Crafts in the Yangtze River Delta: their Resurgence and Relationship to *Design for Sustainability*

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my father for his love and wisdom.

Abstract

Modern manufacturing for global markets tends to homogenize material culture through its centralized production and divisive production processes. In contrast, craft practices usually have a strong local identity through their application of holistic making practices, context-based knowledge, culturally specific responses, and community-centred production. These characteristics are especially relevant to sustainability and its principles and values. For these reasons, there is a renewed interest in craft practices worldwide. Today, the Yangtze River Delta, one of the most developed regions in China with a long-established history of craft production, is witnessing a vibrant resurgence in traditional craft practices within the arenas of Intangible Cultural Heritage initiatives, creative endeavours and consumerism.

In order to understand the multifaceted nature of this resurgence and explore appropriate and effective approaches, including design's contribution, to ensuring the sustainability of traditional craft practices, this research investigates crafts in the YRD from the perspectives of *values* and *design for sustainability*. Due to the exploratory nature of the project, two research approaches are employed to conduct the field inquiry: grounded theory in which semi-structured interviews are used to collect field data, and a case study of a craft community in which a 4-stage participatory action activity is adopted.

The research results in five main findings and one outcome. The main argument of this research is that craft practices should be understood with a holistic notion of their embedded values, which not only supports crafts on a more immediate level but also considers deeper sustainability-related issues of ethical implications, cultural significance and equality. Based on the findings and outcome, this research recommends two approaches to ensuring the sustainability of crafts in the YRD – the *moderate commercial revitalization approach* and the *non-commercial conservation approach*. In addition, the research suggests that besides focusing on product, packaging, branding and marketing, design should also pay more attention to less tangible areas, i.e. facilitation of meaningful collaborations in craft practices; development of education and learning courses for younger generations; and design of customized services to enhance maker-consumer relationships and interactions.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a higher degree at this or any other university. Except stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own. Many of the ideas in this thesis were the product of discussion with my supervisor Professor Stuart Walker.

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Acknowledgements

Over the course of the research, I have received support from a large number of people, without whom it would not have been possible to complete this study.

First and foremost, I am grateful to my supervisor, Professor Stuart Walker for his invaluable advice and continuous support. His thought-provoking knowledge, wisdom and extensive experience have influenced me in my academic study and beyond. As a “how”-oriented design researcher, I have learned from him not only about *how* to do good academic research but also to ask *why* the research should be done, and *what* is the underlining value justifying the research. Thanks also to Professor Martyn Evans for his helpful inspiration and guidance during the field research trip, and to Dr. Ricardo Hernandez for his useful comments on the paper produced for this project. A particular note of appreciation to Helen Walker for her mentoring in academic writing as well as for providing me with coffee and encouragement, and to Xin Liang for her help with the preparation and visualization of materials for the workshop.

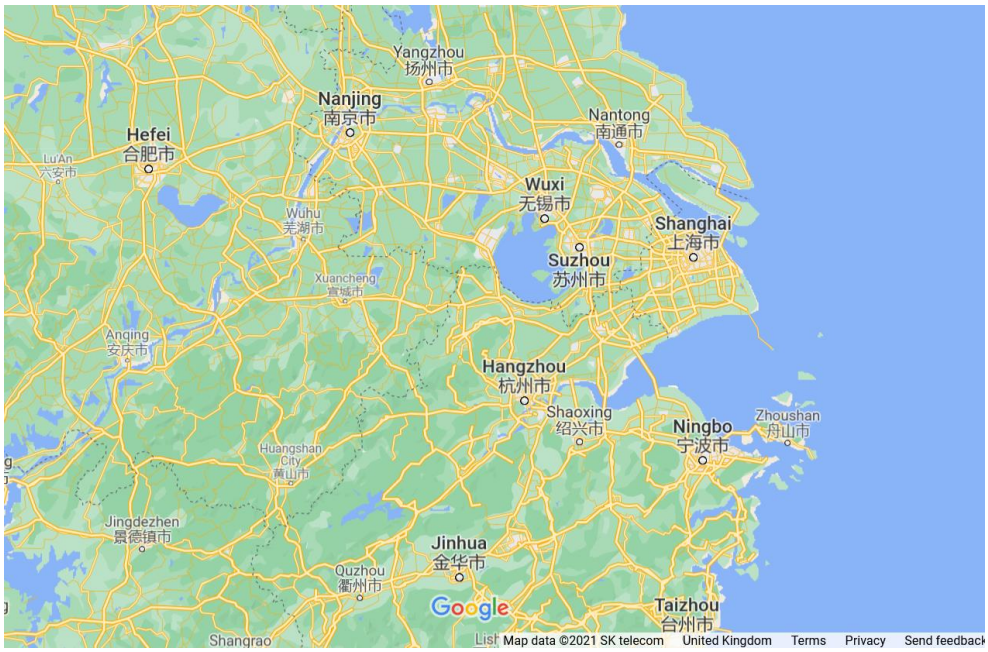
My deepest thanks must go to the informants and participants of the field research in the YRD of China for their time, trust and patience. Unfortunately, in a research project, it is advised that informants should remain anonymous. Sincere thanks must go to those making a financial contribution to this study, especially the China Scholarship Council for their support of this PhD project; the British Council for their “Crafting Futures” fund supporting the case study in Jingdezhen; and the PGR Conference Travel Fund of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Lancaster University. Thanks also to my sister for her support of the field research travel. I would also like to thank the teaching and administration staff at ImaginationLancaster. It is their kind help and support that have made my study and life in the UK so special.

Finally, my greatest gratitude goes to my husband Billy and my son Johnny. Without their tremendous understanding and tolerance, it would have been impossible for me to complete my studies.

Glossary of Terms

Yangtze River Delta (YRD)

The YRD is a triangular-shaped region located on the central-eastern coast of China. It comprises forty-one cities and covers the areas of Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Anhui provinces. This region has grown into one of the six megalopolitan regions in the world as well as one of the most-developed regions in China (Tian, 2011; Gov.cn, 2019). Historically, the region was a major cultural, economic and political centre with a long history of craft production and development. Jingdezhen, in the northeast of Jiangxi province and known as the Porcelain Capital of China, sits on the border of the YRD territory. Due to its significant influence on China's porcelain production and close proximity with the YRD region, this research also includes work conducted in Jingdezhen.



Territory of the Yangtze River Delta region (Source: Google map).

ICH Inheritor programme

This has the full name of "Representative Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritor Programme", and its Chinese name is *daibiaoxing de feiwuzhi wenhua yichan chuanchengren xiangmu*. Resembling the Living National Treasures system (UNESCO, 2002), this programme officially recognizes people who are highly skilled, and have long

been engaged, play an important role, and have a strong influence in particular Intangible Cultural Heritage practices. Inheritors are recognized at four levels: government: national, provincial, municipal and county. Recognition at the national level is granted once every five years by the Ministry of Culture (the Ministry of Culture and Tourism since 2018).

ICH Inheritor

The bearers or “holders” of ICH properties who are recognized and certified through the participation in the ICH Inheritor programme. The Chinese name is *daibiaoxing feiwuzhi wenhua chuangchengren*. See http://zwgk.mct.gov.cn/zfxxgkml/zcfg/zcjd/202012/t20201205_915474.html.

MAC (Master of Arts and Crafts)

MAC (abbreviation for Master of Arts and Crafts) is an official title, *gongyi meishu dashi* in Chinese, that has been awarded since 1979 to artists and craftspeople who have a high degree of knowledge and achievement in particular arts or crafts practices. This title is recognized at three levels: national, provincial and municipal. The recognition is regulated by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security. See http://zwgk.mct.gov.cn/zfxxgkml/fwzwhyc/202012/t20201206_916822.html.

Maker

Maker refers to the group of people who take part in the creation of crafts including design and making. The term in this thesis refers to craftspeople (including ICH inheritors, MAC masters, artisans), designers and artists, who are involved in the process of making craft objects, particularly those related to well-established traditional craft practices. Another group of people are also called “makers”, *chuangke* in Chinese, which is a concept imported from America. In China, this concept of maker means people who are passionate about making things as a hobby and not as their occupation. These things are generally related to technology while having little to do with traditional context and knowledge. The term “maker” used in this thesis does not include people in the latter group.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

This chapter establishes the background and motivations for the research (1.1); specifies the research scope and direction (1.2); and provides an overview of the research (1.3) including the aim and objectives, research questions, location of field research, methodology of the research, main research findings and related publications of the research. The structure of the thesis is also outlined (1.4) which helps the reader navigate through the materials.

1.1 Research Background and Motivations

This section establishes the background and the researcher's motivations for this project in terms of the context of craft resurgence and intangible cultural heritage, the values of craft and design for sustainability, and crafts in the Yangtze River Delta together with the challenges they are facing.

1.1.1 The Context of Craft Resurgence and Intangible Cultural Heritage

Traditional crafts and practices have long been regarded as going against the flow of technological, economic and societal progress (Jung and Stuart, 2015). According to several sources, the global rise of industrialization and consumer societies have hastened a decline in traditional craft practice and production across the world. This is evidenced in a series of research and reports. For example, Chudasri's thesis on craft industry in Thailand (2015); the report for the UK's Crafts Council in 2012 – Craft in an Age of Change (Crafts Council, 2012); and the research of Holroyd et al. (2017). Fortunately, more and more nations have recognized the value of this traditional knowledge and have begun making efforts to protect it from decline. As UNESCO initiated the Convention of Safeguarding Intangible Heritage in 2003, (hereafter referred to as UNESCO convention or UNESCO ICH initiative), recent decades have witnessed an increasing interest in and recognition of craft production and practices worldwide.

Some people see the value of craft as a counterpoint to our current complex, distracting lifestyles in the postmodern era. As British ceramicist Emma Bridgewater said, “to be analogue in a digital world is terrifically appealing” (HCA conference, 2018). Locale-based crafts provide a lens, through which to view people, place, materials and traditions, that helps create a deeper sense of identity and belonging; a stable reference point in a fast-changing, globalized world. This is especially relevant to rebuilding our lost connections to place because craft practices often incorporate intergenerational, place-based knowledge about local materials and the cultural meanings of local designs (Jung and Walker, 2018, p. 16).

Though China has undergone rapid modernization over recent decades, it has its industrial roots in craft heritage which traces its history from the unmechanized, household-based “proto-industries” in the early twentieth century, through the socialist transformation of handicraft cooperatives during Mao’s period, to the period of semi-mechanized large state-owned factories (Eyferth, 2003; Zhou, 2014). China recognizes the importance to the country of this heritage and is one of the earliest countries to have ratified the UNESCO convention in 2004 (ihchina.cn). It adopted the UNESCO convention and formed its own Intangible Cultural Heritage programme (Maggs, 2019, p. 781), such as the “representative ICH Inheritor programme” (ihcina.cn, hereafter referred to as ICH Inheritor programme). Furthermore, the spirit of craftsmanship (*gong jiang jing shen*) has recently been identified as a vital ingredient for the nation’s manufacturing development (gov.cn, 2017a). Also, in 2017 the Craft Revitalization Plan was issued by the central government’s State Council to reintroduce crafts into everyday life (gov.cn, 2017b). Today, craftspeople (*gong jiang*), ingenuity (*jiang xin*) and Intangible Cultural Heritage are frequently referred to by Chinese politicians, policy makers, business promoters and academics; these terms are now part of the mainstream public discourse and regarded as important elements for reconstructing the nation’s cultural self-confidence (Yang, 2018). As marginalized crafts and indigenous knowledge have gained sociopolitical power and attention, there is a renewal of interest in craft objects and craft practices across China within the arenas of

creative industry and craft revitalization initiatives.

1.1.2 The Values of Craft and Design for Sustainability

Craft is “closely related to design in the sense of lying between art, which relies on skills, and science, which relies on knowledge” (Svengren Holm, 2014, p. 328). Various sources have defined craft from different angles. Some are focused on its characteristics of function, process, materials and skills (e.g. Shiner, 2012). Other scholars focus on its way of knowing and thinking rooted in the material culture of territory (e.g. Küchler and Miller, 2005; Adamson, 2007, 2010). Supplementing these understandings, this research stresses the cultural dimension and human values of craft, which embodies local knowledge, tradition, cultural identity, personal belonging, quality work, as well as the material culture of a place.

Notions of sustainability have since expanded from economic and technical levels to societal and cultural levels that entail more people-focused considerations (Ceschin and Gaziulusoy, 2016). In the field of sustainable design, notions have evolved from being primarily technology-based (green design, eco-modernism, ecoefficiency, etc.), to more holistic understandings, e.g., Walkers’ Quadruple Bottom Line of Design for Sustainability (2014, hereafter referred to as Walker’s QBL) which includes three meanings – practical, social and personal – and economic means; and Transition Design (Irwin 2015) in which social and cultural aspects of human values are considered vital in bringing about systemic change.

