

# Research on Innovation and Development Path of Fuli Clay Pottery

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## Abstract

**Fuli clay pottery is a typical folk arts and crafts with local characteristics of southern Shandong. As a precious intangible cultural heritage, it is not only a witness of historical development, but also a precious traditional Chinese culture. Based on the origin, development status and existing problems of Fuli clay pottery, the innovative development path of Fuli clay pottery is mainly discussed, in order to further promote the inheritance and protection of Fuli clay pottery.**

## Keywords

**Fuli clay pottery; Development status; Existing problems; Innovative development path.**

## 1. Introduction

Pottery has a long history. As early as the Paleolithic period, human beings began to shape some shapes with clay. Later, human beings realized that clay was hardened by fire in long-term life practice. In December 1992, archaeologists found an ancient relic in Fuli village, Zaozhuang City, Shandong Province, and unearthed a series of cultural relics such as pottery bowls and pottery bowls in Dawenkou period, unveiling the mystery of Fuli clay pottery. According to research, the origin of Fuli earthenware can be traced back to the settlement of ancient Dongyi people 5000 years ago. Due to the discovery of many Dawenkou Culture and Longshan culture sites near Fuli village, the early type belongs to Dawenkou Culture and the middle and late type belongs to Longshan culture. In the late Qing Dynasty, the Republic of China and around the liberation, the folk arts and crafts masters in Zaozhuang pushed "playing goods" to a prosperous period; During the "Cultural Revolution", the development of pottery art was forced to stop. In 1982, Gan Zhiyou, the "inheritor of intangible cultural heritage of Fuli clay pottery", with the discovered, sorted, studied and innovated Fuli clay pottery, gradually returned to people's vision, so that this valuable intangible cultural heritage was rediscovered and protected. For thousands of years, Fuli clay pottery, as a folk arts and crafts, has attracted us to study and explore continuously because of its unique "absurd, anti fact" character.

## 2. The Overview of Fuli Clay Pottery

Fuli clay pottery is a national geographical indication product in China. It is named after Fuli village, Xiji Town, Shanting District, Zaozhuang City, Shandong Province, more than 5600 years ago. Fuli village has beautiful environment and superior geographical location. There are many myths and stories in Fuli village. It is said that it is not only the hometown of Fuxi, one of the three emperors and five emperors, but also the legend of Fuxi Nuwa breeding human beings here. Fuli village belongs to temperate monsoon continental climate; Black clay, laterite, white kaolin and red stone pottery resources are available, which provides sufficient raw materials for the emergence and development of Fuli clay pottery.

The manufacturing process of Fuli clay pottery is complex. First, select the natural clay about two meters underground near Fuli village and dry the prepared soil for a period of time. After further processing the clay by using techniques such as "cooked mud" and "bow mud", the potter presses the clay into mud cake, and then puts the mud cake into the mold. Most of the Fuli earthenware produced by mold, which is convenient for production, the presentation effect of complex patterns is better controlled. After demoulding, the green body shall be repaired and dried. After the green body is dried, the steamed bread kiln is generally used for firing Fuli clay pottery. The temperature of the kiln shall be controlled at 800 °C ~ 900 °C, and the kiln shall be fired for 10 ~ 24 hours. After cooling, the kiln shall be opened.

Fuli clay pottery has absorbed the advantages of Chinese earthenware art in different dynasties, with the form of primitive society in the Neolithic age, strong Han style, the characteristics of the northern and Southern Dynasties, and the marks of the advantages of other sister arts in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. In terms of decoration, according to the different shapes of utensils, a variety of decorative techniques and patterns are selected to form their own unique decorative techniques. For example, the big standing lion (see Figure 1) skillfully uses the decorative techniques of the combination of lines, breast nails and vortex patterns to vividly depict the simple image of the lion. In terms of color, red pottery, grey pottery, white pottery and painted pottery are widely distributed. The glaze used in Fuli painted pottery is different from that of ceramics. Its glaze is gray white clay, commonly known as "pig excrement glaze". The technique of expression of Fuli clay pottery is traditional and simple; It has a wide range of uses, covering all aspects of daily life, such as appreciation, sacrifice, daily and learning supplies, and successfully combines the exquisite production technology with the practicability of Arts and crafts. It is praised by experts as "precious rare earth ceramic relics handed down on the ground so far".



