

On the Living Inheritance of the Ink Color Technique in Jingdezhen in the Post-heritage-application Period

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Abstract: The ink color technique in Jingdezhen is one of the important carriers and expression forms of Chinese ceramic culture. As a national intangible cultural heritage, the living inheritance and development of this technique in the “post-heritage-application period”. On the basis of the protection principle, we will explore the feasibility and promotion strategies of various forms of living inheritance, so as to understand the status quo of the ink color technique and put forward constructive ideas for the development of the ink color technique in the “post-heritage-application” period, and explore a new way of inheriting this intangible cultural heritage.

Keywords: Post-heritage-application Period, The Ink Color technique, Living Inheritance.

1. Introduction

According to the *Selected Content of the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of World Culture*, “Intangible cultural heritages are not only the precious wealth of human culture, but also an important force maintaining the diversity and vitality of human civilization, and they are related to their holders' sense of identity, history, local knowledge and institutional continuity.” As the “cornerstone” of national culture, intangible cultural heritages are the blood of national spirit and the cultural gene forming national self-identity. They contain the unique cultural thinking and spiritual quality of the Chinese nation, embody the labouring people's wisdom of life in their conformity with nature, diligence and optimism, and their unique aesthetic ideal, which perpetuates the cultural history and national spirit of this country. Only when the roots of intangible cultural heritages are inherited and developed in a living manner can future generations truly enjoy the national identity and pride brought by these precious cultural heritages.

With the development of economic globalization and the changes in the mode of cultural transmission, China's cultural ecology has undergone tremendous changes. Listing the traditional ink color technique in Jingdezhen, the capital of ceramics, does not only reflect the respect and inheritance of the historical and cultural tradition of Jingdezhen, but also helps to maintain the diversity and overall vitality of the Chinese culture. At the same time, importance should be attached to how an ecological environment can be created for the sustainable development of the ink color technique in Jingdezhen in the “post-heritage-application period”, and its original characteristics and cultural space needs to be effectively protected, all of which are of an important practical significance to the living inheritance of the ink color technique.

2. The “Post-heritage-application Period” and the Ink Color Technique in Jingdezhen

The concept of the “post-heritage-application period” was first proposed by Professor Gao Xiaokang, Deputy Director

of China Intangible Cultural Heritage Research Center and professor of Intangible Cultural Heritage Science at Sun Yat-sen University. It is marked by a shift from the blind pursuit of the heritage list application to a more rigorous and meticulous assessment of its scientificity and validity. In July 2014, the State Council published the catalogue of the fourth batch of national intangible cultural heritages. This means that the application of various kinds of intangible cultural heritages in China is about to complete, and that the protection of intangible cultural heritages is entering a new historical period, namely the “post-heritage-application period”. The “post-heritage-application period” is not a time scale, but a stage cognition of the series of China's work on intangible cultural heritages, as well as the reflection and review of the previous work. The “post-heritage-application period” does not mean ending the census and new application of intangible cultural heritages. Instead, it emphasizes more reasonable and scientific protection as well as living and orderly continuation and inheritance of intangible cultural heritages. Therefore, in the context of the social background of the “post-heritage-application period”, this paper investigates the protection and inheritance of the ink color technique in Jingdezhen as a precious intangible cultural heritage, and proposes a new approach.

The explanation of ink color in the dictionary is “one of the color painting decoration methods of ceramics”. It refers to a kind of porcelain painting technique that uses thick or bright black as the main colorant to paint on ceramics, thus presenting a light-black ink painting effect. This technique was derived from the famille-rose technique. It emerged during the reign of Emperor Kangxi. Its dark black color material is either thick or light, complementing with the clear white glaze. Its technique of expression and artistic conception are particularly similar to traditional Chinese ink painting, so it is known as “color ink painting”. During the reign of Emperor Qianlong, under the supervision of Tang Ying, the Ceramic Supervisor, a lot of masterpieces and fine works with the ink color technique were made. Tang Ying himself was proficient in painting and calligraphy, and he personally made ink color ceramics and painted on them. These works were decorated with poems and calligraphy, which enriched the forms of ink color and enhanced the

artistic realm and taste of ink color. After that, the ink color technique was inherited and carried forward. During the reign of Emperor Yongzheng, the ink color technique emphasized an exquisite and delicate style, with more breakthrough forms of expression and richer themes. Compared with the dazzling enamel and famille rose that prevailed in the same period, the ink color was particularly quiet and elegant. It is with a strong literati charm and an artistic appeal, showing an elegant and simple, green and quiet aesthetic feeling.

