

# From Handicraft to Cultural Heritage: Redefining the Role of Traditional Handicraft in Shanxi's Cultural Expression

Jing Lyu, Hassan Alli, Irwan Syah Mohd Yusoff and Liang Lyu

<sup>1,2,4</sup>Faculty of Design and Architecture, Universiti Putra Malaysia 43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor Malaysia, <sup>3</sup>Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia 43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor Malaysia, Jing Lyu, Faculty of Design and Architecture, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM Serdang. Selangor, Malaysia  
Email: gs62491@student.upm.edu.my

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## Abstract

This study examines the development of traditional handicrafts in Shanxi from crafts utilitarian to cultural heritage and redefines their role of Shanxi cultural expression. Traditional handicrafts in Shanxi played an immeasurable importance in understanding and explaining the underlying cultural origins. However, traditional handicrafts nowadays have been seriously impacted by the globalization and modernization, especially in the development of productive forces. Industrialized production not only threatens the economic worth of traditional handicrafts, but likewise destroys their cultural value and making the preservation of traditional handicrafts an unprecedented challenge. By analyzing several numbers of traditional handicrafts in Shanxi and understanding their performance Shanxi culture as well as their interaction with cultural heritage, the study acknowledged the role of traditional handicrafts in Shanxi cultural performance has gone beyond the material level to become a vivid and emotional expression of history and culture. At the same time, to ensure the inheritance and development of handicrafts, the joint efforts of the government, education, communities, and craftsmen are needed to protect and promote the development of traditional handicrafts, so that they can flourish back in the hands of outstanding heirs and continue the charm of centuries-old good manufacturing. These findings provide new perspectives that can help to better recognize and protect the valuable intangible cultural heritages.

**Keywords:** Traditional Handicrafts, Cultural Heritage, Shanxi, Historical Heritage

## Introduction

As the birthplace of Chinese history and culture, Shanxi Province has long attracted attention for its unique forms of traditional handicrafts. Its folk arts and crafts have a long history and a wide variety. Even though the traditional handicrafts in Shanxi have long played an important role in the study of Chinese history and folklore, but only some information talking about their efficacy in the preservation and dissemination of cultural heritage. Traditional handicrafts contain cultural values, ideological wisdom, and practical experience and are essential to preserving intangible cultural heritage (Bo Zhu et al., 2021). As a skill rich in techniques and valuable spirituality, it should be considered a cultural heritage to be preserved. Besides that, under the trend of globalization, traditional handicrafts in Shanxi are facing unprecedented challenges and pressures, and from the way they used to be a necessity skill, they are now gradually losing their original market status and cultural value. In recent years, many inheritors of traditional crafts are abandoning the craft due to low productivity and low income, and these conditions are leading to the decline of traditional handicrafts.

Traditional handicrafts in Shanxi have a long history and have absorbed the essence of the diverse cultures around them, forming a unique artistic style and deep cultural connotation. Most of the handicrafts incorporate rich human history, regional culture, and ethnic customs, reflecting the production life and social activities of the people of Shanxi, and the history and culture of Shanxi. In different regions of Shanxi Province, there are a variety of traditional handicrafts, each with its own characteristics. For example, the art of colorful sculpture in Datong area attracts countless people with its vivid, splendid, and colorful features. Embroidery is an important traditional handicraft in the Changzhi region of Shanxi Province, which is a technique of utilizing needles and threads for pattern decoration on cloth woven fabrics. Beautiful patterns bloom vividly on the fabrics under the skillful design of the artist's hands. It's extremely high level of skill and unique artistic charm make it not only loved by local people, but also an important gift for friends and relatives, and a beautiful accessory for home decoration. The art of paper-cutting in Yuncheng area, with its unique lines and shapes, has sent people's good wishes. In addition, mud sculpture in Linfen area, porcelain in Jincheng area and bamboo weaving art in Jinzhong area are all unique handicrafts in various areas of Shanxi Province. In general, the traditional handicrafts in Shanxi Province show a deep cultural connotation and artistic spirit with their unique craft techniques and traditional design concepts. In today's rapid development of modern society, these intangible cultural heritages should be effectively protected and inherited, so that more people can realize and appreciate their beauty.

