

Research on the Communication Methods of Chinese Ceramic Stories

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Abstract: Ceramics, as a treasure of traditional Chinese culture, bear a history and civilization that span thousands of years. Renowned worldwide for their exquisite craftsmanship, unique artistic charm, and profound cultural significance, Chinese ceramics hold a special place in global cultural heritage. The dissemination of the stories behind Chinese ceramics not only aids in preserving and promoting the nation's cultural heritage but also enhances cultural soft power and fosters cross-cultural exchange and collaboration. By studying the methods of disseminating Chinese ceramic stories, this essay aims to facilitate a deeper understanding of the characteristics of Chinese ceramics and a profounder illustration of different communication channels of Chinese ceramic stories, and to explore innovative strategies to support the preservation and development of ceramic culture. It is hoped that this research will provide valuable insights into the preservation and development of ceramic culture, allowing the stories of Chinese ceramics to shine even more brightly in the modern era.

Keywords: Ceramics, Ceramic Stories, Dissemination, Communication Methods

1. Introduction

Ceramics refer to various objects made by crushing, molding, and firing clay as the primary raw material, combined with other natural minerals. Porcelain originated in China, with primitive celadon dating back more than 3,000 years to the Shang Dynasty. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Chinese ceramic art reached its pinnacle. Ceramics are considered a national essence in China, and it was through ceramics that people abroad first came to know China; the English word for the country China is also “china”, meaning ceramics.

Pottery is generally fired at temperatures between 780°–1080°C. It appears in light (earthy) yellow, unglazed, bears a loose texture with many pores, and is highly absorbent. It is mainly used for utensils, architectural sanitation, and decorative items.

Porcelain, on the other hand, is typically fired at temperatures between 1280°–1380°C. It is mostly white, semi-transparent, with a fine porcelain texture, a smooth glazed surface, high density, and non-absorbent. It is primarily used for garden utensils, tea sets, display porcelain, and some industrial ceramics. In ancient times, ceramics were generally used in households and palaces, but later they became more for decorative and ornamental purposes, with some even becoming art masterpieces [1, 2].

The most famous ceramics in China come from Jingdezhen. Jingdezhen ceramics originated during the Eastern Han Dynasty and, after development through the Wei, Jin, Southern, and Northern Dynasties, reached their peak during the Tang and Song Dynasties. They continued through the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties but suffered a decline during the Republic of China period. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the government placed importance on the development of Jingdezhen ceramics, leading to their gradual revival. Over the course of a century, Jingdezhen became known as the “Porcelain Capital”. Jingdezhen ceramics are diverse; blue and white porcelain, rice-patterned porcelain, famille rose porcelain, and color-glazed porcelain are collectively known as the four famous porcelains. Jingdezhen ceramics are also renowned for being “as white as jade, as bright as a mirror, as thin as paper, and with a sound as clear as a bell.” [3-5]

2. Communication of Chinese Stories

2.1 *The Historical Context of Chinese Story Dissemination*

China has a long and profound history, with a culture as vibrant and colorful as a kaleidoscope. The ways in which stories are transmitted are particularly diverse and distinctive, embodying unique spiritual qualities that, despite changing eras, remain consistent in their essence. Looking back to ancient times, the wise people of China passed down moving and enlightening stories through oral tradition, such as the tragic tale of *Meng Jiangnu's Bitter Weeping* and the poignant love story of *The Butterfly Lovers*. Moving into the modern era, talented Chinese people employed new media forms like film, television, and radio, with their distinctive audiovisual effects and broad reach, to make stories resonate widely and deeply with audiences, as seen in the stirring theme song of *Children of Troubled Times*. In contemporary times, innovation-driven Chinese people are using online platforms, social media, and short videos to bring ancient folk tales and modern creative stories onto the historical stage, such as the dreamlike tale of *Lady in the Moon* and the science-fiction-like achievements in manned space exploration. As time passes and eras shift, the methods of dissemination continue to evolve, but the unique spiritual values are embedded in traditional Chinese culture—loyalty, filial piety, compassion, courage, and innovation—remain constant, and passed down from generation to generation.

2.2 *Characteristics and Significance of Chinese Story Dissemination*

The widespread dissemination of Chinese stories not only highlights their profound historical heritage and diverse communication methods but also conveys rich cultural value and spiritual significance. These stories act as mirrors of history, reflecting the hardships endured by the Chinese people, the vigorous development of society, and the nation's relentless pursuit of ideals, thus constructing a solid bridge that connects the past with the present and links China to the world.