3. Strategies for the Living Inheritance of the Ink Color Technique in Jingdezhen in The “Post-heritage-application Period”

Intangible cultural heritages are the wisdom and crystallization left by ancestors to their descendants. They reflect the mutual influence and penetration of man and society, man and nature, and embody the intersection and integration of culture and nature in a real sense in the continuous development and innovation. If intangible cultural heritages are compared to "living fish", cultural ecology is the "water" allowing fish to grow healthily. With the advent of the information age, the rapid changes of society and the great development of culture, the inheritance of ink color technology is faced with many opportunities and challenges. It will be the key to its sustainable and healthy development to explore and find a path of living inheritance.

3.1. Conforming to the development trend of the “Internet+” era: the new model of “Internet + the ink color technique”

Nowadays, informatization is progressing rapidly. Making use of Internet technologies and conforming to the development trend of the times can help to be closer to the young generations, which is conducive to expanding the growth space of intangible cultural heritages, so as to truly realize their value. In the context of the Internet, “Wechat pushing”, “video courses”, “online live streaming”, “official accounts in social media” and “applications on mobile terminals” are new ways and models of the living inheritance of the ink color technique. These models can bring the ink color technique from small workshops to public inheritance; in the mean time, relevant education departments can be encouraged to develop corresponding online courses according to the age and basis of the audience for online live teaching, so as to make use of the inheritance form of “Internet + the ink color technique” and create public Wechat platforms with the theme of the ink color technique, attract more attention through promotion in the Internet, and attract a wider audience to this ceramic technique and the inheritance of its culture, thus realizing the healthy and interactive development of the Internet and physical exhibition; on this basis, digital information technologies can also be made use of to provide technical support for the living inheritance of the ink color technique. Through new types of information technology platforms, we can imitate and build a comprehensive digital virtual protection and inheritance framework based on computers. Through electronic equipment, its history and related images and information can be searched and consulted, the advantage of Internet technologies can also be used to carry out the innovative design of the ink color technique. For example, virtual ink color technique museums can be set up, including the archives

of inheritors, the production process of the ink color technique, the folk lifestyle and other information. The essence of technologies is to use the Internet and modern digital information technologies to make the ink color technique become in line with the times, so that the protection of this intangible cultural heritage is not limited to few experts and local audience, but involves more people, who learn about and spread these precious cultural heritages, thus popularizing knowledge, culture and technologies.

3.2. Creating a cultural atmosphere conducive to the living inheritance of the ink color technique: cultural consciousness

In the 1990s, Mr. Fei Xiaotong, a Chinese sociologist, proposed the concept of "cultural consciousness", which means that people living in a certain historical and cultural circle have self-knowledge of its culture and have a full understanding of its development and future. The concept of cultural consciousness put forward by Mr. Fei Xiaotong has a profound guiding significance for the protection of intangible cultural heritages today. Through cultural consciousness, the public can correctly understand their own culture, understand diverse cultures, learn from one another and thus build a good cultural atmosphere. Cultural consciousness plays a very important role in creating a cultural atmosphere conducive to the living inheritance of the ink color technique. It can stimulate the spirit of conscious participation of the masses and make them integrate these heritages into contemporary life and actively accept this culture. The purpose of intangible cultural heritage education is to protect the unique traditional culture recognized by various groups, rather than the popularization of mass culture in the ordinary sense. Therefore, it is particularly important to cultivate the sense of identity and cultural subject consciousness of cultural groups related to the ink color technique. To erase the diversity of intangible cultural heritages is to ignore the deep connotation of intangible cultural heritages at the cultural level, which will turn intangible cultural heritages into hollow cultures without a specific inheritance. Moreover, the inheritance of the ink color technique must arouse the public's recognition and value of their own culture of the ink color technique, and further arouse the public's awareness of protection. The inheriting subject and the public's cultural consciousness play a key role in the creation of a good cultural atmosphere. Only when the public truly loves ceramic culture, likes the ink color technique, is familiar with and understands its origin, cultural value, development trend, and is willing to actively promote its development can they, through their personal words, deeds and actions, consciously pass down the ink color technique the culture it contains, thus truly keeping the soul and lifeline of the culture of the ink color technique.