Shanxi Province is renowned for its deep historical roots and rich cultural diversity. Traditional handicrafts, central to the region's cultural heritage, face significant challenges from globalization and modernization, such as market contraction and the loss of cultural value. Consequently, the research titled "From Craftsmanship to Cultural Heritage: Redefining the Role of Traditional Handicrafts in Shanxi's Cultural Expression" is particularly vital. This study not only focuses on how to effectively protect, develop, and pass on these cultural assets to adapt to new cultural contexts and market demands, thereby achieving sustainable cultural development, but also aims to create more effective strategies through the evaluation of existing protective measures by policymakers and cultural institutions. By enhancing public awareness and participation in the value of traditional crafts, this research provides stronger social support and broader market opportunities for artisans, thereby improving their economic and social status.

Moreover, the findings of this research will bring direct benefits to various stakeholders including artisans, policymakers, academics, the general public, and those involved in tourism and related business activities. For artisans, increasing the visibility and recognition of their work is key to boosting their economic benefits; for policymakers and cultural institutions, the research provides a basis to establish or adjust policies for cultural heritage protection; for the academic community, it enriches theoretical and practical research on traditional crafts as cultural heritage; for the public and cultural consumers, it enhances the appreciation and recognition of traditional crafts, promoting the protection of cultural diversity; for the tourism industry and related business activities, revitalizing and utilizing traditional crafts can enhance tourist attraction and economic benefits. Therefore, this study is not only a significant academic exploration in the field of cultural heritage but also a crucial contribution to the strategy for sustainable cultural development in Shanxi and beyond. The study focuses on the following objectives: (1) to recognize and understand the value of traditional handicrafts from the perspective of cultural heritage, (2) to mobilize public attention and participation in traditional crafts, and (3) to formulate effective strategies and policies for the protection and development of traditional handicrafts. The results will provide a new theoretical basis and practical guidance for the protection and development of traditional handicrafts in Shanxi and throughout the country.

## **Background of Study**

### **Early Traditional Handicrafts Development in Shanxi Province**

Shanxi Province is in northern China and is known for its rich history, cultural heritage, and natural resources. The province is known for its traditional handicrafts, such as paper cutting, embroidery, and pottery. The roots of the early development of traditional handicrafts in Shanxi can be traced back to the Neolithic period in 5000 B.C. The production of traditional handicrafts in this period was mainly based on pottery. At this remote period, craftsmen in Shanxi began the production of pottery as a handicraft. With their hands and wisdom, they created a unique and delicate work of art from clay to a vessel. These traditional handicrafts conveyed the sparks of wisdom of the ancients and became a major highlight in the treasury of Chinese culture. With the passage of time, the Han Dynasty, Wei Jin and North and South Dynasties, Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties, to the Republic of China, the new China and other different historical periods, Shanxi's handicrafts are not only not washed away by the long river of history and disappeared, but also gradually develop and grow, the inheritance of the order, and in the Chinese land has produced a far-reaching impact. Its due to the craftsmanship of the artisans who have been passing down their handicrafts from generation to generation and striving for excellence, but also due to the rich natural materials in Shanxi and the deep affection of the local people for handicrafts.

Early traditional handicrafts were characterized by a strong sense of life, and they were not only used to decorate their lives, but also used these handicrafts to record the development of the times and cultural inheritance. In the land of Shanxi, ancient people used tools in their hands, collected natural materials around them, relied on their own wisdom and passion for beauty, and cast a trace of history and culture with a lot of mental and physical labor. Shanxi today still retains these ancient handicrafts, such as brick carving, wood carving, stone carving, shadow, paper cutting, Muyan, etc. The traditional handicrafts with distinctive regional cultural characteristics have blossomed on the stage of world art. Besides that, the intangible cultural heritages are not only works of art, but also represent an embodiment of

Shanxi's colorful and profound history and culture and tell the history of Shanxi in their own way, showing the humanistic spirit of Shanxi.

### **Technological Progress and its Impact to the Traditional Handicrafts in Shanxi Culture**

The technological progress of handicrafts has been an important factor in the continuous adaptation of Shanxi culture to the development of the times and the satisfaction of people's living needs. The improvement of technology has enhanced the practicality of handicrafts, making them better integrated into people's living environment based on meeting the basic needs of life. The fine workmanship enables people to see the craftsmen's love of life and inheritance of traditional culture. The innovative thinking of art allows people to appreciate the beauty while feeling the rich cultural connotations and deep historical origins. The application of new technologies has undoubtedly promoted the development of traditional handicrafts, making traditional handicrafts are no longer limited to practical functions, but can give people more artistic enjoyment. Many craftsmen in Shanxi nowadays have developed traditional handicrafts into modern works with high artistic and aesthetic values.