With social progress and technological advancement, new chapters of stories continue to emerge. Today, the achievements of “FAST” probing the universe, “Beidou” shining, “Chang’e” reaching the moon, “Zhurong” exploring Mars, and “Tiangong” touring the heavens—these space milestones that “reach for the moon” resonate globally and astonish the world [6]. They are not only witnesses of the times but also a powerful driving force inspiring people to pursue a better life and envision the future.

At the same time, the international influence of Chinese stories is steadily growing. Driven by the wave of globalization, Chinese stories are reaching the world stage through various channels, becoming an important medium to showcase the unique charm of Chinese culture and promote international cultural exchange. The global success of films such as *Kung Fu Panda* and *Nezha: The Demonic Child Arrives* is a vivid testament to the spread of Chinese stories worldwide. These stories not only enhance the world's understanding and perception of China but also enable the Chinese people to confidently present themselves on the international stage.

2.3 *Challenges Facing the Dissemination of Chinese Stories*

The era continually presents new questions, and the answers we provide must also innovate. In the face of globalization, Chinese stories encounter cultural barriers in the dissemination process, raising an urgent need to transcend linguistic and geographical boundaries for these culturally rich stories. Looking back, although ancient legends and fables spread overseas through routes like the Silk Road, we can see their influence was limited by the available technology and they could not reach every corner broadly or deeply. Observing the present, we know that the explosion of information accompanying the digital era offers endless possibilities for spreading Chinese stories, yet it also brings unprecedented competitive pressure. How to stand out amidst the massive influx of information and how to make foreign audiences truly understand and resonate with these stories have become pressing challenges we must face.

3. Communication of Chinese Ceramic Stories

The dissemination of Chinese ceramics is not limited to the circulation of physical objects; it deeply integrates China's history, culture, and artistic characteristics, becoming an important window for the world to understand China. From the ancient Silk Road and maritime trade to modern cultural

exhibitions and cross-national collaborations, the pathways and methods of spreading the story of Chinese ceramics have continuously innovated and expanded. This has not only influenced the culture of different regions but also promoted the global development of ceramic art.

3.1 Evolution of the Dissemination of Chinese Ceramic Stories

The history of Chinese ceramics dissemination is long-standing, ranging from ancient trade routes like the Silk Road and maritime trade to modern cultural exhibitions and international collaborations. This dissemination has constantly been innovated and expanded. In ancient times, as early as the 5th century BC, China had mastered the technology of firing ceramics, which spread to Central Asia, West Asia, and Europe through the Silk Road. The greenware and white porcelain of the Tang Dynasty, along with the various kiln styles during the Song and Yuan dynasties, gained wide recognition in Western markets. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Chinese ceramics became prized possessions of European royalty and nobility, creating a high demand for them. In modern times, with European archaeologists' explorations and museums' collections of Chinese artifacts, Chinese ceramics gradually became a focal point for art and cultural research abroad. For instance, institutions like the British Museum in the United Kingdom, the Louvre in France, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the United States have all established Chinese ceramics sections. In contemporary times, with the implementation of China's cultural "Going Global" strategy, including initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative and the establishment of the BRICS cooperation organization, the international dissemination of Chinese ceramics has entered a new stage. Through international exhibitions, cultural festivals, museum displays, and cross-national cultural projects, the story of Chinese ceramics is presented dynamically and interactively to the global public.

3.2 Dissemination of Chinese Ceramics in Modern Times

Since the beginning of the modern era, the international dissemination channels of Chinese ceramics have further expanded. These museums' collections and research on Chinese ceramics have not only preserved cultural heritage but also facilitated the widespread dissemination of Chinese ceramic stories in the Western world.

In particular, in Japan, the import of Tang and Song Dynasty ceramics has profoundly influenced Japanese tea ceremonies and pottery. The Japanese not only imitated Chinese ceramic-making techniques but also gradually developed their own ceramic styles. In the early 20th century, Chinese exchange students and cultural exchange activities further deepened the spread of Chinese ceramic stories in Japan, gradually enhancing Japanese public awareness of Chinese ceramic culture. To this day, Japanese museums and private collectors still hold a large collection of Chinese ceramics, playing an important role in Sino-Japanese cultural exchange.