It is on these comparable, more intangible levels that the nature of craft is consistent with sustainability principles. Although, for many fields, understanding sustainability and implementing its measures are still on instrumental levels, this research acknowledges that it is especially pertinent to understand the sustainability of craft beyond supporting craft per se to include more significant aspects of culture, belonging, sense of place and humanity; because these together contribute to the future of sustainability as a whole.

The locally based model of craft production is explored in this study in terms of its

relationship to sustainability; as a way of maintaining a locally relevant material culture; and as a potential aspect of local production that could be combined with aspects of post-modern production to develop more sustainable modes of making material culture. Despite the potentially strong relationship between craft and sustainability (in all its interpretations), there is still only limited research theoretically exploring these relationships and investigating how craft can more effectively contribute to post-modern modes of production/consumption and life in general.

1.1.3 Crafts in the Yangtze River Delta and the Challenges they are Facing

The Yangtze River Delta (hereafter referred to as the YRD), the region of interest for this PhD research, has a long craft history, in which a considerable number of crafts are recognized as Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereafter referred to as ICH crafts) at international, national, provincial, municipal and county levels (ihchina.cn). These include traditional porcelain from Jingdezhen, which is known as the Porcelain Capital of China, and one of the four famous Chinese embroideries – Su-embroidery from Suzhou.

This region is also one of China's most developed and highly concentrated industrial areas with significant societal and environmental issues due to rapid industrialization and urbanization (Shen et al., 2019). It has become one of the most dynamic areas to have embraced the country's ICH policies and it has been exploring the revitalization of ICH crafts in its cultural and industrial contexts. Crafts in the region have not only been protected through the country's ICH initiatives such as the ICH inheritor programme (MCT, 2015), investment in specialized museums, and dedicated exhibitions, but they have also been revitalized in the commercial sector by producing goods for the consumer market. In recent years, many of the ICH crafts that were once limited to export and local circulation have been put on the online market through major YRD-

based e-commerce companies such as *Taobao*[1]and *Dongjia*[2] and are now sold all over the country (Pan and Li, 2015). As consumer culture seeks its inspiration from ICH and traditional crafts, local brands have begun to emerge in collaboration with fashion houses to produce high-quality goods following local styles (e.g. Shang Xia brand in collaboration with the French Hermes Group, lanecrawford.com); and design enterprises based on traditional crafts and rural lifestyles have sprung up (e.g. PINWU design studio, designboom.com).

Within this context, there needs to be a good understanding of how these efforts translate into meaningful practices in ways that are sensitive to people, place and community, along with the economic benefits. Given this, the researcher's concern is how to understand and consider the various elements present in this region – well-established crafts, strong and influential policy supports, dynamic, technological and commercial development, and a growing economy – in order to best realize the potential values of crafts relevant to our time and to work towards a sustainable future. In particular, the researcher is interested in the potential for design to make a constructive contribution.

1.2 Research Scope and Direction

Craft is understood in this research as a complex activity that contains practical, epistemological and ontological characteristics (as per Section 2.1.2). This notion emphasizes that craft is not only to do with traditional skills, knowledge and culture, but also a way of knowing and thinking our ever-changing material world. Craft has pushed its boundaries, especially in the western countries, from preserving heritage crafts, which is more in line with the purposes of the UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage initiative, to exploring a more contemporary innovation in craft sector which combines

1 Taobao is the largest e-commerce company in China and it has created online shopping that dominates the consumption by Chinese people (taobao.com).

2 Dongjia is a mobile application founded in 2015 for promoting and selling Chinese crafts, featuring traditional crafts including those awarded Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) status, and their makers (idongjia.cn). It resembles the Etsy website in the West.

traditional craft thinking with new technologies and has close relationship with the Maker Culture (e.g., Crafts Council, 2016). However, as identified from literature and confirmed in the field research, craft practices in the YRD, though some of them adopting technology interventions, mostly focus on conserving and revitalizing them in contemporary life and economy as a type of Intangible Cultural Heritage. These craft practices have a clear distinction from the “creations” by the “makers” from the makers community. Makers in the YRD mainly dedicate themselves to “information and communication industry” and focus on “technological creativity” (Sang and Simpson, 2019), which have little to do with traditional crafts and contexts (Sections 2.2.2.4, 6.1.2.1). Due to this difference in nature between the two fields and the limited time for a PhD project, this research mainly focuses on craft practices of the YRD in the former context. Therefore, the term “maker” used in this thesis refers to the people involved in well-established craft productions and practices, as annotated in the *Glossary of Terms* (p. xxiv).

In terms of the categories of particular crafts, there are a great variety in the YRD region. According to the categorization of China’s ICH inheritor programme, crafts are included in “Traditional Craftsmanship” which ranges from the utilitarian, primarily object-based, to the decorative, primarily skill-based. Some cases are also included in “Traditional Fine Art” such as various carvings, New Year woodblock prints, paper cutting, etc. (ihchina.cn). This research project focuses on crafts and sustainability from a design perspective – investigating potentials for sustaining crafts through exploring their connections to contemporary life via design. Everyday life is identified by emergent scholarship as an important domain for sustainability change (Kossoff, 2015, p. 35). Therefore, crafts that have potential for use in everyday life would be more feasible and conducive for building sustainable lifestyles. In addition, there is limited time for a PhD project to include a large variety of crafts to be researched thoroughly. It is due to these premises that this research focuses mainly on crafts that are originally more utilitarian and were used in everyday life but may or may not be in use anymore, e.g., textiles, porcelain, bronzeware etc. rather than those decorative, more art-based

crafts such as ivory carving and musical instruments.

Design has evolved from designing single objects (signs) to focusing on interactions, places and systems (Buchanan, 2001, pp.3-23). It has pushed its boundaries to work for broader areas including services, interactions, experience, and social activities (e.g. with literature on “emotional design” (Chapman, 2005); “service design” (Kimbell, 2015); “co-design” (Sanders and Stappers, 2008); and “social innovation” (Manzini, 2015). For the purposes of this project, this research addresses design in relationship to crafts not only in its tangible function (design of useful, pleasurable objects and packaging) but also in its intangible contributions (design of services, branding, marketing, and facilitation in collaborations). In terms of design for sustainability, this research emphasizes a holistic understanding within Walker’s QBL including economic, environmental, social, cultural and personal dimensions as mentioned in Section 1.1.2.

Finally, it is important to highlight that this research does not only focus on supporting crafts themselves (i.e. design in products, processes and marketing) but also on ensuring their intrinsic values will be protected, perceived and transformed into new forms and expressions.

1.3 Research Overview

This section presents the overview of the research including the aim and objectives, research questions, location of the field research, methodology of the research, main research findings, and related publications of the research.

1.3.1 Aim and Objectives

The overarching aim of the research is to address three research questions (1.3.2) that seek to investigate crafts and traditional practices in the Yangtze River Delta and the values embedded in them within the context of sustainability, by exploring appropriate and effective approaches, including design contributions, to helping crafts in the region move towards a sustainable future.

To achieve this aim, the following objectives are set:

1. To understand the characteristics of crafts in the YRD and identify the particular issues among craft communities from field analysis;
2. To understand the-state-of-the-art of the current resurgence in craft practices, and identify their patterns and manifestations;
3. Based on information from the previous phases, to generate initial insights and concepts to inform further directions;
4. To review the outcome(s) developed from Objective 3, and explore potential approaches and strategies within a real craft community;
5. Based on the above, to determine approaches including areas for design contribution to enabling a sustainable transformation in crafts of the YRD, and to make recommendations for discussion and validation.

1.3.2 Research Questions

Three main research questions were developed from the conclusions of the literature review as guidelines for the field research:

RQ1: How can we understand the characteristics and values of crafts and the resurgence of traditional practices in the YRD?

RQ2: What are the appropriate and effective approaches in line with sustainability principles to ensuring the long-term development of crafts in the region?

RQ3: Can design make a constructive and meaningful contribution to enabling a sustainable transformation in crafts of the region, if so, in what areas?

1.3.3 Location of Field Research

The location of the research was a specific area of the Yangtze River Delta in China. Identified from the literature review, the region had a rich history of craft production and traditional practices were experiencing a resurgence within the context of ICH conservation and creative industries. Porcelain and textiles were identified as major categories in the region.

The work was undertaken in the four cities of Shanghai, Suzhou, Hangzhou, and Jingdezhen where an in-depth case study on the porcelain community was also conducted (Figure 1.1). In total, five types of crafts are investigated in this research including the two major types of porcelain and textiles, plus woodcarving, oiled paper umbrella making, and bronze craft.

Figure 1.1. Location of field research

1.3.4 Methodology of Research

There is only limited published evidence regarding the relationship and the role of design in crafts of the YRD, especially at a general theoretical level. This research, therefore, is predominantly exploratory and qualitative in nature. A grounded theory approach is employed to generate – from the ground up – ideas and concepts emerging from real-life situations with the data collected from the YRD. Meanwhile, in order to understand craft-related contexts, and make sense of the life and work of

craftspeople, other stakeholders, and the craft community in depth, this research also employs a case study approach in which a 4-stage participatory action research activity is used to generate data and develop insights. The field research includes two research phases:

- **Field Research Phase I** is a general study employing a grounded theory approach and aimed at understanding the context and characteristics of crafts and craft practices in the YRD in a general sense, involving five types of crafts. The work was undertaken in the four cities of Shanghai, Suzhou, Hangzhou and Jingdezhen. Semi-structured interviews and participant observations were the main methods used to collect data.
- **Field Research Phase II** is an in-depth case study on porcelain crafts in Jingdezhen conducted with a participatory action approach, aiming to consolidate and review findings from Field Research Phase I and explore potential directions, areas and strategies for design to make a constructive contribution. A 4-stage research activity was designed as a strategy to develop the study – in terms of ethnography, sense-making, a co-creation workshop and a practice-based experimental project. Multiple anthropological and co-design methods were used to collect data.

The overview of the methodology is presented in Figure 1.2 (on the next page).

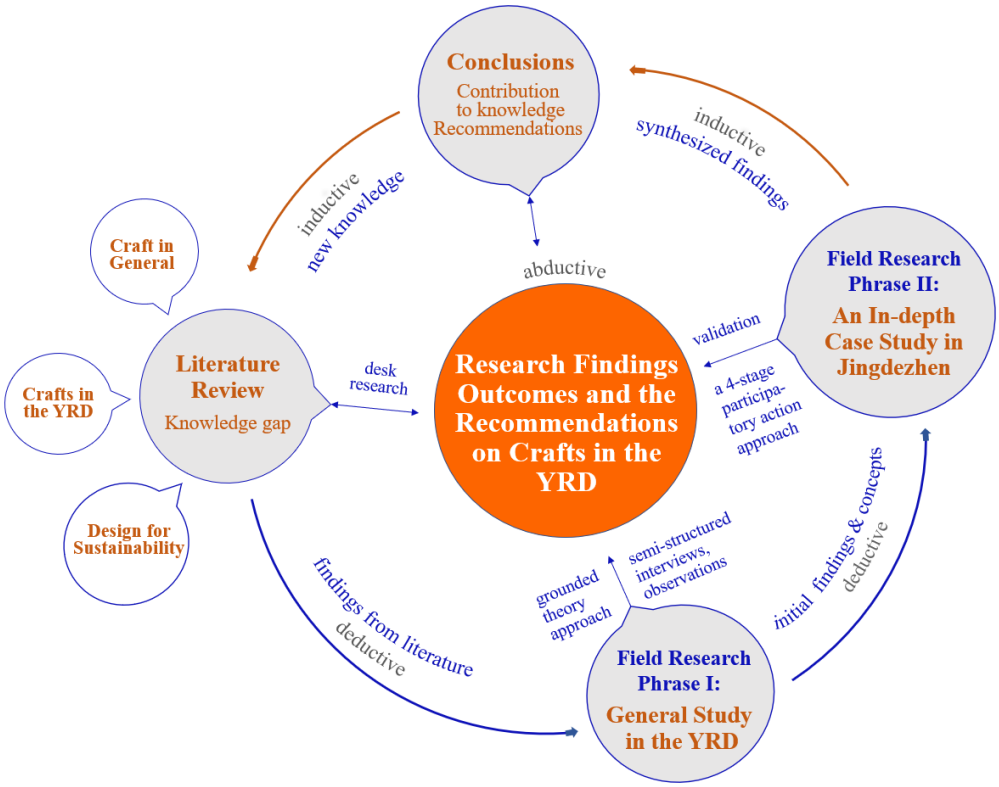

Figure 1.2. Methodology of research

1.3.5 Main Research Findings and Outcome

This PhD project produced five main research findings and one outcome:

1. While many traditional crafts in the YRD are in decline, some are undergoing significant revitalization, for use in everyday life; or transforming into commodities and arts through developments in product lines, designs, processes, packaging and branding, and marketing. Four craft categories were identified as four different approaches of craft resurgence in the region, namely, *traditional craft, modified craft, innovative craft* and *objets d'art*, each of which represents a rather different set of values.