Shanxi Province has always been known for its strong historical and cultural background and rich traditional handicrafts. The inheritance of handicrafts such as brick carving, wood carving, shadow puppets and papercutting is not only the dissemination and promotion of ancient skills, but also the continuation and development of Shanxi's culture. Each carefully crafted handicraft contains the love of the people of Shanxi for the culture of their hometown and the respect for ancient crafts. The development and influence of handicrafts can be described as far-reaching. It not only promotes the economic development of Shanxi Province, but also provides more employment opportunities for local people. The innovation and development of handicrafts highlights the wisdom and talent of the laboring people of Shanxi, and at the same time enhances people's knowledge and understanding of Shanxi culture. Whether for the people of Shanxi or for most tourists, the development of handicrafts has undoubtedly enriched the color and connotation of life.

### **The Process of How the Traditional Handicrafts Become Cultural Heritage**

Handicrafts are the direct exponents of human wisdom and efforts, which are the results of human understanding and transformation of the natural world and living environment. All along, all kinds of production tools, living goods and even artworks carry human thoughts and wisdom. With the development of society, handicrafts, an innovative activity centered on human beings and the pursuit of a better life and aesthetics of craftsmanship, has gradually moved away from pragmatism to a cultural situation of universal respect and love for art. Among them, in the Shanxi region of China, handicrafts have experienced a slow ascension from the status of necessity to being regarded as a carrier of spiritual support and artistic expression, and then further to becoming a cultural heritage that carries the history, culture, lifestyle and values of the region. This can be seen not only in all kinds of traditional handicrafts in Shanxi, but also occupies an important position in the cultural life and spiritual pursuit of many people. Traditional handicrafts such as brick carvings, wood carvings, shadow puppets, paper cuttings, etc., not only reflect the skillfulness and extraordinary innovation of the craftsmen, but also demonstrate the rich history and culture of the region as well as the deep heritage of life.

In modern society, an increasingly understand that traditional handicrafts are not only the inheritance and innovation of craftsmanship, but also have deeper cultural significance and

social value. As a kind of cultural heritage, traditional handicraft is an important link to carry the past, understand the present and look forward to the future. Therefore, it is even more important for us to treat it as a valuable resource to cherish, love, learn and pass on, so that it can flourish in the new historical period and more people can understand and appreciate our traditional culture. The protection of traditional handicrafts is not a conceptual gesture or the pursuit of sentiment, but a kind of respect for history and culture, appreciation of human wisdom, care for nature and the environment, and anticipation of the future world. To protect and pass on traditional handicrafts is to protect our cultural roots, to plan our cultural future, and to provide the world with a cultural choice that is distinctive in national characteristics and rich in diversity, as well as a contribution to world culture.

### **Traditional and Modern Designs of Traditional Handicrafts**

From the easily observable external forms such as shapes, colors, and materials, to the inner essences such as design inspiration, cultural connotations and creators' heart scriptures that are difficult to perceive directly, the traditional handicrafts of Shanxi Province are all reflected in them. First, it is the performance of traditional handicrafts in Shanxi Province in terms of craft techniques. Carving is one of the main techniques. Whether it is carving beautiful textures in wood or majestic shapes in stone, craftsmen in Shanxi can show amazing art charm through their talent and skillful techniques. Painting is another common technique, where figures and scenes are painted vividly under the dexterous brush strokes of painters. In addition, delicate processes such as welding, firing, and polishing are an integral part of the region's traditional handicrafts, which are used to shape and work various materials to give them a specific texture and appearance.