3.3 Dissemination of Chinese Ceramics in Contemporary Times

In contemporary times, with the implementation of China's cultural "Going Global" strategy, the international dissemination of Chinese ceramics has entered a new stage. Today, the channels of dissemination are more diversified, and the methods of dissemination are also richer, including international exhibitions, cultural forums, ceramic cultural tourism, media promotion, and cross-cultural cooperation. On this basis, Chinese ceramics are no longer displayed as historical artifacts and works of art only, but are increasingly presented as dynamic and interactive cultural forms.

3.3.1 International Exhibitions and Cultural Festivals

In recent years, international exhibitions and cultural festivals have become important means of disseminating Chinese ceramics. For example, the Jingdezhen International Ceramic Fair attracts many foreign artists and scholars each year, serving as an international window for showcasing Chinese ceramic culture. Through exhibitions and cultural festivals, visitors from different countries can experience the unique charm of Chinese ceramics firsthand, deepening their understanding of Chinese culture. These activities enhance the visitors' experience and engagement through live demonstrations, interactive lectures, and cultural exchanges, making the story of Chinese ceramics more captivating.

3.3.2 Museums and Collection Institutions

International museums and collection institutions display and research Chinese ceramics, bringing Chinese ceramic stories into the global public eye in the form of artifact exhibitions. Many museums in

Europe and the United States display Chinese ceramic treasures in their Chinese sections, emphasizing their historical background, artistic value, and cultural symbolism, allowing visitors to understand the story of Chinese ceramics from multiple perspectives. For instance, the large ceramic exhibitions at the British Museum in the United Kingdom and the Louvre in France not only showcase the exquisite craftsmanship of ceramics but also detail the role of ceramics in the history of Sino-Western cultural exchange. These exhibitions have become significant channels for disseminating Chinese culture overseas.

3.3.3 Cross-National Cultural Projects and International Exchanges

Some cross-national cultural projects and art exchange programs provide a platform for disseminating Chinese ceramic culture abroad. For instance, with the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative, China has expanded cooperation with countries along the route in culture and art. Through holding ceramic-themed exhibitions, cultural forums, and academic seminars, Chinese ceramic art has been promoted globally. Such cross-national cultural exchanges not only contribute to the development of the ceramic industry but also enhance the influence of Chinese culture worldwide.

3.4 Characteristics and Significance of Communicating Chinese Ceramic Stories

3.4.1 Combining Culture and Commerce to Drive Trade

The spread of Chinese ceramics not only serves as a cultural export, but also has commercial value. In ancient times, ceramics entered the western market as a commodity through the Silk Road and became a luxury for Western nobles, driving the development of foreign trade. The exhibition of modern ceramics and cross-cultural cooperation bring considerable benefits to China at the economic level. For example, Jingdezhen ceramics are not only works of art, but also crafts and tourism commodities with huge market potential, expanding ceramic culture to the global market through commercialization.

3.4.2 Recreating Cultural Symbols for Deeper Cultural Exchange

Chinese ceramics are not only artifacts, but also a symbol of cultural symbols. In Western minds, ceramics represent the mystery, delicacy and elegance of Eastern culture. In the international dissemination, Chinese ceramics gradually became one of the symbols of Eastern civilization, and promoted the understanding and exploration of Eastern aesthetics by Western artists and designers. This reshaping of cultural symbols has enhanced the depth of cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries.

3.4.3 Innovative Modernization of Traditional Craftsmanship

In the process of contemporary communication, Chinese ceramics not only maintain the traditional craft, but also integrate modern design concepts and show innovative artistic forms. For example, some Chinese potters combine traditional blue-and-white porcelain techniques with modern elements to create new works of art that are presented to the international market through exhibitions and cross-cultural collaborations. The integration of traditional craftsmanship and modern innovation makes Chinese ceramics not only retain the historical weight, but also have a fashionable and modern beauty, which is easier to spread and accept among the younger generation.