2. Among these four approaches, this research finds that *modified craft* tends to be a relatively promising approach to sustaining crafts, especially those that have potential for contemporary use, in an economically viable fashion without destroying the crafts' intrinsic nature. Meanwhile, continuing *traditional craft* practices through non-commercial conservation (e.g. China's ICH programme

and related initiatives) can best ensure the cultural and ethical significance of the region's/nation's Intangible Cultural Heritage, especially for those that are culturally vital and spiritually meaningful but have less potential for contemporary use. However, neither *innovative craft* nor *objets d'art* is, on its own, an appropriate approach to moving crafts towards a healthy and sustainable future.

3. Two significant issues are identified among craft communities in the YRD: 1) socioeconomic inequality and polarization due to unequal recognition of the official ICH programme and unaffordability of *objets d'art*; 2) competing interests and tensions exist among stakeholders, especially between local craftspeople and contemporary creatives, and are caused by conflicting values and priorities.

4. Craft production in the YRD can be characterized as a deconstructed industrial model that entails community collaborations among stakeholders, especially between local craftspeople and various contemporary creatives. However, within these collaborations tensions and contradictions exist with respect to different values, priorities and motivations (as mentioned in Main Finding 3).

5. To overcome the tensions among stakeholders, facilitating meaningful collaborations through engaging contemporary creatives in "immersive" making practices with local craftspeople can nourish a shared, holistic notion of values, build closer relationships and boost collective creativity. Design has the potential to contribute to these collaboration practices especially in the area of guiding professional and ideologically different people to a "common place" and facilitating co-creation processes with situated tactics and tools.

   Outcome: a comprehensive understanding of values embedded in the contemporary craft practices of the YRD was developed, drawing from Schwartz's values circumplex, Walker's QBL and the empirical findings from the field research (as per Figure 8.3 *the Combined Values Model*).

The research highlights the importance of the "values" approach. Based on the findings

and outcome, this research recommends two approaches to ensuring the sustainability of crafts in the YRD – the *moderate commercial revitalization* approach (*modified crafts* approach) and the *non-commercial conservation approach* (a number of *traditional crafts* supported under this approach, i.e. China's ICH inheritor programme). In addition, the research suggests that besides focusing on product, packaging, branding and marketing, design should also pay more attention to less tangible areas, i.e. facilitation of collaborations in craft practices; development of education and learning courses for younger generations; and design of customized services to enhance maker-consumer relationships and interactions.

1.3.6 Publications Resulting from this Research

Zhan, X. and Walker, S. (2019). Craft as Leverage for Sustainable Design Transformation: A Theoretical Foundation, *The Design Journal* 22 (4): 503-523. A revised version of a paper presented on the International Association of Societies of Design Research Conference 2017, The College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning, University of Cincinnati, 31 October – 3 November 2017, Cincinnati.

Zhan, X., Walker, S. and Hu, J. (2019). Crafting Sustainable Value through "Relational Making": A Case Study - the Porcelain Town of Jingdezhen, Proceeding of the International Association of Societies of Design Research Conference 2019, Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University, 02-05 September 2019, Manchester.

Zhan, X. and Walker, S. (2018). Value Direction: Moving Crafts toward Sustainability in the Yangtze River Delta, China, *Sustainability* 10(4):1-20.

Zhan, X. (2017). Crafts in the Yangtze River Delta, China: Designing A Renewed Ecology for Sustainability, *The Design Journal* 20 (6):867-876.

Zhan, X. Walker, S. Hernandez-Pardo, R. and Evans, M. (2017). Craft and Sustainability: Design Intervention in Crafts in the Yangtze River Delta, *The Design Journal* (Sup1): S2919-2934. A paper presented on the 12th International

Conference of the European Academy of Design, Sapienza University of Rome, 12-14 April 2017, Rome.

1.4 Structure of Thesis

This thesis consists of nine chapters, as mapped in Figure 1.3.

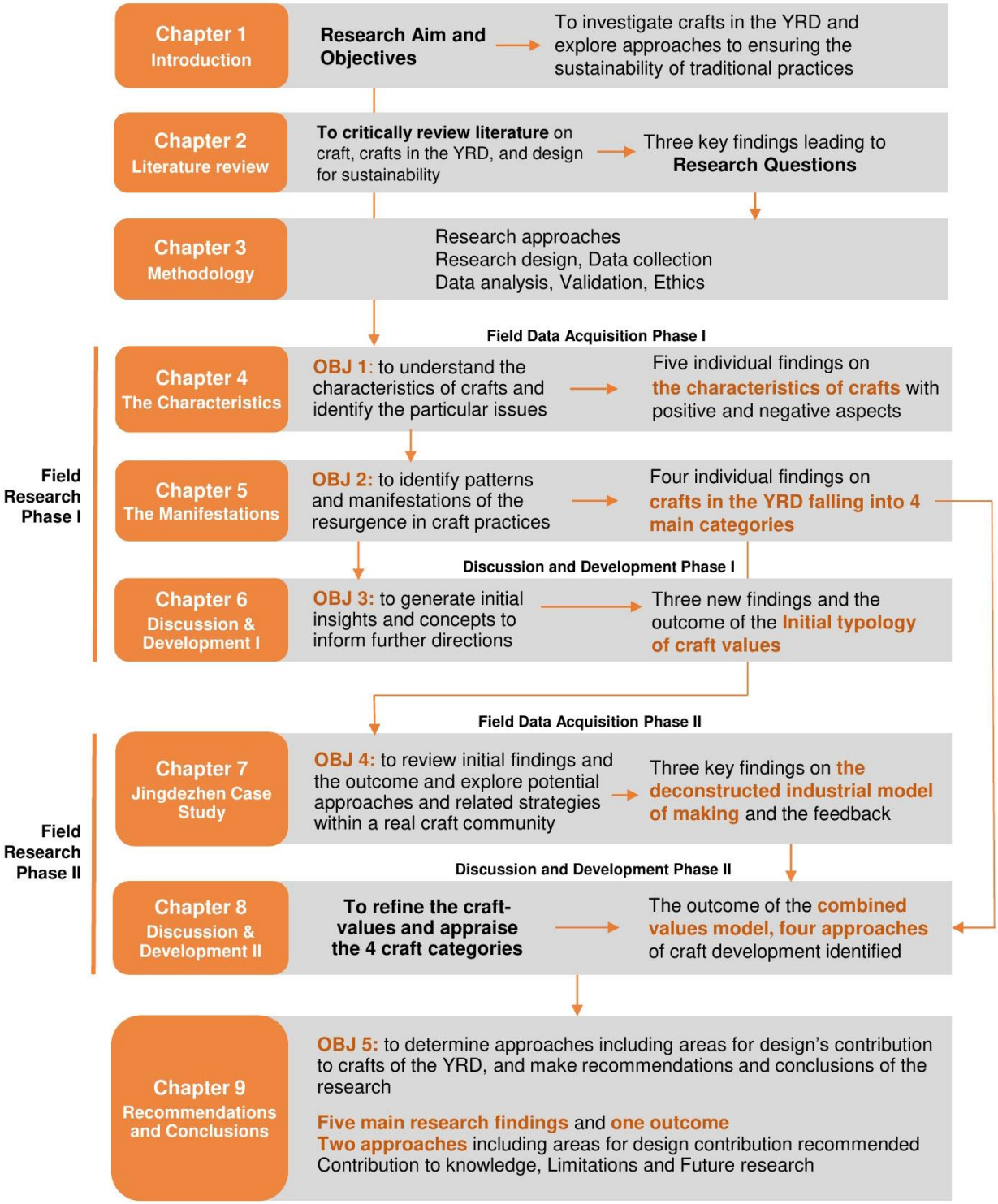

Figure 1.3. Structure of thesis

Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature and a discussion leading to the development of the research questions. It begins with a critical review on craft(s) in general from a theoretical perspective (2.1), followed by a review on crafts of China and the YRD in particular (2.2), and on the main notions, approaches and concepts of design for sustainability (2.3). Next, findings from the previous sections are synthesized resulting in three key findings (2.4). Lastly, these key findings are discussed and concluded (2.5), which leads to the identification of knowledge gaps and the main research questions (2.6).

Chapter 3 presents the research design, explaining and justifying the research approaches chosen and methods employed in this project. It begins with a discussion of the research types and approaches (3.1), followed by the research design (3.2), data collection methods (3.3), data analysis (3.4), the validation of the research findings (3.5), and lastly, ethics approval (3.6).

Chapter 4 presents the analysis of data collected from Field Research Phase I with respect to the characteristics of crafts in the YRD. It begins with a detailed description of the methods employed for data acquisition (4.1), followed by the analysis of the data whose results are organized into five themes (4.2), discussion of the analysis results leading to five individual findings (4.3). Lastly these individual findings are summarized into a principal finding which depicts the characteristics of crafts in the YRD with both positive and negative traits (4.4).

Chapter 5 presents another part of the analysis of data collected from Field Research Phase I with respect to the manifestations of the resurgence in craft practices of the YRD. It contains the description of data acquisition (5.1); the analysis of data (5.2) including data on categorizations of crafts (5.2.1), validation of the identified categorization, namely the four craft categories (5.2.2) and manifestations of the identified four categories (5.2.3), discussion of the analysis results leading to four individual findings (5.3); and a chapter summary identifying four craft categories (*traditional, modified, innovative* and *objets d'art*) as manifestations of craft resurgence in the YRD (5.4).

Chapter 6 presents a discussion of the findings from previous research stages and a development of an initial typology of craft values. It begins with the discussion of the findings from Field Research Phase I in relationship to findings from literature (6.1), through which the similarities, disparities and three new findings are resulted from the comparison (6.2). Then, the positive characteristics of craft(s) are discussed in relationship to sustainability and values, which leads to a development of an initial typology of craft values (6.3). Lastly, outcomes of this chapter are summarized and directions for the next stage of field research outlined (6.4).

Chapter 7 presents the analysis of data collected from Field Research Phase II (the in-depth case study) on the porcelain craft community in Jingdezhen. It contains the introduction of the case study's site, methods of data acquisition (7.1), data analysis and results (7.2), discussion of the results leading to eight individual findings including feedback on the typology of craft values (7.3), and lastly a summary of the individual findings into three key findings on porcelain crafts in Jingdezhen (7.4).

Chapter 8 synthesizes and discusses the values of craft identified from the field in relation to findings from literature, Schwartz's values theory and Walker's QBL in particular, which results in a comprehensive understanding of the values embedded in contemporary craft practices – *a Combined Values Model* (8.1). Using this model, the four categories of crafts identified from the field are appraised and the profile of the values embedded in their practices are plotted respectively (8.2). Through a comparison of these four categories in terms of purpose, priorities and outcomes, significant differences are revealed (8.3). The chapter closes with a summary of the outcomes (8.4).

Chapter 9 brings together the various findings and outcomes to form general conclusions. It synthesizes the overall findings and outcomes and summarizes them into *five main research findings and one outcome*, through the discussion of which a series of recommendations for crafts in the YRD including design's contribution are made (9.1). In addition, the research's original contribution to knowledge is discussed, together with its potential beneficiaries (9.2). Then, the limitations of this investigation

are reflected upon (9.3), and opportunities for further research outlined (9.4). Finally, the chapter closes with the concluding remarks (9.5).

Chapter 2. Literature Review

This chapter presents a literature review on the themes of craft in general (2.1); crafts in the Yangtze River Delta (YRD) of China (2.2); and design for sustainability (2.3). A series of findings are identified through a systemic and critical review into related literature. Thereafter, these findings were synthesized resulting in three key findings (2.4). Further directions as field research opportunities emerged from the discussion and conclusion of the findings (2.5), which led to the main research questions (2.6).

2.1 Craft in General

For centuries, craft has echoed the rhythms of daily life (Hang and Guo, 2012, introduction.) with its rich materiality, deep-rooted cultural identity and intrinsic values, such as offering good-quality work, and expressing cultural and ethical mores (Sennett, 2008; Walker et al., 2018). How we understand the term “craft” determines how we perceive its value when it comes to considering it in relation to *design for sustainability*.

2.1.1 Defining Craft

2.1.1.1 Craft: a polythetic category

There are various definitions of “craft” in the literature: craft as a process or practice; craft as a category of disciplines (Shiner, 2012); craft as a form of art; craft as a functional satisfaction of physical needs (Risatti, 2007, pp.13-35); craft as an approach to understanding the realm of art and design (Risatti, 2007, preface). Amongst these definitions, the words “handmade”, “skill”, “mastery”, “material”, “function”, “process”, “authentic”, and “aesthetics” are frequently used and discussed. Although there is extensive writing and critique on the subject from diverse social, economic, historical and technological perspectives, much of it only partially defines craft (Greenhalgh, ed. by Dormer, 1997, foreword).