In the design of handicrafts, a closer look reveals that the design concept seems to be a very important factor. Most of the traditional handicraft designs in Shanxi Province follow the concepts of traditional culture, which are mainly reflected in the pursuit of nature simulation and idealization. The understanding and use of natural phenomena, as well as the reproduction and idealization of all kinds of animal and plant forms, are directed at the understanding and use of natural phenomena, with extreme emphasis on the aesthetics and fineness of the shapes. The combination of these designs with the unique rhythms and rhythms of nature allows one to feel the vitality of the artwork. And from this, we can also see that these handicrafts are not only practical crafts, but also works of art with deep traditional cultural heritage and national spirit. The need for innovation and modernization of handicrafts has become a trend and is evident in traditional handicrafts in Shanxi. The value of traditional handicrafts is reflected in their unique art forms and respected craftsmanship, but how to adapt these traditional handicrafts to the needs, tastes and aesthetics of modern society is a big challenge.

Recently, the craftsmen have risen to the challenge and have begun to gradually combine modern craft techniques with traditional craft techniques, giving traditional crafts a new dimension. For example, modern equipment and tools are used to improve the traditional production process, thus enhancing the quality and artistic effect of the handicrafts, and high-tech materials are used to change the limitations of traditional materials and break the boundaries of traditional crafts. Such innovative and modernized technology plays an important role in improving the production efficiency and market share of handicrafts, and even in protecting and developing traditional handicrafts. In addition, motivated by the

diversified needs of modern society, craftsmen have not only adopted innovative thinking and concepts in design, reinterpreting and innovating traditional patterns and seeking a design language with more modern aesthetic concepts, but have also made changes in the actual functionality of their products. For example, traditional handicrafts such as Shanxi colored sculptures, paper cuttings, porcelain, etc., along with the development of society, the change of their functional use is also obvious, no longer used for decoration or rituals, but gradually introduced into daily life. At the same time, they have absorbed fashion elements and modern aesthetics in their modeling and pattern design, realizing the perfect fusion of tradition and modernity. Therefore, it is obvious that the innovation and change of traditional handicrafts in Shanxi in the inheritance make it still maintain its vitality and vitality today and ensure its survival and development in the fierce market competition.

### **Material and Method**

The study is to use bibliometric analysis to analyze the field of traditional handicraft and its development in Shanxi region. Bibliometric analysis is a set of methods used to quantitatively analyze scientific and scholarly literature. It employs statistical and mathematical techniques to examine publications, such as articles, books, and patents, to understand the structure, patterns, and dynamics of scientific research. Bibliometric analysis or scientometrics is a technique that consists of the application of mathematical and statistical methods to carry out a quantitative study of bibliographic units Donthu et al (2021); Kumar et al (2021), making it possible to understand the path and evolution of a certain subject area. In essence, bibliometric analysis is a powerful tool for understanding the landscape of scientific research, guiding strategic decisions, and enhancing the overall efficiency and impact of scholarly communication. The Scopus database was used for the selection of documents due to its coverage a greater information. The decision of using Scopus database in based on the largest volume of information regarding authors, countries and institutions provided (Zhang & Eichmann-Kalwara, 2019; Cicea et al., 2021). In addition, it contains the largest volume of articles and journals that meet the scientific quality requirements for peer review (Baas et al., 2020). Through keyword and content analysis can help the authors identifies the frequency and trends of specific terms and phrases within the literature to understand emerging research themes and directions.

### **Results and Discussion**

To reach the objective of this study, there are 150 papers Scopus have been reviewed. The keywords for obtain the information based on several words such as traditional handicraft, handicraft innovation, culture heritage, process and production of traditional handicraft, handicraft prevention and modern product design. The search of information specifically focuses on China and Shanxi province.

### **Redefinition of the Role of Traditional Handicrafts in Shanxi's Cultural Expression**

In Shanxi, traditional handicrafts have been richly endowed with cultural symbolism and historical and cultural values, and their role in local cultural expression has been increasingly emphasized and redefined. One view is that traditional handicrafts play the role of "inheritors" in the cultural expression of Shanxi. Whether it is Shanxi paper-cutting, oil-paper umbrellas, clay sculptures, or wood carvings, they all carry Shanxi's long history and cultural traditions, and pass Shanxi's history, folklore, local customs, and local features to the next

generation in an art form with local characteristics, while at the same time demonstrating the essence of Shanxi's culture to a wider audience.

