included this article in the paper "Recent Investigations of Ancient Kiln Sites Seen". Later, he reported the situation of Ou Kiln kiln sites to the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, and then Zhu Boqian also came to Wenzhou to investigate the Xishan Kiln Site. [] On October 27, 1946, Mr. Xia Nai, the founder of modern Chinese archaeology, together with Zhang Jingfei, Zhou Bangji, Ye Changyin, and others, jointly investigated the Xishan Kiln Site. During his stay in Wenzhou, Mr. Xia Nai also investigated Ou Kiln kiln sites many times and visited many collectors in Wenzhou at that time, recording all his observations and gains in his diary.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Fang Jiekan, the first curator of Wenzhou Museum and a seal cutter, together with archaeological teams, cultural relics experts, and scholars, launched in-depth investigations and researches on Ou Kiln, and wrote many related papers and investigation reports, providing valuable materials and

information for later researchers. He visited Ou Kiln kiln sites many times with famous archaeologists such as Xia Nai and Chen Wanli, jointly carried out archaeological excavations of Ou Kiln kiln sites with the provincial archaeological team, collected and protected the ancient Ou Kiln ceramics scattered in the hands of farmers, and also discussed Ou Kiln with well-known collectors in Wenzhou such as Shan Bin and Xie Leiming, and studied the Ou Kiln they collected. He successively wrote papers and investigation reports on Ou Kiln such as "Several Questions about Jin Dynasty Pale Celadon", "Research on Jin Dynasty Dong'ou Kiln Pale Celadon", and "Jin Dynasty Dong'ou Kiln Celadon System".

From the 1930s to the 1950s, Ou Kiln received a great deal of attention from all sectors of society, and many archaeologists, cultural relics experts, and scholars launched a series of investigations, samplings, and researches on Ou Kiln, achieving corresponding results and accumulating precious materials for the inheritance, innovation, and research of Ou Kiln later.

Colleges and universities should play an important role in the education, inheritance, innovation, and protection of intangible cultural heritage. As institutions of scientific research and academia, colleges and universities have strong research and innovation capabilities. Through in-depth research on intangible cultural heritage projects, they can tap their internal potential and value, propose innovative educational inheritance methods, and promote the transformation and development of intangible cultural heritage projects. As educational institutions, colleges and universities can promote the standardization of intangible cultural heritage inheritance education through the construction of relevant courses and majors, help students systematically master the relevant knowledge and skills of intangible cultural heritage projects, and cultivate professional talents. Intangible cultural heritage is an important part of traditional Chinese culture. Through the systematic study of intangible cultural heritage culture, students can deeply understand the connotation of traditional culture, improve their practical abilities, and further enhance their cultural confidence. With the help of colleges and universities, intangible cultural heritage projects can obtain the soil for continuous inheritance and development, which not only expands their popularity and mass base among young people but also completes the standardization of inheritance and innovation of intangible cultural heritage projects through the scientific research and educational functions of colleges and universities, realizing unified teaching syllabi, curriculum settings, and evaluation standards, ensuring the standardization and consistency in the inheritance process, and enabling Wenzhou's intangible cultural heritage projects to show new styles in the new era.

In recent years, Ou Kiln has achieved many achievements in inheritance, innovation, and development, ranking ahead of other intangible cultural heritage projects in Wenzhou. It has made breakthroughs in the application of intangible cultural heritage projects, the number of intangible cultural heritage inheritors, the scale of the industry, and product development. The reason is closely related to the cooperation between Ou Kiln and various colleges and universities, which enables intangible cultural heritage inheritors to teach in colleges and universities, making the enthusiasts and practitioners of Ou Kiln younger.

4. Case Practice and Summary

This article summarizes and studies the experience of Ou Kiln College of Zhejiang Dongfang Vocational and Technical College in the inheritance and innovation of Ou Kiln over the years, and explores feasible and effective methods for the inheritance and development of Wenzhou's intangible cultural heritage projects.