Attempts to define “craft” have given rise to a wide range of specialized literature (e.g. Lucie-Smith, 1981; Adamson, 2007, 2010; Risatti, 2007; Sennett, 2008; Niedderer,

2014; Hang and Guo, 2012). Among these writings, craft is regarded as the most elusive of concepts, which belongs to a "polythetic category" (Marchand, 2016, p.3, cited in Hyland, 2016), because it cannot be absolutely fixed by one particular definition. Therefore, a review of craft as a unified system is needed.

2.1.2 A Review of Craft as A System

When talking about the word craft in terms of its Anglo-Saxon origins, Langlands (2017, p.17) defines it as skill – a physical, mental and spiritual skill. Informed by this definition and a combination of other ideas about craft in the literature (e.g. Adamson, 2010; Sennett, 2008; Walker, 2014a; Marchand, 2010; Shiner, 2012), an understanding of craft emerges from three different perspectives – practical, epistemological and ontological. These are discussed below.

2.1.2.1 Practical: craft as a way of making

Specialized knowledge

Adamson (2010, p.3) proposes an open-ended definition of craft that suggests it is "the application of skill and material-based knowledge to relatively small-scale production". This gives room for a wide range of practices and is in accord with understandings that recognize craft in terms of embodied knowledge, materials, localization, small scale, etc. (Shiner, 2012, p.239). This relationship between knowledge and craft's tangible outputs is commonly discussed in the literature. Sennett (2008, p.95), for example, discusses the embodied or tacit knowledge embedded in craft practices (for a discussion of tacit knowledge see Polanyi 1961, ed. in L. Prusak, 1997). Sennett says craft establishes "a realm of skill and knowledge perhaps beyond human verbal capacities to explain" (2008, p.295). This know-how, skill or expertise is acquired over long periods of time by engaging in the slow pace of craft-making practices (ibid.). Traditionally, these specialized skills and areas of knowledge were passed down from one generation to the next through an apprentice system, where a newcomer works alongside, observes, practises and learns from a skilled craftsperson. This form of knowledge-sharing and skill development shaped the unique relationship between

expert and pupil.

Localization

In addition, this kind of knowledge is traditionally developed in specific contexts (Brown, 2014, p.6), with locally-specific materials and resources, and serving local human needs. Craftspeople root their practices in particular places, frequently building on local traditions (Crafts Council, 2012). Hence, a craft practice will often represent an intensely personal or symbiotic relationship with a locality (Racz, 2009; Williams et al., 1992, p.31) and is as unique to each locale as it is to each person. Hence, “local” and “diversity” are both important characteristics of craft practices. Today, however, due to digital communications, craftspeople can easily follow each other’s work and be connected across large geographical areas. This will undoubtedly affect the sense of the local in contemporary craft (Brown, 2014). Even so, as a response to globalization, mass-produced products and homogenized aesthetics, we are seeing a growing interest in local identity and products produced through craft practices (e.g. China’s Craft Revitalization Plan, Gov.cn 2017b; some fashion houses cooperating with craftspeople to develop new products such as Shangxia Brand in China, Lanecrawford.com; British Council’s Crafting Futures Programme, 2018; Thackara, 2006).

Ecological practice: pro-environment, continuity and slow change

Although there may be some exceptions, many crafts, especially the more traditional crafts, are commonly considered to have relatively low environmental impacts (Li, 2006, p.109). Some crafts, however, may have significant energy requirements, such as the use of ceramic kilns and glass-blowing kilns, and some may use toxic substances, such as in the tanning of leather. Many traditional processes use natural alternatives (like oak bark for tanning), and many of these craft materials are renewable, such as wood, wool, and plant-based dyes. Hand skills and human energy are significant parts of the process, usually along with small machines like lathes, sanders and electric saws. Also, craft objects tend to have long lifespans and their traditional designs – honed over generations – give them an appearance of

timelessness (Ree, 1997 cited in Nugraha, 2012, p.106); this aesthetic quality is very different from many modern products that are often short-lived, fashion-oriented, technology-dependent and made by mass production.

The ecological attributes of craft products are not just superficially embodied through the use of eco-friendly resources, recyclable materials, respect of nature, etc., but are reflected in the culture of craft as a whole. This point is supported by the theory of cultural ecology (Steward, 1990), which argues that any particular cultural change, especially on a relatively small scale, is induced by adaptation via technologies, practices and knowledge that enable people to live in their environment. Craft processes will frequently make use of local materials and appropriate technology in the local environment. The technology is constrained and influenced by that specific environment and it is adapted as circumstances change. This constantly evolving process creates a unique culture, which is part of a local ecological system and yields locally appropriate material goods. In turn, culturally ecological changes are reflected in the craft that contains them.

Furthermore, based on research on the papermaking handcrafts in China, Eyferth (2009) holds that craft knowledge and ability can only function collaboratively among makers in certain societies and in particular geographic places; once the natural and social relations break, the craft knowledge becomes invalid. Research in Jingdezhen's ceramic industry of China also shows how ceramic crafts in this city have adapted and evolved over time, responding to the changes in the ecology, the culture, and the social circumstances (Fang, 2015). In turn, these changes and adaptations have contributed to the development of a dynamic, and seemingly robust, ecology for sustaining the ceramic craft industry in the present day. Meanwhile, all these social, cultural and economic characteristics and changes are reflected in the ceramic products themselves in terms of their function, form, quality, pattern and overall aesthetic. Most of all, these responses, adaptations and transformations have enabled the ceramic crafts to stay relevant in a fast-changing social context. This is, indeed, a vital practical consideration because, unless they are able to maintain relevance, traditional practices

tend to wither and die.

2.1.2.2 Epistemological: craft as a way of knowing and thinking

Adamson says that “craft is not a defined practice but a way of thinking through practices of all kinds” (2007, p.7). Craft as a way of *thinking-through-doing* is an important epistemological insight, which forms the basis of the contemporary Maker Movement and has been the subject of extensive exploration. Progress in cognitive studies, neuroscience, philosophy of mind, and ethnographic fieldwork has led to revised understandings of craft, especially with respect to craft knowledge and the learning processes offered through apprenticeship.

Multiple ways of knowing

Some argue that craft reflects multiple ways of knowing, which have the ability to engender complex thinking (Crawford, 2009, p.23). Contrary to linguistic ways of knowing, the tacit knowledge inherent in craft practice is, as Polanyi (1961, ed. in L. Prusak, 1997) argues, a complex knowing process on which other types of knowledge (e.g. the cognitive) are based. “Embodied knowledge is more than merely skilled practice and performance, and the body plays a key role in the making and recall of a wide spectrum of knowledge, including the conceptual kind” (Marchand, 2010, p.18). Because of its seemingly uncommunicative nature, Metcalf (1997, pp.74 -75) describes it as "bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence", which is a way of knowing that has little to do with conceptual thinking. However, this is not the entirety of craft knowledge. Sennett (2008, p.50) points out that the self-awareness facet of reflection plays a part in the craft-making process, making judgements about tacit habits and reviewing assumptions. Thus, tacit knowledge and explicit awareness are interconnected in the craft-making process.

Experiential and cognitive

Experience and practice are critical aspects in both acquisition and sharing of tacit knowledge (Lam, 2000) and craft quality emerges from their combined application. They exemplify two aspects of human intelligence: the experiential and the cognitive, which are claimed to be equally important in the theory of multiple intelligences

(Gardner, 1999). Furthermore, some knowledge management (KM) scholars argue that these two aspects of craft ability, i.e. a craftsperson's embedded or tacit knowledge, can be largely explicated and codified (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995, cited in Niedderer and Townsend, 2011). This is evident in many craft-based, practice-led researchers' writings and reflections, as Nimkulrat (2012, p.11) notes "The procedural and experiential knowledge thus becomes explicit as a written text and/or as visual representations".

This reinforces Marchand's argument about craft knowledge that combines text and image as not just an embodiment and reproduction of the master's tacit know-how, but also gives rise to a variety of experiences, which are based on the same foundation but combine the application of visual and verbal understandings, reasoning and individual technique, style, and characteristics.

Problem-solving process

When discussing work associated with the Droog design collective from the Netherlands, Adamson states that the "craft imaginary and process" are embraced into this well-known and well-publicized brand, implying that craftsmanship is not merely bodily skills, but also a process of problem-solving (2007, p.34). Similarly, Follett and Valentine (2010, p.5) refer to the thought processes used in craft making as a "system of thinking" that can serve as a strong agency to inform design (Woolley, 2011, p.31) and design organizations, especially with respect to interdisciplinary collaboration. This notion is supported by Niedderer and Townsend who say "the complex thinking engendered by craft knowledge could benefit knowledge exchange and shared understanding" across boundaries (Niedderer and Townsend, 2011, p.5).

Craft as a problem-solving process has been investigated in recent years, as evidenced by a series of projects funded by the UK's Crafts Council that bring together multi-disciplinary researchers, practitioners and enterprises to conduct cross-boundary explorations (e.g. AHRC Creative Economy Knowledge Exchange projects, and the Maker-Shift Conference, 2016). These multi-disciplinary makers included: biomaterial scientists who were exploring material innovation for traditional crafts; textile

artisans/designers who were solving problems in digital fabrication; surgeons who were seeking solutions through craft thinking, etc. Through cross-disciplinary collaboration, different areas of knowledge can be shared via “boundary objects”, employing ways of thinking inherent to the craft process (see Brown and Duguid, 1998, pp.103-104). In such collaborations and explorations, craft can provide an overarching guideline for the emerging interdisciplinary system, or it can serve as a boundary object to build common understanding. This understanding has similar epistemological foundations with the Maker movement, which emphasizes learning-through-doing by combining technological exploration with artisan spirit.

Craft as a way of thinking has also brought about new developments in the area of “digital crafts”, which focus on Web Development, Cybersecurity, and UX Design (Sennett, 2008, pp.39-44), and therefore address an entirely different field. These are different from traditional crafts that employ predominantly natural materials and are concerned with the manipulating, shaping and joining of materials to create physical artefacts. Although “digital crafts” are physically different from traditional crafts they share the common ground at an epistemological level i.e. that craft is a problem-solving process.

Existential way of knowing

As another way of knowing, some scholars introduce “spiritual intelligence” as an unquantifiable parallel counterpart of rational (IQ) and emotional (EQ) intelligence (see King and DeCicco, 2009). Spiritual intelligence refers to critical existential thinking, personal meaning production, transcendental awareness, and conscious state expansion (King and DeCicco, 2009). Emmons (2000, p.59) defines it as "the adaptive use of spiritual information to facilitate everyday problem solving and goal attainment”. Spiritual intelligence is a widely-appreciated wisdom in both religion and the sciences. Due to the challenge of codifying scientific criteria for spiritual intelligence, Gardner (2000) suggests using the term “existential intelligence” instead of “spiritual” to explore “the nature of existence in its multifarious guises”. Here, existential thinking in craft is regarded as being related to the ontological level, and is discussed further in the next

section.

2.1.2.3 Ontological: craft as an authentic way of being

Authenticity

From the foregoing, another issue emerges, that of “authenticity”. The implications and meaning of the various aspects of craft and craft making could be encapsulated by the term “authenticity”. Apart from the originality in materiality and authorship, “authenticity” describes “a person who acts in accordance with desires, motives, ideals or beliefs that are not only hers (as opposed to someone else's), but that also express who she really is” (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2014). “Authenticity” is a fragmented and contested term in both aesthetics (Funk et al, 2012, pp.9-20) and existentialist philosophy (Thomas, 2006, p.53). The predominant value of existentialist thought is commonly acknowledged to be freedom; and its primary virtue is authenticity (ibid.). Here, the term “authentic” can refer to that which is both physically real and philosophically true, but especially the latter, which is related to “moral-psychology, identity and responsibility” (ibid.). For physical realness, craft is traditionally produced from natural materials, human labour and natural resources (Baldacchino and Cutajar, 2011). However, many research studies reveal that what is most valuable in craft is the working attitude and philosophical implications rather than the handmade and traditional technique per se (e.g. Risatti, 2007; Sennett, 2008)

For philosophical trueness, craft making is a type of activity motivated by the desire to do good work for its own sake (Sennett, 2008, pp.241-267); craftspeople find self-fulfillment in the making itself, in the freedom of experimentation, and in an aspiration to pursue excellence. In this process, craftspeople reflect critically on their goals and values, and are responsible for their own work (ibid). Taylor (1992, p.15) maintains that the “powerful moral ideal…. behind self-fulfillment is what a better or higher mode of life should be…. [offering] a standard that we ought to desire”. He further suggests that this moral ideal is something we wish for, but it is something that transcends us as individuals. This reveals aspects of deeper meaning in craft making, namely, existential (spiritual) meaning; this will be discussed below. The moral ideal can be found, Sennett

(2008, pp.269-273) claims, in the “play” within the craft-making process. Niedderer (2009, p.169) also thinks the intimacy that relates craft to its maker and user, in the making and using process respectively, yields authenticity. However, neither good-quality human work nor self-fulfillment can be achieved by machine-controlled mass production or modern management and regulation (Sennett, 2008; Tweedie and Holley; 2016). In recent years, more and more people have criticized the inauthenticity of modern meaningless and purposeless work (e.g. Taylor, 1992, pp.2-4: Walker, 2014a), instead celebrating the dignity of craft labour, which they argue, reflects a more authentic, ethical way of being.