3.5 Challenges in Communicating Chinese Ceramic Stories

In the perspective of cultural inheritance and innovation, seeking the spread and development of ceramic culture is the practical need to implement the national development requirements and help the living inheritance of ceramic culture. However, at present, there are some problems in the communication and development of ceramic culture, such as poor connection between excavation and inheritance, improper handling of integrity and innovation. First of all, the spread of Chinese ceramic culture needs to overcome language and cultural differences, especially in the process of translation and interpretation, the details and unique connotations of ceramic culture may not be accurately conveyed due to language barriers. Secondly, in the international cultural market, the commercial value and artistic value of traditional ceramics are often difficult to measure, and some foreign audiences may regard ceramics as mere ornaments and ignore their cultural depth. Finally, with the increase of imitations and commercial products, Chinese ceramics with real cultural connotations may be affected by the market, affecting its reputation and status in the international market.

4. Methods to Disseminate Chinese Ceramic Stories

4.1 By Holding Ceramic Exhibitions

Ceramic exhibitions serve as a bridge for cultural exchange and play an essential role in the promotion and development of Chinese ceramic stories. Holding ceramic exhibitions attracts artists and collectors from all over the world, while allowing the public to engage with and learn about Chinese ceramic stories up close. This face-to-face interaction makes the display of ceramic culture more direct and immersive, enhancing the appeal of Chinese ceramic stories. Ceramic exhibitions provide an excellent stage for disseminating Chinese ceramic stories. In October 2023, the China Jingdezhen International Ceramic Fair was held at Taobo City in Jingdezhen, Jiangxi, showcasing the remarkable achievements of ceramic art from both domestic and international creators. As a world-class ceramic event and international trade platform, the fair not only promoted the exchange and dissemination of Chinese ceramic stories with the world but also facilitated exchanges and cooperation in business, culture, and craftsmanship across the global ceramics industry. Additionally, the “Achievements and Dreams” China International Fine Ceramics National Tour (Jingdezhen Station) was launched in Jingdezhen, Jiangxi, offering attendees a visual feast of China’s latest ceramic creations. This exhibition greatly contributed to sharing Chinese ceramic stories, showcasing ceramic culture, and demonstrating ceramic craftsmanship.

4.2 By Taking Advantage of Ceramic Museums

Museums are specialized venues for the public to learn about various cultures, with prominent educational and research functions. Ceramic museums, as part of the arts category, are particularly dedicated to narrating and exhibiting ceramic culture. Through beautiful ceramic artifacts, ceramic museums present the vast history of Chinese ceramics to the world. They are like timeless books waiting to be opened and read. Jingdezhen China Ceramic Museum in Jingdezhen, Jiangxi Province, is a prime example: “A history of Chinese ceramics, with half of its mountains and rivers in Jingdezhen.” The museum houses a wealth of precious ceramic relics, displaying China’s superior ceramic craftsmanship and long history, telling the story of Chinese ceramics. It serves as both a window into Jingdezhen’s ceramic culture and an essential platform for studying the development of Chinese ceramics. The museum displays ceramic masterpieces from different periods in chronological order, presenting the complete history of Chinese ceramics from the Neolithic period to the modern era. Its public nature allows everyone to approach it freely, thus broadening the reach of Chinese ceramic stories. Not only Jingdezhen China Ceramic Museum, but also Jingdezhen Ceramic History Museum, Foshan Shiwan Ceramic Museum in Guangdong, and other ceramic museums play similar roles. In today’s world, where “spiritual enrichment” is emphasized, establishing ceramic museums is undoubtedly essential. Ceramic museums allow people to learn about and appreciate ceramic culture, helping Chinese ceramic stories to travel even further.

4.3 By Making Full Use of Internet Media

With the rapid development of the Internet, the dissemination of various cultures has become increasingly convenient. The spread of ceramic stories also follows the trend of the times, relying on Internet media to bring the charm of Chinese ceramic culture to people’s homes. The “Internet + Ceramic Stories” approach not only aligns with current trends but also helps expand the breadth and depth of ceramic storytelling. Through popular and accessible formats such as TV series, documentaries, and short videos, Chinese ceramic stories can transcend regional limitations and become embedded in people’s hearts in a more accessible way. The TV series *The Grand Ceramic Merchant* tells the turbulent life of the porcelain merchant Tao Changnan during the early Republic of China, highlighting the difficult growth and development of Chinese ceramic culture and the porcelain industry at that time. The documentary *Chinese Craftsmen—Journey of Porcelain Culture* uses video to document representative craftsmen and cultural heritage figures who have made outstanding contributions to Chinese ceramic culture, while media coverage brings the colorful Chinese ceramic stories to life in the modern era. The short video *Hello, Chinese Porcelain* offers a concentrated look at a thousand years of porcelain-making history in just over a minute. Upon release, it received a strong positive response. In the era of new media, to better meet people’s spiritual and cultural needs and more effectively promote Chinese ceramic stories, it is necessary to leverage the strengths of internet media. By combining ceramic stories with modern media tools, Chinese ceramic stories can become a part of everyday life for the general public.