4.1. Establishment of Ou Kiln College, Traditional Intangible Heritage Taking Root in Universities

Ou Kiln College was jointly founded by Zhejiang Dongfang Vocational and Technical College and Wenzhou Ou Kiln Society in June 2016. It is the only comprehensive cultural and creative college in China that integrates academic research, collection and protection, discipline construction, professional talent cultivation, and college students' entrepreneurship and innovation of Ou Kiln. It is a specific practice of deeply promoting modern industry-university-research cooperation, building characteristic discipline construction, and constructing regional characteristic cultural brands.

The college offers more than ten professional courses such as "Ou and Ou Culture", "Inheritance and Development of Ou Kiln Ancient Ceramics", and "Ou Kiln Culture and Inheritance". The courses are divided into three categories:

Practical Courses:** Systematically teach students ceramic skills such as throwing, coiling, trimming, pinching, and glazing, enabling students to master the production process of Ou Kiln during their school years.

Theoretical Courses:** Arrange courses such as art history, ceramic history, and Wenzhou history to lay a solid theoretical foundation for students while making.

Appreciation Courses:** Arrange the appreciation of ancient ceramics from various kilns, allowing students to have a zero-distance contact with ancient ceramics, deeply analyze their structures, patterns, and shapes, and fully understand the aesthetics of ancient ceramics. The "Ou and Ou Culture" forum is held, and experts and scholars from all walks of life are regularly invited to give lectures. Over the years, more than 100 lectures have been continuously held. The construction of professional courses and the holding of lectures have ensured the standardization and consistency in the inheritance process, increased students' awareness and interest in learning about Ou Kiln, and played a crucial role in promoting the inheritance and innovative development of Ou Kiln, this intangible cultural heritage project.

The college has cooperated with Wenzhou Ou Kiln Society, archaeological institutes, museums and other departments to hold a number of theme salons and forums such as "2018 Ou Kiln Culture Inheritance and Development Forum", "2023 Wenzhou Arts and Crafts (Ou Kiln) Inheritance and Development Seminar" and "Theme Forum on the Protection, Inheritance and Educational Function of Ancient Ceramics (Ou Kiln)", and has exchanged and discussed the historical culture, academic research, exhibition protection, educational inheritance and industrial development of Ou Kiln ancient ceramics, and jointly discussed the inheritance and innovation development plan of Ou Kiln.

In 2024, the college successfully applied for the "Arts and Crafts Design" major and became the only higher vocational college in southern Zhejiang approved to set up this major. With the teaching development orientation of cultivating

"craftsmanship compound talents", the major emphasizes the inheritance of culture, the contemporaneity of design, the openness of teaching and the practicality of creation, and cultivates talents with regional characteristic arts and crafts cultural knowledge and professional skills. The application for the "Arts and Crafts Design" major is another major breakthrough in the cultivation of professional talents in Ou Kiln, opening up a new path for the academic qualification improvement and employment of young practitioners.

The establishment of Ou Kiln College and the construction of professional courses have enabled the traditional intangible heritage project of Ou Kiln to enter the university, providing a professional university platform for the inheritance and innovation of Ou Kiln. The successful application of the "Arts and Crafts Design" major has created a solid foundation for the academic qualification improvement and systematic professional knowledge learning and training of practitioners.

4.2. Establishment of Ou Kiln Museum

In 2016, Ou Kiln College founded the Ou Kiln Specimen Museum. In 2019, it began to prepare for the construction of the Ou Kiln Museum on the basis of the specimen museum and opened on October 30, 2020. The Ou Kiln Museum is the only specialized museum in China with the theme of collection, research and exhibition of Ou Kiln ancient ceramics. It is a university museum with distinct regional characteristics, strong academic research ability and rich collections. At the same time, the museum has established a professional volunteer explanation team and is open to the public for free. Since its opening, it has attracted more than 100,000 people from provincial and municipal departments, major museums across the country, archaeological institutes, universities and cultural enthusiasts from all walks of life to visit. The establishment of the Ou Kiln Museum has demonstrated the aesthetics of Ou Kiln ancient ceramics and greatly promoted the spread and popularization of Ou Kiln culture. In particular, it has enabled Ou Kiln practitioners, enthusiasts and students to understand the cultural connotation of Ou Kiln from the source, and provided the material and mass foundation for the inheritance, innovation and development of Ou Kiln, this intangible cultural heritage project.