Craft and existential (spiritual) meaning

Here, the terms “existential” and “spiritual” will be used interchangeably because of their close relationship. Although there are disagreements in the literature about which term should be used in relation to academic research, the most important point is that spiritual or existential thinking is a significant human trait. It is related to human values but cannot be measured scientifically (Gardner, 2000). As an idea of philosophy, Thomas argues that existentialism represents “the practice of philosophy as “care of the self” which values the experience and judgement of the individual and focuses on “the proper way of acting rather than on an abstract set of theoretical truths” (Thomas, 2006, p.1). This is consistent with craft’s prominent characteristic of practice, personal emotion and experiential knowledge.

The meaning of existence is an ontological topic concerned with fundamental questions. Spirituality refers to “meaning-making” activities and ideas (Sink and Richmond, 2004), or giving life to the material world via human emotions and social manners, and even self-transcending ideas and beliefs (Miller and Thoresen, 2003, p.27). From archaeological evidence, traditional crafts and practices are replete with value accumulation and the spiritual embodiment of ancestors. Existentialists think these “activities and ideas” are produced from the acting, feeling, and lived experiences of human beings as individuals rather than merely from the mind or thinking (Macquarrie, 1972, pp.14-15). According to these ideas, material things are endowed

with meanings that transcend the materials themselves through the making and using processes; meanings that can even pertain to some self-transcending beliefs. In these processes, what the craft might embody, represent or symbolize through the use of materials and employment of knowledge, skills, and experience determines the values of the craft itself and its maker. Risatti suggests that craft's unique qualities come partly from "an ability to express human values that transcend temporal, spatial and social boundaries" (2007). These human values have been closely connected with the production of crafts and everyday objects for thousands of years (Ahmad, 2003 cited in Arshad et al., 2014). Many crafts are representative of deep meanings that lie beyond the functional and external aesthetic aspects of the objects. They are symbolic and spiritual embodiments that concern thoughts about beliefs and being. Walker (2011, p.118) has described the Japanese *shakuhachi* flute as not just a functional object, but one that also symbolizes the deep-rooted philosophy of Taoism and Zen Buddhism as well as cultural and spiritual meanings. These are expressed through its physical structure and components, and its use – the creation of the sound as a whole. This demonstrates the existential factor of craft as providing a metaphysical reflection on life and meaning, which transcends the physical object itself and reaches to a realm of meditation and tranquillity (Myers, 2007).

Taylor (1992), in *The Ethic of Authenticity,* tries to address the deeply ideological issue of existence, specifically, transcending instrumental reason to pursue an authentic life. In this transcendent realm, authenticity is about human values and even though these cannot be fully measured, nevertheless, they form the basis of our existence and well-being. This also implies that craft involves important human values and spiritual aspects of personhood that can inform academic research.

2.1.3 Findings on Craft in General

In conclusion, three findings are drawn from the preceding review:

1) **A systemic view of the nature of craft:** the nature of craft can be constructively viewed as a "system" that encompasses knowledge and

ways of doing (practical); ways of thinking (epistemological); authentic ways of being and meaning-seeking aspects related to purpose and human existence (ontological).

2) **Principal characteristics of craft** are identified as specialized knowledge, localization, environmental attributes, continuity of tradition and authenticity

3) **A system of the elements of craft:** craft contains a comprehensive ecology that encompasses craftspeople, materials, skills, culture, community, and environment.

These will now be discussed in more detail:

- **A systemic view of the nature of craft**

According to Section 2.1.2 on the review of craft as a system in terms of practical, epistemological and ontological, the essences of craft can be understood through several critical thematic terms: ecological-making practice, that consists of environmental attributes, localized knowledge and communality (Section 2.1.2.1), complex ways of thinking combining the experiential with the cognitive (Section 2.1.2.2), and authentic ways of being, that is the existential, spiritual and transcendental aspects (Section 2.1.2.3). These essences of crafts are systemically viewed through practical, epistemological and ontological lenses.

- **Principal characteristics of craft**

To understand craft in the contemporary context, thereby to inform future research on craft, the characteristics of craft reviewed and analysed in Section 2.1.2 are extracted and summarized in Table 2.1. These are interrelated and the boundaries are not as distinct as implied in the following table.

Table 2.1. Principal characteristics of craft

Principal Characteristics of Craft
The practical
• **Localization:** craft-making and production are commonly based on local materials, and locally appropriate techniques and forms, and traditionally they served the local community (Adamson, 2010, p.3; Walker, 2006, p.36) (Section 2.1.2.1); • **Ecological attributes:** generally**,** resources and waste have a low impact on the natural environment and local eco-systems (Li, 2006, p. 109); craft practice does not exist on its own; it changes and adapts while environment, society and culture change (Section 2.1.2.1); • **Continuity/consistency:** craft making generally inherits and passes on traditional objects and practices which are embodiments of knowledge and/or beliefs in ways that reflect changes in awareness, needs and preferences over time (Lucie-Smith, 1981, p.19); thus, through both objects and practices, there is continuity and an accumulation of meanings related to the changing material culture (Section 2.1.2.1). • **Authenticity of making:** natural, genuine materials, skills, techniques, human labour and originality of the authorship (Section 2.1.2.3).
The epistemological
• **Specialized knowledge:** this is an essential feature of craft, including tacit know-how and explicit awareness (Shiner, 2012, p.236), of which, tacit knowing is most valuable for human intelligence (McNiff, 1995, p.128) (Section 2.1.2.1); • **Complex thinking:** craft is no longer regarded as mere bodily skill or experiential knowledge. It encompasses multiple ways of knowing including the experiential and cognitive, which often contribute to problem-solving and even an existential way of knowing (Section 2.1.2.2).
The ontological

Authenticity of being: in some cases, craftspeople find they are able to express themselves through their craft in ways they find very fulfilling and consequently they are able to live the life they choose. In these cases, in the making process craftspeople have the freedom to manipulate materials and tools, and to creatively engage with the whole process. Compared to work and lifestyles in the (post)modern industrial world, craft is claimed by a number of scholars to be an authentic model for work and life (e.g. Risatti, 2007, pp.388-399; Sennett, 2008, pp.294-296) (Section 2.1.2.3). However, not all craftspeople are able to live in this way. Often, in addition to their craft, they have to hold down another job. Even if that is not the case, they have to manage and administer their craft business, complete the accounts and taxes, conduct the marketing, attend exhibitions of sales, etc., all of which interfere with their ability to fully engage in the creative craft-making processes.

Findings 1 and 2 are combined and presented in Figure 2.1.

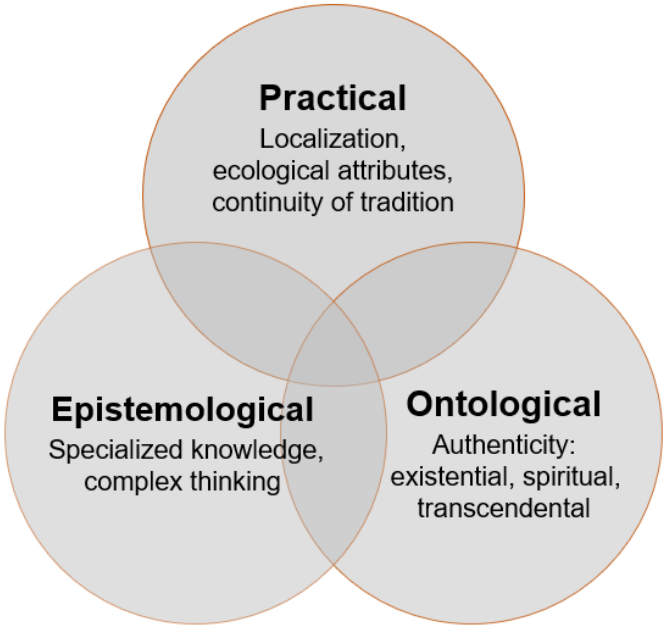

Figure 2.1. A systemic view of the nature of craft

- **A system of the elements of craft**

According to the analysis of Section 2.1.2, craft is a human-centred (craftspeople) practice, and its elements can be roughly classified as craftspeople, materials, skills, culture, community, and environment. These elements of craft correlate with each other

and this is presented as a system of the elements of craft that sustains the existence and development of craft (Figure 2.2).

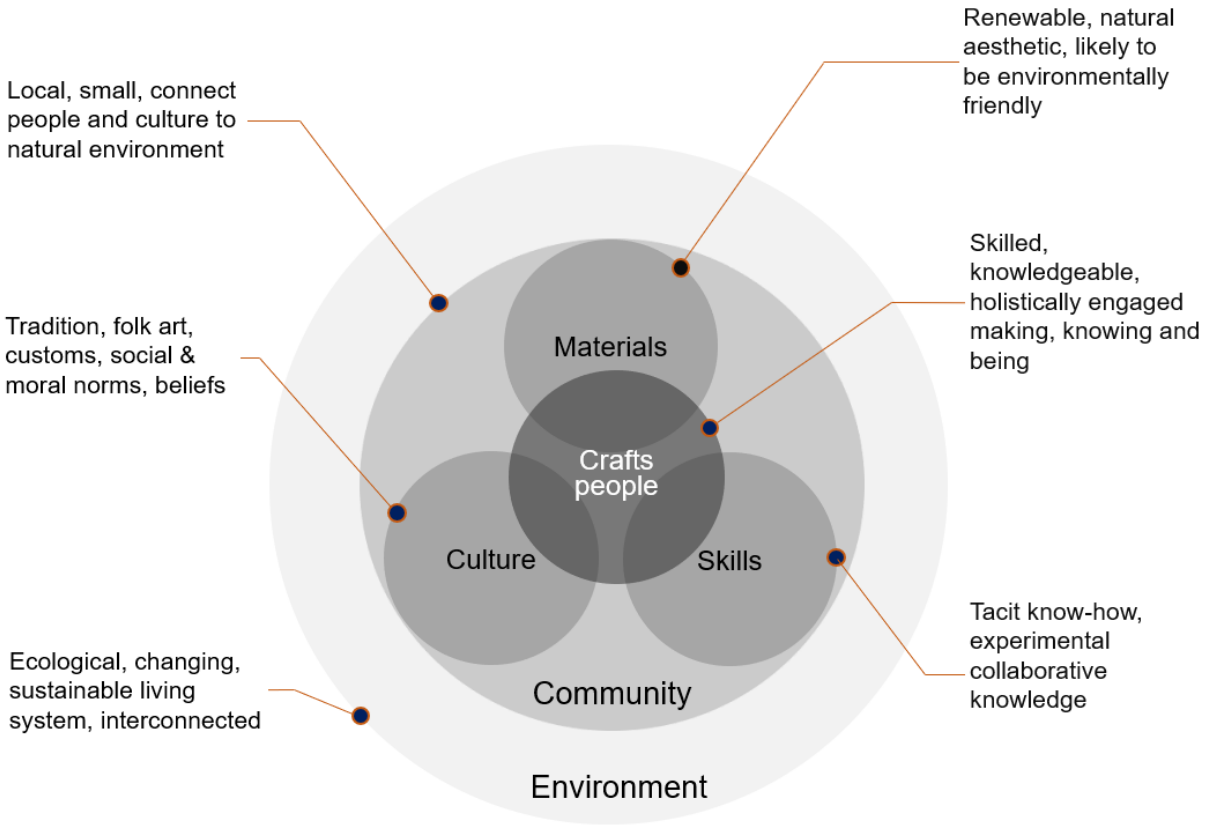

Figure 2.2. A system of the elements of craft

As an old saying in a classic Chinese work on craft and ancient technology (*Tiangong Kaiwu*: *the works of heaven and the inception of things,* 1637) says “If a thing is made in a favourable climatic (time, heavenly), geographical (place, earthly) condition with good material by skillful people, it can be excellent” (Dai, 2003). This aphorism expresses exactly the eastern ecological philosophy of craft: the harmony of heaven, earth, people and material, through which a state of sustainability is maintained.