4.4 By Promoting Ceramic Cultural Tourism

Ceramic culture is an essential part of Chinese civilization, and ceramic tourism, as a critical path for cultural dissemination, plays a vital role in spreading Chinese ceramic stories. As the “Porcelain Capital”, Jingdezhen’s ceramic culture is a beautiful symbol of the city, and thus developing tourism focused on ceramic culture is the optimal choice for promoting Jingdezhen [7]. Jingdezhen has rich tourism resources, including well-known attractions like the Ancient Kiln and Folk Customs Museum, the Royal Kiln Factory National Archaeological Site Park, the Imperial Kiln Scenic Area, and the China Ceramic Museum. Every year, these sites attract numerous domestic and international visitors who, while touring, can appreciate an array of exquisite ceramics and experience the joy of ceramic-making. This immersive experience deepens visitors’ understanding of ceramic culture, thereby promoting the dissemination of Chinese ceramic stories and culture.

4.5 By Training Professional Ceramic Translation Talents

Translation serves as an essential bridge for cultural communication and is a crucial tool for promoting cultural integration. As an important tool for the international exchange and dissemination of ceramic culture, ceramic translation plays an indispensable role in telling the story of Chinese ceramics. To tell the story of Chinese ceramics well, a large number of professional ceramic translators are needed. However, at present, there are relatively few individuals specialized in ceramic translation. Relevant universities and research institutions should establish a training system for ceramic translation talent to cultivate professionals dedicated to translating and disseminating Chinese ceramic stories [8]. This foundation will help Chinese ceramic stories reach a global reader.

5. Conclusion

As an important component of China’s outstanding cultural heritage, the story of Chinese ceramics holds immense significance in its dissemination. Through research on the ways in which Chinese ceramic stories are shared, we can clearly see that in today’s diverse social environment, the spread of ceramic stories faces new opportunities and challenges.

From a traditional perspective, books and exhibitions have long been key channels for disseminating ceramic stories. Ceramic-related publications provide a systematic and in-depth explanation of ceramic history, craftsmanship, and artistic value, equipping people with a wealth of knowledge about ceramic stories. Various ceramic exhibitions, meanwhile, offer an intuitive visual experience that allows audiences to feel the charm of ceramics up close, making ceramic stories come to life. However, these traditional methods have certain limitations in terms of the speed of information dissemination and audience reach.

With the rapid advancement of information technology, new media platforms offer broad opportunities for the dissemination of Chinese ceramic stories. Social media, short video platforms, and live-streaming allow ceramic stories to reach global audiences in a more convenient and rapid manner. Through online dissemination, whether it's the creative process of ceramic artists, the display of ceramic works, or explanations of ceramic history and culture, significant attention and interaction can be attracted, greatly enhancing the spread of ceramic stories. Digital media platforms not only break the limitations of time and space but also provide new opportunities for cultural exchange and innovation, allowing ceramic stories to shine with new vitality in the modern era.

However, we must also be mindful of certain issues in the dissemination process. On the one hand, it is essential to ensure the authenticity and accuracy of ceramic stories, avoiding excessive commercialization and entertainment that may distort the narrative. On the other hand, we must consider the differences in audiences with varying cultural backgrounds, using approaches that are easy to understand and accept, thereby enhancing the appeal and attraction of ceramic stories.

In summary, the dissemination of Chinese ceramic stories requires a comprehensive application of multiple methods, fully leveraging the strengths of both traditional and modern approaches, both domestic and international outreach, as well as academic and public engagement. Only by continuously exploring and innovating in communication methods and enhancing communication effectiveness can we ensure that Chinese ceramic stories are widely shared around the world, enabling more people to understand and appreciate Chinese ceramic culture and making a greater contribution to the inheritance and development of the outstanding culture of the Chinese nation [9, 10]. With the concerted efforts of

society as a whole, the story of Chinese ceramics is sure to shine with even greater brilliance in the new era.

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