Another view is that traditional handicrafts play the role of a "living fossil" in Shanxi's cultural expression, in addition to its heritage. Even in the rapid modernization and development of the present, Shanxi's traditional handicrafts still maintain their original characteristics and forms, which seem to have gone through the precipitation of time, but reversed the advance of time, and become a vivid and concrete witness of history. Like a living fossil, it records the changes of Shanxi's history, social life, and the people's spiritual world, which makes Shanxi's culture and history vividly displayed in front of the world. In addition, traditional handicrafts should be regarded as a unique "innovator" in Shanxi's cultural expression. They have abandoned the previous over-reliance on mechanized and digitalized manufacturing processes, and focus more on craftsmen's skills and innovation, an innovative blend of the old and the new, reflecting both Shanxi's cultural heritage and its spirit of innovation. Tradition is not rigid conservatism, but the need to find and retain one's own characteristics and roots while adapting to modern society.

At the same time, the role of traditional handicrafts in Shanxi's cultural expression is also reflected in their role as "educators" of the people. While meeting aesthetic needs, they educate the public to understand and respect traditional culture, pass on and carry forward the spirit of the place, and improve the cultural quality of the society through continuous innovation and development. In general, the role of traditional handicrafts in Shanxi's cultural performance, from "inheritor" to "living fossil", from "innovator" to "educator", is constantly being given new connotations and meanings. From "inheritor" to "living fossil", from "innovator" to "educator", they are constantly being given new connotations and meanings, which figuratively interpret Shanxi's profound cultural heritage and unique regional charm.

### **Interaction Between Handicrafts and Cultural Heritage**

Handicraft, an art system rich in life wisdom and craftsmanship, has a unique role in influencing the value and perception of cultural heritage. First, handicrafts carry a local knowledge inheritance, reflecting the characteristics and history of a region. It is important to note that this heritage is not isolated; it is closely related to cultural heritage and becomes an important basis for understanding and evaluating cultural heritage. By focusing on these crafts, people can see the internal logic and historical development of a region's cultural heritage, and better understand and cherish those cultural heritages. Secondly, handicrafts show the incomparable charm of cultural heritage with their unique forms and high degree of individuality. Traditional handicrafts are rich in humanistic values and artistry, and often reveal the ineffable spiritual connotations of cultural heritage. Appreciation and study of these handicrafts can lead to a deeper knowledge and understanding of cultural heritage, thus promoting a renewed awareness and high evaluation of the value and importance of cultural heritage.

Furthermore, handicrafts have an important impact on the preservation and transmission of cultural heritage. Similarly, handicrafts are also part of cultural heritage, often containing rich cultural elements and historical information, and are not only the carrier of a region's cultural heritage, but also the key to its historical inheritance. The preservation and development of handicrafts can help protect and hand down these cultural heritages and can convey their

cultural value and significance in a visual and intuitive way, thus enhancing the public's sense of identity and participation in the protection of cultural heritages. Finally, the development and innovation of handicrafts also play an important role in giving new vitality and value to cultural heritage. The integration of traditional handicrafts with modern technology and design concepts can inject new impetus into traditional cultural heritage, making it more vivid and attractive in modern society. In this sense, the development and reform of handicrafts can promote the transformation and development of cultural heritage and enhance its social value and influence.

### **How Cultural Heritage Shapes and Enhances Handicrafts**

Cultural heritage is in a key position in the social ecology and has a unique shaping and enhancing effect on handicrafts. First, through the protection and restoration of cultural heritage, unique handicraft techniques and styles can be shaped. Cultural heritage contains rich craft resources, such as ancient architecture, sculpture, pottery, and fabrics, which have unique modeling arts and craft techniques, and are valuable resources for the development of crafts. Drawing on and learning from these traditional techniques can shape handmade products with traditional characteristics and local styles, making them unique and increasing the artistic value and market competitiveness of handicrafts. Secondly, cultural heritage, with its deep historical deposits and rich cultural connotations, has a strong educational function and infectious power, which can enhance the social status and cultural value of handicrafts. Handicraft is not only a production skill, but also a cultural heritage. The protection and utilization of cultural heritage can make more people understand and recognize the historical value and cultural connotation of handicrafts, elevate handicrafts to the height of culture and art, and enhance their social status and public recognition. Finally, promoting and utilizing cultural heritage can also provide a platform for learning and innovation, and realize the enhancement of handicrafts in inheritance and development. In modern society, we can excavate and pass on ancient handicraft skills through the study and research of cultural heritage and improve and upgrade them in innovation. At the same time, with the help of modern technological means, such as digital technology, 3D printing, etc., we can also realize the innovation and breakthrough of traditional handicrafts, so that they can be inherited and at the same time be in line with the development of the times.