2.2 Crafts in the Yangtze River Delta, China

This section reviews literature on crafts in China, and in the Yangtze River Delta (YRD) in particular. By reviewing the ideas and the current status of crafts, as they are

described in the literature (i.e. secondary data), some initial findings are revealed.

2.2.1 The Context of Craft(s) in China

China has a long history of technical inventions that are claimed to be remarkable (Layton, 2015, p.339). This history of inventiveness is considered by some scholars to be a significant inspiration to China's contemporary making and reconstruction of cultural identity (e.g. Zou, 2016; Fang, 2013). Modern studies on craft(s) in China are mainly found and recorded in the fields of:

1. History of Science and Technology, (e.g. craft-related books of Needham's series *Science and Civilization in China,*1999);
2. History of Arts and Crafts (e.g. Tang, 2003, 2006; Zhang, 1999; Hang, 2014; Shi, et al., 2004);
3. Anthropology of Art (e.g. Layton, 2015; Fang, 2015);
4. *Intangible Cultural Heritage* (ihchina.cn); and
5. Design and Creative Industries (mainly in practice, e.g. the ICH Revitalization Programme at the Public Art Cooperation Centre in Shanghai, PACC, 2018).

2.2.1.1 Research on modern craft practices

Although there has been a considerable amount of research on Chinese crafts in the first three of the fields mentioned above, studies on China's contemporary craft practices are still limited. This is reflected in the shortage of systemic research on crafts in the latter two fields of ICH, and Design and Creative Industries. Driven by China's enthusiasm and policies in ICH, contemporary craft practices in the fields of Design and Creative Industries have started to flourish over the last decade. This is evidenced in a series of top-down ICH initiatives, such as the training programme for selected ICH inheritors in universities since 2015, (ihchina, 2016), and the multi-level designations of ICH and their inheritors since 2006 (MCT, 2019). In 2017 the *Revitalization Plan for Traditional Arts and Crafts* (hereafter referred to as Revitalization Plan) was issued by the central government's State Council to reintroduce craft products into everyday life

(Gov.cn, 2017b). However, theoretical reflection and research on the practices are significantly limited in the fields of design and creative industries and especially from the perspective of sustainability (Zou, 2015). Moreover, in the sector of ICH, the categories of craft and fine arts are mainly recorded as a directory for archiving and promotion (Zou, 2015; and see list on ihchina.cn).

2.2.1.2 Social status of craft and craftspeople

Needham (1999) comments that Chinese historiographical works on crafts merely deal with the artefacts while neglecting the people who made them and their socioeconomic and political implications (p.19). By reviewing literature on Chinese craft, a shift emerges in the field of anthropology. Recent decade has witnessed an increasing interest in China's contemporary craft production by anthropologists. For example, Fang (2017) has done a series of research studies on China's craft communities ranging from Han nationality-based areas to ethnic minorities groups. Layton (2015) has done work on China's craft communities of both rural and city craft production from the anthological perspective of the West. However, literature is less evident on the implications for individual craftspeople and their ideas regarding how the crafts are conceived and made (Zou, 2017, p.11).

There is little or no information available on the historical and social background of craft-making, especially before the early twentieth century, apart from a few scattered oral histories and introductory portfolios of craft masters being produced due to ICH initiatives (Zou, 2017). Schäfer (2011) has tried to address this issue by re-examining craft knowledge in seventeenth- century China by interpreting classical texts – Song Yingxing's book *Tiangong Kaiwu* (*The Works of Heaven and the Inception of Things, 1637*). However, this still fails to reveal the knowledge and ideas of craftsmen due to the limitation of Song's writing. As she states in the book: "the figure of the artisans is conspicuous by his absence in written discourses" (2011, p.14); there are "no craftsmen in the eye of Song but just scholars" (Tencent Culture, 2016).

2.2.2 Craft Resurgence in Contemporary China

In China, the spirit of craftsmanship (*gong jiang jing shen*) has recently been identified as a vital ingredient for the nation's manufacturing development (gov.cn, 2017a). Also, as mentioned above, the *Revitalization Plan* was issued in 2017 to "protect Intangible Cultural Heritage and meet needs such as employment and poverty alleviation" (Xinhua Net, 2017). Today, craftspeople (*gong jiang*), ingenuity (*jiang xin*) and *Intangible Cultural Heritage* (ICH) (*fei wu zhi wen hua yi chan*) are frequently referred to by Chinese politicians, policymakers, business promoters and academics, and the terms are now part of general public discourse. As marginalized crafts and indigenous knowledge have gained social and political power and attention, there is a resurgence of interest in craft objects and craft practices across sectors.

2.2.2.1 In commercial fields

Many of the ICH crafts that were once limited to local circulation and/or export have been put on the online market and are now sold all over the country through major e-commerce platforms (Pan and Li, 2015), e.g. Taobao and Dongjia.[1] Meanwhile, tourist industries have begun to develop projects in traditional, rural crafts communities with the idea of experiential tourism; some tourist initiatives with the aim of craft conservation, such as far-near projects, have boosted the wave of "ICH/craft fever" (Dreamore.com, 2015). In addition, traditional "China Time-honoured Brand" enterprises[2], such as the Zhang Xiaoquan (张小泉) Scissors (zhangxiaoquan.com.hk) and the Nei Lian Sheng (内联升) Cloth Shoes companies (nls1853.com) have passionately participated in the ICH initiatives and rethought about the values and tradition of their enterprises within the renewed context; new products, points of sale, and new model of marketing in terms of tourist experience have been explored by a

1 Refer to footnotes 1&2 in Section 1.1.3, p.5

2 "China Time-honoured Brand" is a title granted by the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China to Chinese enterprises that existed before 1956, sell products, techniques or services passed down through generations, have distinct Chinese cultural characteristics and are widely recognized by society (People.cn, 2019)

number of the “Time-honoured Brand” enterprises (Zhu, 2019, People.cn).

2.2.2.2 In education fields

In order to publicize ICH among young people, many primary and secondary schools have begun to involve ICH crafts in the educational activities and curriculum as one of the ten ICH categories since 2012, known as “move ICH to schools” or “move ICH to classrooms” initiative (Xiang, 2017). In recent years, the central government is working on more specific plans and regulations to normalize ICH in education system (MCT, 2020). Universities also participated in the “craft fever” in many forms. For example, Tsinghua University and China Academy of Art where representative inheritors are invited to attending training courses on craft theories, modern design and aesthetics (Tsinghua.edu., 2017); Twenty-eight thousand inheritors have attended the training courses in 110 universities and colleges from 2015 to 2019 (Ihchina.cn, 2020). Design schools at universities are collaborating with craftspeople and villages to revitalize traditional crafts, such as a series of rural craft revitalization projects done by the School of Design at Hunan University in line with the aim of the state’s poverty alleviation programme (newchanneldesign.com).

2.2.2.3 Interdisciplinary collaborations in craft practices

In recent years, interdisciplinary collaborations have emerged across the fields of arts, crafts, modern design and anthropology. This phenomenon can be seen in collaborations between artists, artisans, industries, crafts sectors, e-commerce and design departments in universities, such as the ICH innovation projects at the Public Art Cooperation Centre in Shanghai (PACC); the New Channel project between Hunan University and Markor Furnishings Company (HNU Design, 2016); and the porcelain craft revival through the collaboration among artists, artisans and designers in Jingdezhen (Fang, 2015). This suggests a great opportunity for craft’s development in a more collaborative way. Meanwhile, there are large craft communities in China and these craft communities are now undergoing a revival in the context of “ICH fever” and the booming “cultural creative” industries (Fang, 2018). These include the silk embroidery community in Zhenhu (Zhang and Zheng, 2010) and the red stoneware

pottery community in Dingshu (Zhang, 2019), both of which are in Suzhou, and the porcelain community in Jingdezhen, Jiangxi province (Fang, 2015). In these communities, local craftspeople are now collaborating with artists and designers to make new products to suit more contemporary uses and purposes (Zhang and Ji, 2016; Wang et al, 2016).

2.2.2.4 The distinction between the craft sector and the 'makers' community

New technologies (e.g. digital fabrication, the use of biomaterials) have contributed to the renewal of craft practices, as identified, for example by the UK Crafts Council (see Section 2.1.2.2). However, compared to the craft practice and research in the UK (as explored by, e.g., Niedderer and Townsend, 2014, pp.624-647), traditional craft in China has yet to be merged in-depth with modern science and new technology though some technologies have long been adopted to improve the processes and quality of particular crafts. For example, digital weaving is adopted by some professional textile masters such as master Jialin Li who uses digital programming to weave silk brocade (Wang, 2020), and skill-screen printing is used for decoration part of particular crafts such as handmade silk umbrellas (Pan et al., 2021).

Borrowed from the western countries and combined with the manufacture industries thriving in China, maker (创客 *chuangke*) culture and maker movement are widespread across major industrial cities in China such as Shanghai and Shenzhen. Despite this, literature provides little evidence that these makers in China have extended their practices and explorations into traditional crafts both in practice and research. For example, Sang and Simpson (2019)'s research indicates that the maker movement in China provides hands-on learning opportunities for youths and sparks "individual innovative enthusiasm" in "information and communication technology manufacture and hardware industry" "through industrial production, repair, and professional craftsmanship in electronics". In addition, none of the interviewees in their research is craftspeople/artisans or collaborates with people in craft sector. Likewise, in Magistad (2016)'s blog report on the maker movement in Shenzhen, makers and citizens'

participation in the making were largely concentrated on electronic and digital products and technological “Do-It-Yourselves” which have little context with traditional/ICH crafts.

2.2.3 Crafts in the Yangtze River Delta

Based on secondary data, this section briefly introduces the current status of crafts in the YRD, and presents problems and challenges facing the development of crafts in the region.

2.2.3.1 The Yangtze River Delta

The Yangtze River Delta is located on the eastern coast of China. This region has grown into one of six influential world-class metropolitan areas, and it plays an important role in China’s economic and social development with its intensive dynamic and creative industries (Tian et al., 2011). Generally, it comprised Shanghai, southern Jiangsu Province, northern Zhejiang Province and western Anhui Province and included forty-one cities (Figure 2.3). By 2019, it covers an area of around 358,000 square kilometers and is home to over 227 million people, of whom over 60% are urban (Gov.cn, 2019). In 2020, the GDP of the Yangtze River Delta region reach 24.5 trillion yuan, nearly a quarter of China's total economy. With about a seventh of China's population and a great percentage of the country's GDP, the YRD is one of the fastest growing and richest regions in China.

The city of Jingdezhen in the northeast of Jiangxi Province is included in the YRD tourist board maps (PGJP, 2016). Jingdezhen is and has always been the dominant city in China’s porcelain industry that had a huge impact on world porcelain history. Given this, the research includes Jingdezhen in the territory of the YRD.

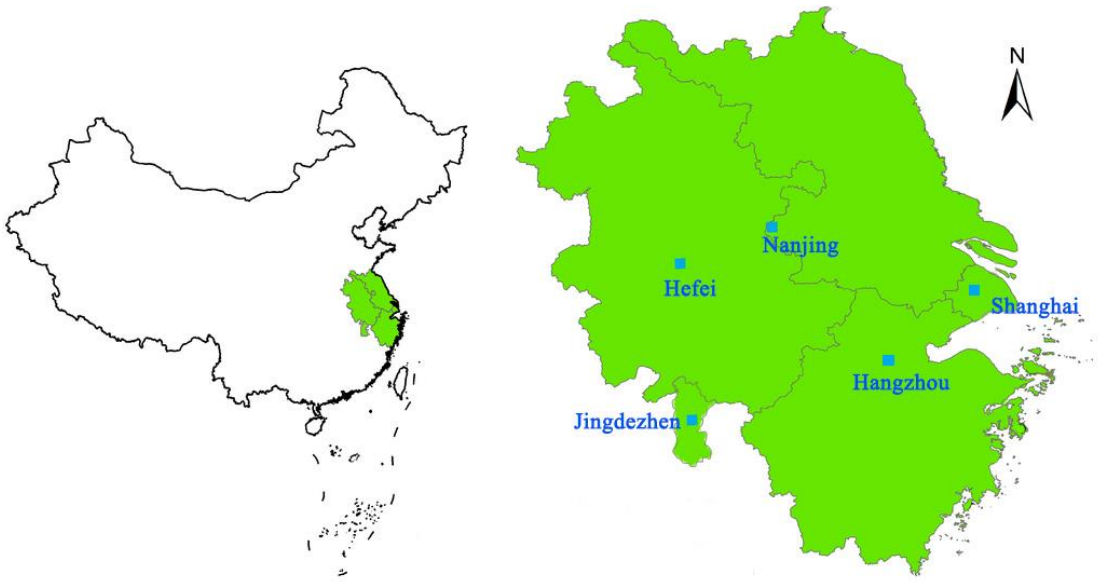

Figure 2.3. The location of YRD, China

2.2.3.2 Crafts in the region and the Intangible Cultural Heritage listing

The region of YRD has a long history of craft practices, among which some are recognized as *Intangible Cultural Heritage* at the international, national, provincial, municipal and county levels (see, for example: UNESCO, 2008). In the Arts and Crafts field, craft is normally classified in terms of function and adornment, which is included in the two categories of “Traditional Craftsmanship” and “Traditional Fine Art” in the ICH List (ihchina.cn, 2014).