4.3. Inheriting Culture and Holding Various Exhibitions

Since 2016, the college has cooperated with Wenzhou Ou Kiln Society, major museums and archaeological institutes to actively hold exhibitions of Ou Kiln ancient ceramics. The "Ou Ya Yu Cang", "Appointment of Utensils and Tao", "Initial Condensation of Colored Smoke", "Jade-like Clarity and Radiance" and "All Things Are Tao" and other Ou Kiln theme exhibitions planned and undertaken by the college have toured major museums across the country. They have fully demonstrated the aesthetic phenomena and ancient craftsmanship spirit of Ou Kiln ancient ceramics, allowing Ou Kiln practitioners and enthusiasts to observe closely and providing materials for their creation and product research and development. At the same time, it has spread Ou Kiln across the country, making this Wenzhou native celadon kiln go out of Wenzhou and into the whole country.

The college has also cooperated with Wenzhou Municipal Bureau of Culture, Radio, Television and Tourism, Wenzhou Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Center and other relevant departments to hold a series of exhibitions such as

"Shangshang and Qing", "Oriental Utensils' Charm and Glittering Colors" and "Art and Science" that combine new Ou Kiln with contemporary aesthetics and modern ceramics art. This has enabled Ou Kiln not only to stay in the museum but also to enter the public and integrate into daily life.

4.4. Holding Various Competitions

Since 2017, Ou Kiln College has held the "Ou Kiln Culture Festival" with different themes in December every year. Students create works according to the theme of the year and the first, second and third prizes are selected. So far, more than 1,000 students have participated and more than 200 award-winning works have been produced and displayed in different areas of the school. The holding of the culture festival has enabled students to fully participate and experience the charm of Ou Kiln, which is helpful for the promotion of Ou Kiln among students.

Since 2020, Ou Kiln College has jointly held the "First Ceramic Art Vocational Skill Competition", the first and second "Dong'ou Cup Ou Kiln Porcelain Creation Works Competition" and other competitions with Wenzhou Municipal Bureau of Culture, Radio, Television and Tourism, Wenzhou Intangible Cultural Heritage Center and Zhejiang Ceramic Industry Association and other relevant departments. These competitions have attracted practitioners from all over the country to participate. While promoting Ou Kiln, they have also enabled local Ou Kiln practitioners in Wenzhou to compete with their peers on the same stage, broadened their horizons and enabled Ou Kiln practitioners to collide with the academic school and other kiln system practitioners to produce different sparks.

5. Summary

As the continuation of traditional culture, intangible cultural heritage has retained China's long history and cultural memory through the inheritance of skills and the dissemination of knowledge. It is of great significance for the development and progress of society and enables people to understand and experience the charm of traditional culture. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that "Historical and cultural heritage not only vividly tells the past, but also deeply affects the present and the future; it not only belongs to us, but also to future generations. Protecting and inheriting historical and cultural heritage is responsible for history and the people." As the centralized intersection of education, science and technology and talents, universities are an important position for cultural inheritance and innovative development. They are committed to excavating and inheriting excellent traditional Chinese culture and carrying out cultural innovation in combination with the characteristics of the times to promote the prosperity and development of Chinese culture. Through various forms such as academic research, curriculum setting and cultural activities, universities integrate excellent traditional culture into the education system, guide students to understand and identify with Chinese culture and enhance their cultural confidence. There is a close and complex relationship between intangible cultural heritage and universities, and the two are complementary.

From the years of school-running experience of Ou Kiln College, it can be found that the inheritance and innovative development of an intangible cultural heritage project needs to carry out close cooperation with universities. First, establish a secondary college of the intangible cultural

heritage project, apply for relevant majors, offer courses, popularize relevant knowledge and improve students' practical ability to popularize the intangible cultural heritage project among the youth group; second, create a theme museum of the intangible cultural heritage project to show the aesthetics of the intangible cultural heritage and enable people to understand its cultural connotation from the source; finally, cooperate with museums, intangible cultural heritage centers, archaeological institutes and industry associations to hold corresponding exhibitions and competitions to let the intangible cultural heritage project go out of the university and Wenzhou and promote the development of Wenzhou intangible cultural heritage projects on a national scale.

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