3.3. Constructing diversified talent training models: the protection and cultivation of inheritors

After entering the “post-heritage-application period”, the protection of intangible cultural heritages cannot only stay in the protection model based on physical display. Nowadays, it is common to build museums and cultural forums, but we should avoid the phenomenon of protection for the sake of protection or pure materialism. Currently, there are some misunderstandings in the protection of intangible cultural heritages. We've been protecting culture instead of protecting

“human culture”. The protection method of “intangible cultural heritage protection as the core” ignores the key role of “human” and thus becomes the protection of intangible cultural heritages “without human presence”. If we aim at cultivating people with culture, the problem of cultural subject and the initiative of inheritors will be solved easily.

The disappearance of many traditional techniques is not only because they have lost the soil they are rooted in due to the change of times, but also because the inheritors have given up these traditional techniques in the face of difficulties in life. We ought to advocate that the inheritors are the core of the inheritance of intangible cultural heritages. Living inheritance requires the protection and cultivation of inheritors to avoid the phenomenon of having no inheritors. In the inheritance and development of the ink color technique, older generations of inheritors select young people in a planned way to pass on the essence of the technique they mastered to younger generations, so that the younger generations can inherit and carry forward and pass on the inheritance, and carry out recreation and reproduction; at the same time, this specific intangible cultural heritage can be combined with local universities, such as Jingdezhen Ceramic University and Jiangxi Ceramic Arts and Crafts Vocational and Technical College, etc. located in Jingdezhen. In this way, a local education model can be constructed, so as to comprehensively cultivate the required talents of ink and color technique in an order-placing manner, and bring the inheritance and protection of the ink color technique into the modern education system of universities, thus creating an organic connection between the protection of intangible cultural heritages, regional economy and cultural development and establishing a living inheritance mechanism integrating schools, field and society. The cooperation with local colleges and universities can expand the ideas and paths for the inheritance of the ink color technique culture in such aspects as inheritance methods, inheritance sites and inheritance objects, and break through the limitations of “father-son inheritance” or “master-apprentice inheritance” in the past. The living inheritance of the ink color technique as an intangible cultural heritage requires more social forces and individual participation. In particular, the cooperation and exchange in the field of art and teaching between the teachers with certain artistic theory accomplishment in higher education institutions and the inheritors of the folk ink color technique can combine the Chinese and Western art theories and the tradition of the ink color technique, thus broadening and extending its creative ideas and forms.

4. Conclusion

Ceramic is a unique expression of the Chinese civilization,

and ink color porcelain is an important embodiment of the tangible inheritance of the entire ceramic culture. The ink color technique is a very precious cultural resource. Although it has been included in the list of national intangible cultural heritages, it has not attracted effective attention in the environment of Jingdezhen, and it is even on the verge of being lost. This paper starts from the historical context of the “post-heritage-application period”, and aims to open up a new path for the protection of the authenticity, integrity and viability of the ink color technique and other intangible cultural heritages. At the same time, this paper hopes to provide a stable cultural field for the inheritance and development of the ink color technique through various effective ways, so that the ink color technique can be preserved and inherited in a living manner. The ultimate expectation of this paper is to make ink-color porcelain and related techniques better inherited and developed, so that they can attract more people's attention, truly promote the living inheritance of the ink color technique and promote the development of Chinese ceramic culture.

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