Due to incomplete documentation and difficulty in accessing data of ICH items at the municipal and prefectural levels, the research only reviews craft lists at the first three levels (world, national and provincial). Referencing the two categories of craft in the ICH list, the statistic of crafts named ICH in the YRD is summarized in Figure 2.4.

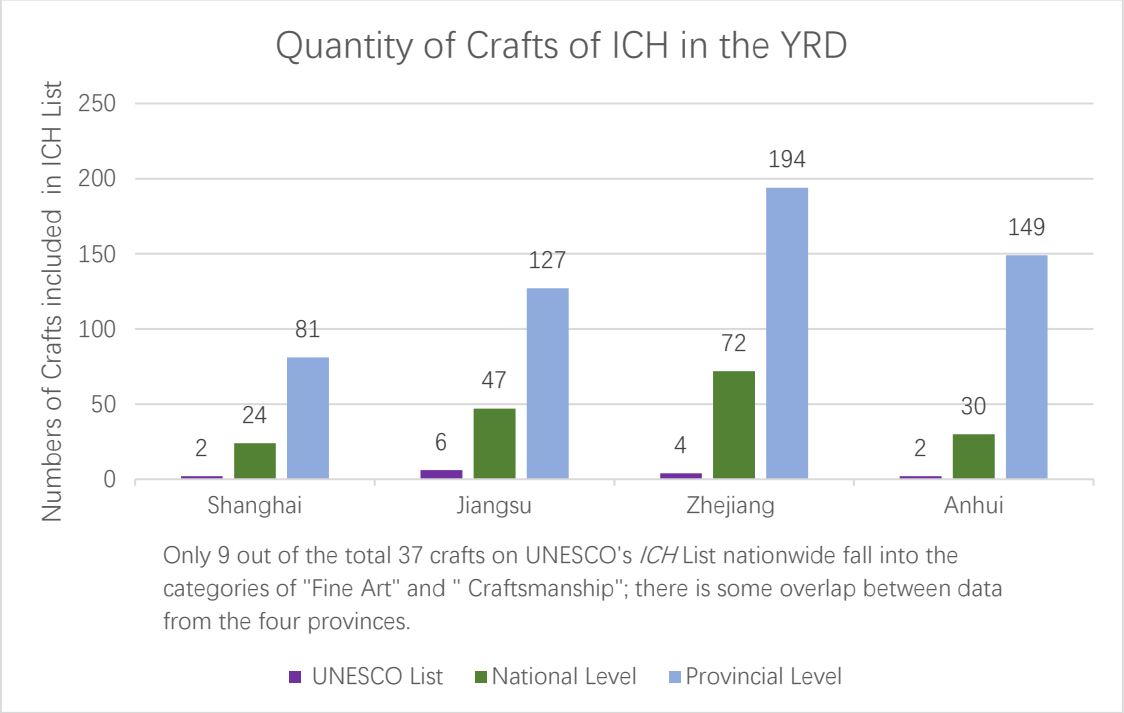

Figure 2.4. Quantity of crafts of ICH in the YRD (Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Anhui provinces), source: ICH Jiangsu, ICH Zhejiang, ICH Shanghai, ICH Anhui, ihchina.cn (November 2016).

According to Figure 2.4, there are ca. 700 crafts recognized as Intangible Cultural Heritage. Among them, nine crafts have been recognized as world-status ICH by UNESCO (2016). The majority of these listed ICH crafts are not used in everyday life and are primarily for the purposes of decoration and collection. The ICH initiative is a powerful project, which has strongly influenced the protection of traditional crafts, especially those crafts that are valuable but dying out in the YRD. However, being listed as ICH does not necessarily mean these crafts are viable and well-protected. In fact, many are not used in everyday life and some risk extinction, such as Panjin silk rug making and some Hui ethnic crafts (CMP, 2012; CNR, 2016).

2.2.3.3 A transition period for crafts in the region (1950s-1990s)

Unlike the UK and most Western countries, China didn't have an industrial revolution (Layton, 2015, p.340). While the UK was industrializing major sectors of manufacturing in the first half of the nineteenth century (ca.1830), China was in a period (later Qing Dynasty) of agricultural and craft economy, relying heavily on decentralized farming

and family-based craft production (Xu and Wu, 2003, p.29). Although Western technologies have had some influence on China's traditional production system in developed areas since the first Opium War in 1840, industries based on household workshops and semi-mechanized crafts factories remained the pillar industry for China's economy and society at that period (Fei, 1992; Eyferth, 2003; Zhou, 2014).

However, China's crafts did undergo a moderate degree of industrialization between the 1950s and the1990s. Craft industrialization in that period is thought by some scholars to be critical to crafts in the YRD today (e.g. Hang, 2014, p.120). From 1950, craft industries began a semi-mechanization and concentration, when scattered family craft workshops were organized into collective craft cooperatives and later large state-owned factories, with a primary aim of producing more crafts for foreign markets so as to accumulate industrial capital (Mao, 1977, p.265; Fang, 2000). In contrast to the state's initial purpose of increasing production, crafts in the 1990s, as noted by some scholars, actually declined in terms of innovation and productivity (Hang, 2014, p.29; Layton, 2015, p.344). Since the UNESCO ICH initiative was proposed in 2003, China's once declined craft industries have started to revitalize and resume on a large scale. According to recent statistics, for example, Jingdezhen has ca.120,000 people involving in ceramic production (Fang, 2017); Zhenhu town – one of the many towns in Suzhou producing silk embroidery – has ca.8,000 women embroiderers (Xinhua Net, 2017); there are ca.12,000 family workshops and ca.400 factories in Dingshu town – one of the many towns producing red stoneware pottery in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province (China News, 2016).

Many scholars believe that the engaged way of making with the unity of head and hand had passed down generation by generation throughout pre-industrial history (Sennett, 2008; Walker, 2019). The industrialization of craft in China, as Hang argues, broke from this humanistic way of making and eroded the nature of craft that reflects human ingenuity (Hang, 2014, p.117). In the transition period of craft industrialization, crafts were shoddily produced in factories while being totally detached from life and became diminished as a hollow national symbol exchanged for foreign currency (Hang, 2014;

Pan, 2017). As a consequence, major crafts in China today (e.g. porcelain and textiles) especially in the YRD region remain at a relatively large scale of production.

2.2.3.4 Forms of crafts development

Craft practices have continued into contemporary life in the YRD, but in highly dynamic and diverse forms Some crafts are historically important brands such as Zhang Xiaoquan (张小泉) Scissors Ltd. (People.cn, 2020) and Qian Taixiang (乾泰祥) Silk Company (qtx1863.com); some are place-based specialized craft industries, such as porcelain manufacturing in Longquan city and Jingdezhen city; others are companies that integrate traditional crafts into modern design, such as Shang Xia Ltd. (shangxia.com), which produces a wide range of products that include clothing, jewellery, homeware, furniture and giftware; some are charitable initiatives primarily by design schools, e.g. the New Channel Gamel social innovation project by the design school of Hunan University (Newchanneldeign.com); and commercial tourist initiatives, e.g. Far-near craft revival and tourism programme (Dreamore.com, 2015). These craft initiatives are dedicated to safeguarding traditional crafts from decline and they promote craft communities.

2.2.3.5 Major crafts in the Yangtze River Delta

According to statistics, of the ca.700 crafts in the YRD recognized as Intangible Cultural Heritage, with those that focus on utilitarian object-based crafts falling into two main categories: porcelain and textile (ihchina.cn, UNESCO, ICH Jiangsu, ICH Zhejiang, ICH Shanghai, ICH Anhui). In order to consolidate this result, the researcher searched existing literature (including books and academic articles) on crafts in the YRD. In addition, these two major categories were also agreed by experts as representative crafts of cultural significance for the YRD region, according to the researcher's initial interviews with a number of Chinese experts and researchers in the craft field (2017).[3]

3 These initial interviews include conservations via WeChat with a scholar in craft and anthropology at Chinese National Academy of Arts, and two experts in the YRD crafts who are identified as informants S16 and S23.

- **Porcelain/ceramics**

Porcelain/ceramics in the YRD is the most prominent craft and industry in China's history with its *guan, ge* and *Longquan* kilns, which are famous kilns from the Song dynasty, (Fang, 2011). There are two main historical porcelain bases in the YRD: Jingdezhen city and Longquan city. They have produced distinct forms of porcelain for over 2000 years (Dillion, 1992) and 1700 years respectively (Song, 2018). Besides these, there are other ceramic and porcelain companies and communities, most of which are emerging enterprises, and are not as densely concentrated and industrialized. The porcelain industry in the YRD has dominated the Chinese porcelain industry in many aspects: tradition, production, innovation, and marketing. Jingdezhen has been a foremost national centre of porcelain production, and gained global prominence for the remarkable scale of its porcelain production and the excellence of its local craftsmanship (Mengoni, 2011).

Jingdezhen city is known as the "porcelain capital" of China, where the time-honoured blue glaze ware (*qingbai*), blue and white (*qinghua*) porcelain, and coloured enamel (*fencai*) porcelain are still flourishing with their exquisite craftsmanship and highly skilled traditional kiln technique (Xu and Yu, 2014). *Longquan Celadon* is another world-renowned traditional porcelain that has been recognized as an *Intangible Cultural Heritage* since 2009. However, the current production and development of *Longquan Celadon* are being challenged. The scale of production is mainly that of family workshops and small private enterprises (Wang, 2010). According to a body of literature, the lack of innovation in technique is facing a challenge, and the majority of designs are out of date (e.g. Lan, 2009); products are mostly produced for packaging other commodities like spirits, wine and Chinese medicine (Cao et al., 2013). There are two levels of product directions: one is high-value artistic celadon aimed at high art and collection market; the other is functional celadon, but this only occupies a very small part of the market (Yuan, 2008; Zhou, 2011).

- **Textiles**

The textile crafts in the YRD are mainly silk and cotton products among which *Nanjing*

Yunjin Brocade and *Sericulture and Silk Craftsmanship* have been recognized as world-status *Intangible Cultural Heritage* since 2009 (UNESCO, 2009a). The multiple weaving crafts in this region, especially the embroideries and brocades, date back over 1600 years. Jiangsu Province is the concentrated area of embroidery in the YRD, featuring its *Nanjing Yunjin Brocade* and *Su Embroidery* which are strongly related to sericulture (the rearing of silkworms for silk production) and silk crafts. There are many communities and towns with a long history of embroidery and textile making in Jiangsu Province, including Nanjing brocade community, Wujiang cheongsam town, and Zhenhu embroidery town (Zhang and Zheng, 2010).

Hangzhou, the capital of Zhejiang Province, is another centre of silk and embroidery textiles in China. It is a historically cultural city, which was the political and economic centre in the Song dynasty, characterized by its excellent silk culture and related craftsmanship such as *Hang-Embroidery*, *Silk Umbrellas* and *Silk Fans,* (worldsilk.com.cn). There are four silk museums in China of which three are in Zhejiang Province, and Hangzhou hosts one of the biggest silk museums in the world (UNSCO). The traditional textiles have been highly protected, and many historic relics have been repaired and replicated (e.g. ihchina.cn, 2019); the embroidery and brocade skills have been retained and improved through the introduction of modern technologies (Xu et al. 2018).

Though the porcelain and textile sectors have a long history and excellent craftsmanship, they are not flourishing in, or compatible with, contemporary society, especially in terms of creativity, design and value. According to the literature (Li, 2006; Zhou, 2011; Zhang, 2011; Tang, 2013; Xu and Yu, 2014; Liu and Zou, 2014; Shao et al., 2018), the problems and dilemmas of porcelain/ceramics and textiles are summarized in Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 respectively.