### **Realistic Case Analysis of The Handicraft Interaction**

Take paper-cutting in Shanxi as an example, this is because papercutting is part of China's intangible cultural heritage, and Shanxi has a profound history and culture of paper-cutting, so by analyzing the two, it can make the revelation of the interactive relationship between cultural heritage and handicrafts more representative and universal. The art of paper-cutting in Shanxi has a long history, its style is simple and exquisite, and its forms are unique and diverse. Paper cutting is a common handicraft in the life of Shanxi people, both in the agricultural seasons of the past and in the cultural activities of the present. The patterns they depict are mostly objects in life, such as flowers, birds, insects and fish, myths, and legends, etc., rich in local characteristics and folk beliefs, and to some extent, paper-cutting itself is a vivid demonstration of the culture of Shanxi region. Then, digging into the value of cultural heritage behind paper-cutting, we can see that this traditional craft was born and developed in the context of cultural heritage. Cultural heritage provides the soil for paper-cutting to grow, which makes Shanxi paper-cutting patterns express both real-life elements and cultural resources such as folklore and ancient myths. These cultural resources not only make the art



of paper-cutting more vivid and rich, but also become a source of inspiration for paper-cutting artists, leading to the innovation and development of paper-cutting art. At the same time, paper-cutting, as a cultural form, also enriches and expands the connotation of Shanxi's cultural heritage, giving it a broader social influence.

In modern society, the art of paper-cutting in Shanxi has been supported by cultural heritage protection policies. In order to protect and pass on this endangered craft, the government, the community, and various non-governmental organizations have been promoting the study and passing on of paper-cutting, such as planning exhibitions, promoting paper-cutting courses in schools, and subsidizing paper-cutting artists in their creations. This protection and promotion have allowed the art of paper-cutting to survive and develop in modern society, and it has also given more people the opportunity to understand and meet the art of paper-cutting, further promoting Shanxi's cultural heritage. Through the above analysis, we know that the relationship between the art of paper-cutting and cultural heritage in Shanxi is mutual promotion and integration. In this process, the art of paper-cutting enriches the connotation of cultural heritage with its vivid and unique forms of expression, while the cultural heritage also provides a deep background and source for the art of paper cutting. This degree of interaction makes the two more vital together and demonstrates the critical value in the interaction between cultural heritage and handicrafts.

### **Exploring the Possibilities of Crafts in Cultural Heritage Preservation**

Handicraft refers to the activity of producing products with certain use or ornamental value based on traditional craft skills using handwork as the main technical means. Historically, handicrafts have been an important stage in the development of productivity in human society and an important part of every cultural form. Handicrafts are an important intangible cultural heritage of mankind, which contains rich cultural information of various regions and nationalities and is an important embodiment of the cultural heritage of mankind. Therefore, the protection and inheritance of handicrafts is of great significance to the protection of cultural heritage. From the perspective of sustainable development, handicrafts can provide a new low-carbon and environmentally friendly way for local economic development. The production process of handicraft products generally does not require high-energy consumption and high-pollution machinery and equipment, which is less destructive to the environment; while meeting people's basic living needs, handicrafts also have high ornamental value and cultural connotation, which is in line with the concept of sustainable consumption.

Traditional handicrafts can be a force for local community development. By providing employment opportunities and helping residents build and develop skills, craft activities can help reduce poverty and improve the quality of life. The process involves, first and foremost, people who have mastered the production skills, who can teach the skills and sell handmade products, which keeps the skills alive and leads to small-scale economic development. In addition, the transmission and protection of handicrafts is also in line with the need to preserve cultural diversity. Each handicraft work is a unique portrayal of a particular culture, history, and region, and they enrich the cultural heritage of mankind and enhance the cultural diversity of mankind. However, with the development of science and technology and the advancement of industrialization, many traditional handicrafts are in danger of being lost. How to effectively protect and pass on these handicrafts so that they can still survive and

develop in modern society is an important issue facing us. In this process, it is necessary to promote the protection and inheritance of handicrafts through various means, such as education, exhibitions, the establishment of handicraft associations, handicraft festivals and policy support.