**Figure 1.** The big standing lion

### **3. The Present Situation and Problems of Fuli Clay Pottery**

#### **3.1. The Situation of Development of Fuli Clay Pottery**

Gan Zhiyou has been excavating and rescuing the intangible cultural heritage of Fuli clay pottery for more than 30 years. Although the clay pottery has a history of 1000 years, it is rarely known in the history of Chinese ceramics. In addition, it was destroyed and resisted in the later period, and the research progress of archaeologists and scholars in the industry on this kind of pottery is relatively slow. Perhaps the development process of Fuli clay pottery is the epitome of the development of the whole folk art and culture. The remaining excellent works are decreasing and developing slowly, and few people are willing to continue to inherit and develop. It can only retain the internal spirit of folk culture in the hearts of a few ordinary people.

## **3.2. The Existing Problems of Fuli Clay Pottery**

### **3.2.1. Clay Pottery Production Scale Is Small and Simple**

The production scale of Fuli clay pottery is very small, and the production mode is only Gan Zhiyou's family workshop. Relying on craftsmanship, the production technology and equipment are backward. There are only two dilapidated earth kilns in Fuli, and the participation of modern technology is very low. This leads to low work efficiency, less mass production and high production cost, which makes it impossible to compete with other products in the market.

### **3.2.2. Lack of Marketing Awareness**

The employees of Fuli clay pottery lack of marketing awareness. The buyers of pottery products are mainly political and academic persons. There is no fixed sales channel. There are few Fuli clay pottery series products in major sales websites, and the product yield is low. These factors have greatly affected the innovation of expanding the business scale and product types of pottery, which is not conducive to the sustainable development of pottery. Secondly, the awareness of copyright of Fuli clay pottery is weak, there are no own brands, pottery crafts basically have no registered trademark and lack of corresponding packaging.

### **3.2.3. The Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage Is Uninherited**

With the development of the information age and the progress of the market economy, the living needs of the Chinese people have gradually improved, and the concept of aesthetic consumption has also changed. Most local people no longer recognize the artistic form of Fuli clay pottery, feeling that it is earthy and vulgar. Earthenware has gradually disappeared from people's vision, and more and more older intangible cultural heritage artists have withdrawn from the stage of history. Due to the complex production process, low selling price and meager profit, the young generation engaged in this folk traditional art is decreasing day by day.

## **4. Research on the Path of Innovation and Development of Fuli Clay Pottery**

### **4.1. To Develop Cultural and Creative Products of Intangible Cultural Heritage Fuli Clay Pottery**

On August 12, 2021, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and The General Office of the State Council issued the Opinions on Further Strengthening the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage, which is of great guiding significance to the non-heritage and creative industry. There is a complete policy guidance system and safeguard measures for the protection, inheritance, development and utilization of intangible cultural heritage. For example, we can deconstruct and recombine the animal shapes and traditional decorations of Fuli clay pottery, so that they can be used in office stationery, cultural and creative products and other items common in People's Daily life, endowing ordinary commodities with the charm of traditional culture, highlighting the characteristics of folk arts and crafts, and showing the charm of traditional Chinese culture. This combination is closely combined with people's real life, with large space for development and high commercial value. Part of the profits brought by the development of "cultural creation + intangible heritage" industry can be used to invest in the protection and inheritance of intangible heritage. Through the new way of protecting the productive resources of intangible cultural heritage, the traditional single input market mechanism should be changed, and the development, design, production and marketing channels of cultural and creative products should be broadened to realize complementary advantages and mutual benefit.