### **Practices and Challenges in the Protection of Traditional in Shanxi**

Shanxi Province is one of the provinces in China with rich intangible cultural heritage and a wide variety of handicraft skills. Shanxi has a series of practices in protecting and passing on traditional handicrafts. For example, to promote and pass on the art of paper-cutting, Shanxi Province has established a paper-cutting art research institute and organized paper-cutting art festivals, so that this traditional art can be passed on from one generation to the next. At the same time, Shanxi has also strengthened the social power of cultural heritage protection by conducting various exhibitions and seminars to provide the public with a deeper understanding and awareness of handicrafts. However, there are also many challenges. First, despite Shanxi's efforts to protect and pass on handicrafts through various means, individual handicrafts are in danger of disappearing due to a shortage of talents and difficulties in passing them on. Secondly, in the process of industrialization of handicrafts, it is necessary to avoid reducing the cultural water of handicrafts, and to avoid the decline in quality caused by over-commercialization. Furthermore, along with the rapid development of modern society, the younger generation's interest in traditional handicrafts is gradually decreasing, which undoubtedly brings great challenges to the inheritance and development of traditional handicrafts. In addition, the development of modern science and technology has made the production cost of handicrafts higher and higher, and it faces greater difficulties to go into people's daily life. In addition, the protection of traditional cultural heritage, especially intangible cultural heritage, has yet to be improved in terms of the improvement of the legal system and its enforcement. The rights and interests of some folk artists are not effectively safeguarded, which can have a negative impact on the protection and transmission of cultural heritage.

In the face of today's challenges, multi-faceted solutions are needed to ensure that the unique and rich handicrafts of Shanxi Province continue to develop and be passed on to future generations. The first and foremost recommendation is for government departments to adopt positive means to protect and support the crafts community, including the creation of a favorable environment and conditions for crafts through policy support and financial investment. For example, some economic subsidy policies should be implemented to provide financial assistance to enterprises and individuals engaged in the production of traditional handicrafts, to alleviate their operating pressure. At the same time, the Government should also provide training and guidance in technology and marketing to help craftsmen improve their professional skills and strengthen their competitiveness in the market. The second solution is to set up a special fund for those handicrafts that are threatened with disappearance due to a shortage of talents or inheritance problems. The fund can provide support and encourage willing heirs to learn and master these precious skills. In addition, we should also make more students understand and meet traditional culture through the education system and school education, and study and research on handicrafts. This will not only cultivate their appreciation and creative talents, but also prepare them for the next generation of handicrafts. Finally, the public should be mobilized to participate in the protection of intangible cultural heritage by organizing various forms of exhibitions and

experiential activities to give the public more chances to contact and understand handicrafts, to enhance their understanding of handicrafts and improve their cultural confidence and cultural pride. Satisfying the above requires not only the joint efforts of the government, education, communities, and craftsmen, but also the support and cooperation of the whole society. Only in this way can we truly protect and promote the development of our handicrafts, so that they can flourish in the hands of outstanding heirs and continue the charm of centuries-old good manufacturing.

### **Conclusion**

In the process of in-depth study of Shanxi's traditional handicrafts and cultural heritage, it was found that they are not only valuable in terms of history and art, but also have real economic value in the modern economy. Craftsmen have largely sustained the sustainable development of local communities, created employment, promoted the export of handmade products, attracted tourism, and maintained the uniqueness of local character and identity. At the same time, it is also recognized that traditional handicrafts are not only crafts, but also lifestyles, people's understanding, and expression of life. Therefore, promoting the revival of traditional handicrafts in Shanxi Province not only helps to preserve and pass on valuable cultural heritage, but also has far-reaching implications for the social resilience and economic health of local communities. On a broader level, the development of traditional handicrafts also represents the valuing and recognition of human creativity and innovation and is an expression of human cultural diversity and ecological diversity.

The future of traditional handicrafts and the cultural heritage of Shanxi Province is yet to be further researched and explored, and we should devote all our efforts to the preservation and development of these heritages to realize the sustainable use of these valuable resources, not just to win economic benefits. This is an important social responsibility and our commitment to future generations. We expect that future studies will provide us with more information and insights, more strategies, and directions for creating an inclusive, innovative, and sustainable social environment.

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