#### **4.2. To Build A Cultural and Creative Community, and Pay Attention to the Integration with Zaozhuang Cultural and Tourism Industry**

Today, with the rapid development of tourism, Zaozhuang carries Fuli clay pottery in a specific cultural environment, and the clay pottery is interdependent with Zaozhuang culture and tourism industry. First of all, to highlight the artistic characteristics of Fuli clay pottery, make it as one of the important cultural support for the construction of Zaozhuang culture and tourism industry. Secondly, the innovation of Fuli clay pottery should be practical with the purpose and be people-oriented. For example, the Spring and Autumn Festival, organized by Jingdezhen Taoxichuan Cultural and Creative Park, not only invited skilled craftsmen from other provinces and cities, but also invited artists from domestic art schools and even from different regions abroad to show their works. Drawing lessons from successful cases in other regions, the author has continuously opened up a suitable way for the survival of Fuli clay pottery in Zaozhuang, and driven the "active" development of clay pottery by cultural and creative communities. It not only creates a strong aesthetic atmosphere of life with zaozhuang's unique intangible cultural heritage art in real life, but also promotes the development of Zaozhuang culture and tourism industry and achieves a win-win situation.

#### **4.3. To Strengthen Inheritance and Inheritor Protection, and Broaden the Talent Training Mechanism**

Nowadays, we should pay more attention to the development of Fuli clay pottery. First of all, the local government should formulate policies related to the protection and development of Fuli clay pottery, allocate funds to support Fuli clay pottery, and use special funds to vigorously publicize the intangible cultural heritage unique to Zaozhuang, increase the social impact of clay pottery, so as to form the linkage of the whole society. Secondly, folk artists should be supported to inherit their skills in various ways when they enter the classroom of colleges and universities. For example, the successful combination of talents, research resources and enterprise support of Jingdezhen Ceramic University has transformed the university's ceramic research achievements into productive forces of ceramic production, continuously adding new impetus to the ceramic industry. Fuli clay pottery of Zaozhuang should also actively cooperate with contemporary high-level art colleges and universities, combine the product advantages of Fuli clay pottery with the characteristics of colleges and universities, and create innovative products. Finally, it is necessary to encourage the establishment of Zaozhuang characteristic intangible cultural heritage town, and introduce well-known designers and artist studios to achieve the purpose of building a platform for exhibition and exchange activities and enhancing the influence of Zaozhuang intangible cultural heritage.

#### **4.4. To Activate Market Power Through Online Sales Model**

With the rapid development of the Internet, people's life is becoming more and more convenient. We can use modern communication technology to promote Fuli pottery through live broadcast, short video, documentary and other ways to raise the attention of folk craft in People's Daily life. Using advanced modern digital technology, we can build digital audio-visual files for Fuli clay pottery and display the intangible cultural heritage database with Zaozhuang characteristic culture. For example, the sales data of cultural and creative products of the Palace Museum showed geometric growth, because its team opened an online purchase platform and developed the cultural and creative industry of the Palace Museum by using the FMCG model. Expanding consumer groups through mass media, make more people understand the craft and culture of Fuli clay pottery, thus increasing the demand of earthenware and purchases, enhance intangible brand influence, scaffolding fell in earthenware propaganda trading platform, promote the earthenware electricity project work, promote the virtuous cycle of the model, and build the sustainable development Fuli clay pottery.

## 5. Conclusion

Fuli clay pottery not only plays an important role in the long river of Chinese folk art, but also is one of the traditional art forms with the longest history, the widest coverage and the greatest influence in southern Shandong. Still, it faces a tough test. This paper explores the innovative path of Fuli clay pottery, which is not only for the inheritance and development of Fuli clay pottery, but also to enhance the cultural confidence of the people in Zaozhuang, promote the economic development of Zaozhuang, and walk out of a Renaissance road of intangible cultural heritage containing traditional culture.

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