Table 2.2. The current situation of porcelain/ceramics in the YRD

The current situation of porcelain/ceramics in the YRD
• The technique of porcelain making has been improved and innovated greatly with the ever-increasing patent awards on ceramic and porcelain products since 1999 (Wang, 2014; Chen, 2014). However, governments have not developed effective regulations and markets have not formed into an ordered competition in terms of intellectual property protection; thus, incentives, innovation and originality of porcelain products are limited (Gong and Zhang 2019); • The price of Chinese porcelain is much lower than that from other countries on the international market (Wang, 2011; Zhang, 2011). Craftsmanship hasn't been valued; there is a huge price gap for the same products: the products are sold at a high price at the beginning of expos or fairs, but sold at a very low price at the end; modern Chinese porcelain had a poor reputation for the daily-use porcelain market in terms of value, originality and creativity (this notion is based on the researcher's observations and conversations with local people during research visits to Jingdezhen in 2013). • Academy crafts education emphasized creativity but ignored technique and craftsmanship, while the market valued technique but ignored creativity, innovation and added (design) value (Tang, 2013; Xu and Yu, 2014). This inconsistency resulted in porcelain training failing to meet the needs of the porcelain industry (Liu and Zou, 2014, p.386). Creativity and excellent craftsmanship didn't match one another in the porcelain education, market and industry (Shao et al. 2018).

Table 2.3. The current situation of textiles in the YRD

The current situation of textiles in the YRD
• There has been a sharp decrease in the number of apprentices in the traditional techniques over recent decades. Younger generations are not willing to learn the skills for multiple reasons (Li, 2006; Guangming News, 2014); • Many textile crafts have been revived through technique innovation in high-end apparel and accessories (Zhang, 2010; Zhang, 2020); • Yunjin Brocade and silk embroideries are mainly for middle- and high-end markets made from quality material by the combination of traditional, improved techniques. However, there are mass-produced copy products out of inferior material existing in the market which have low value and to some extent demean these crafts' real value and reputation (Guo, 2004); • Most of high-skill textile crafts are made for foreign market and export, while domestic market share is small. (specifically, Yunjin Brocade represents the consummate craftsmanship in Chinese textiles, most of which is for export and high-end markets) (Zhu, 2012); • The comparatively less expensive folk crafts, such as cotton weaving and dyeing, have failed to be retained and healthily developed. Some special crafts (e.g. homespun cloth) are risking extinction (Zuo, 2006; Li et al. 2019); • Cotton textiles have been largely replaced with machine and digital fabrication (Yang, 2015).

2.2.3.6 Issues facing crafts in the YRD

Despite China's long and rich history in crafts, especially in the areas of porcelain and textile, these sectors have undergone a depression and encountered obstacles, especially before the revitalization initiatives were enacted over the past decade or so (these initiatives include the Guidance on the Development of Arts and Crafts Industries issued in 2014, Gov.cn; and the Plan on Revitalizing China's Traditional Crafts in 2017). A key problem that remains in relation to these crafts is the tensions between protection and innovation and the difficulties in overcoming barriers to innovation, as they relate to products, production processes and value creation (Zhang, 2010; Liu and Zou, 2014). According to a number of authors, the issues and problems are:

- The percentage of products for everyday use is limited, especially some crafts involving complicated traditional techniques such as Longquan Celadon (green-glazed ceramics) and Yunjin Brocade; the potential markets for everyday use of such crafts and products have not been developed (Guo, 2004; Lu, 2012).
- Lack of motivation and incentives for the younger generation to learn craft skills, because of its low-paid hard work (Li, 2006; Lan, 2009; Liu and Zou, 2014, p.386;).
- Creativity and originality are not properly valued in traditional crafts. Most of the craft techniques lack innovation and breakthrough ideas. The design and technology of heritage crafts are out of time in terms of form, function, pattern and process (Li, 2006; Zhang, 2010).
- Craft innovations are poorly linked to modern technologies (e.g. craft-product design, service, etc.); cross-sector collaborations among heritage crafts, science and technologies are limited (Zhang, 2010).
- Craft education is out of line with the craft industry; craft education values creativity yet devalues technique and craftsmanship while the craft market values material scarcity and technique yet devalues creativity and design (Tang, 2013; Xu, 2014).
- Tensions between inheritance and innovation: cultural enterprise vs. economic

industry; protection of traditional skills vs. technique innovation; traditional apprenticeship vs. academic craft education; contemporary influence vs. ICH protection (Li, 2006; Shao et al. 2018).

2.2.4 Findings from Crafts in the YRD

Through a review of literature and the secondary documents on Chinese craft and crafts in the YRD, a series of findings were revealed. The findings are summarized into pros and cons in Table 2.4.

(See next page)

Table 2.4. Findings from crafts in the YRD

Pros	Cons
• The YRD is a metropolitan region with a vibrant economy and creative industries which is also an opportunity for traditional crafts to be revitalized (Section 2.2.3.1); • Interdisciplinary collaborations are increasing in resurgent craft practices (Section 2.2.2.3); dynamic forms of craft development involving people from various fields such as craftspeople, designers, artists, “China Time-honoured Brand” owners, e-commence, academics, and NGOs (Section 2.2.3.4); • There is a long and rich craft history in the YRD, with ca.700 crafts recognized as ICH at the international, national and provincial levels (Section 2.2.3.2); • Porcelain/ceramics and textiles are the major craft industries in the YRD, which have been identified as the primary categories for future research and exploration (Section 2.2.3.5); • A series of governmental support initiatives in heritage crafts: ICH Inheritors training programme and courses; driving force of creative industries; etc.(2.2.2).	• The potential craft market for everyday use has not been developed; shortage of innovation and creativity; (Section 2.2.3.6); • Craft is valued more as a matter of collective activity than an individual practice; craftspeople are overlooked in literature; the research on craft lacks individual makers” perspective (Section 2.2.1); • As a consequence of semi-industrialization from 1950s-1990s, major crafts are at an industrial scale involving a large craft population and large scale of workshop cooperation (Section 2.2.3.3); • Mainly as gifts for decorative purpose or commodities for export; Major crafts as commodities for export and well-established crafts for collection (Sections 2.2.3.3, 2.2.3.6); • Lack of motivations for the younger generation to take craft as a career; academic craft education is out of line with the craft industry (Section 2.2.3.6); • Lack of research on contemporary craft practice and its relationship to the understanding of sustainability (Section 2.2.1).

2.3 Design for Sustainability

This section presents an understanding of design for sustainability in theory and practice. It starts with theoretical understandings of sustainability, followed by an analysis of the approaches of design for sustainability from two perspectives: the technology-based and society-people-based. It concludes with findings in terms of four key concepts of design for sustainability.

2.3.1 Theoretical Understandings of Sustainability

Sustainability is a comprehensive concept that embraces highly diverse elements that are related to context and the particularities of place, community and individual needs and interests. (Van der Ryn and Cowan, 2007, p.20; Walker, 2018). Issues that are related to environmental and social crisis include colonialism, urbanization, science and technology, patriarchal culture, (Van der Ryn and Cowan, 2007, p.19), globalization of industry, capitalism, consumerism and transnational socio-economic disparities (Walker, 2006). These many and various contributing factors mean that sustainability is anything but a single movement or approach.

There are many notions and ideas about how to understand sustainability. From the theoretical level, Elkington's *Triple Bottom Line* and then the later developed *four pillars of sustainability* are mostly acknowledged among various notions. From the design field, Walker's *Quadruple Bottom Line of design for sustainability* has been gaining wide attention in the field and beyond because of its holistic view and its focus on meaning and values.

2.3.1.1 From Triple Bottom Line (TBL) to the Four Pillars of Sustainability

Sustainability is commonly expressed as involving three elements: economic development, social equity and environmental protection (Elkington, 1997, p.70), which can also be identified as "profit", "people" and "planet" respectively. It was initiated by Elkington as a guide towards sustainability for business corporations (1997, p.70). These three aspects are now extensively considered and debated by government, business, academia and society in general. It was originally thought that sustainability

could be achieved by addressing and balancing the issues within these three aspects.

However, growing arguments challenged and disputed the idea of the Triple Bottom Line (hereafter referred to as TBL). The Economist (2009) once criticized the three elements as being hard to assess by simply adding them together according to the profit measurement as money. Meantime, Elkington (2018) himself also wrote a paper in *Harvard Business Review* recognizing that the TBL had not worked. The reasons he gave were fundamentally related to the fact that companies had not addressed it in an integrated way but rather, had separated out the three factors and addressed these separately. Because profits and economic growth are regarded by companies as paramount (not least to ensure shareholder return), therefore the economic factor always takes precedence. This is exactly what Walker stated (2015) when he pointed out that the TBL puts economic profit and issues as a priority, which is problematic and makes the TBL inadequate in representing sustainability.

With the evolving development of sustainability, many people argue that a fourth element including ethics, human, culture and governance should be added. Among them, “culture” as the fourth element is widely acknowledged, which constitutes the four pillars of sustainability along with environment, economy and society (Figure 2.5, Hawkes, 2001). Other than culture, “human” as the fourth element of sustainability was adopted by some people especially from the business field to make another version of the four pillars of sustainability (Goodland and Bank, 2002). The human element encompasses “the development of skills and human capacity to support the functions and sustainability of the organization and to promote the wellbeing of communities and society” (RMIT University, 2017).

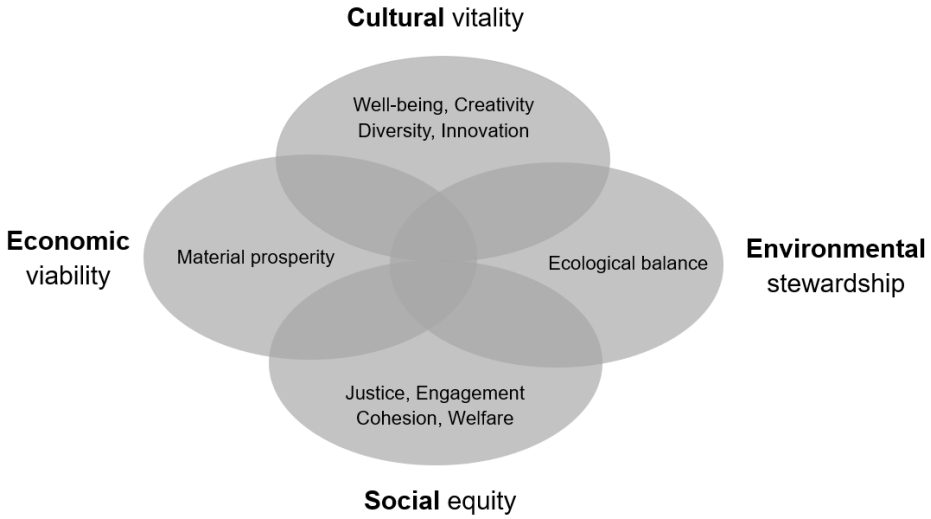

Figure 2.5. The Four Pillars of Sustainability (Source: interpretation from Hawkes, 2001)

2.3.1.2 The Quadruple Bottom Line (QBL) of Design for Sustainability

In response to the deficiency of the TBL and the increasing environmental and social issues in design field, Walker (2011) argues that the fourth element would be more related to the human aspect of individual. Different from the definition of human by people from the business field, his understanding of human factor refers to personal meaning and inner development of the individual (p.127). Walker argues that the TBL is missing the vital element of the individual, which is the fundamental aspect of being human and leads towards sustainability. This is because we as individuals are not only the key players in the consumer society but also “meaning-seekers” (p.127). Based on meaning, a deeper and more profound understanding of sustainability was developed by including the vital part of personal meaning which refers to spirituality, inner values, ethics and morality (Ibid, p.190).

The understanding of personal meaning can be traced to the philosophical underpinning of Heidegger's (1978) ontology of being-in-the-world, which opens a new perspective of the individual to interpret the meaning and value of the world and of life. This perspective is especially relevant and important to helping us rethink about environmental crises and social issues we are facing in the 21st Century especially for the field of design and consumerism. According to many authors, “not only have

modern interpretations of the good life proved to be environmentally devastating, socially divisive, and economically inequitable, they have also nurtured widespread discontentment and have helped create a sense of meaninglessness in contemporary consumer-based societies" (Wilkson and Pickett, 2009, p. 226, Schwartz, 2004, p. 109-193, and Taylor, 2007, p. 715-717, cited in Walker, 2014).

Based on these ideas, Walker (2011) proposed the Quadruple Bottom Line (QBL) in order to offer a more holistic understanding of sustainability, which includes three meanings and one means (as illustrated in Figure 2.6). The QBL, in contrast to TBL, prioritizes Personal, Social and Practical Meaning, which involve, respectively, inner or spiritual values (personal); compassion, benevolence, equity and justice (social); and pragmatic benefits while also taking care of the nature and place, which includes avoidance of waste, reducing transportation distances of materials and products i.e. more localization. The Economic element of the QBL is not a "meaning" but a "means" – which lies at a second order and is the means for achieving the other three, i.e. not an end in itself.

> **Practical meaning:** utilitarian needs plus their associated environmental impacts;
> **Social meaning**: social justice, equity, community, benevolence related to the product's making, use and after-use;
> **Personal meaning**: spiritual development & well-being, inner values, conscience with respect to the product's making, use and after-use;
> **Economic means**: a means, rather than an end - ensuring the enterprise is economically viable in order to ensure the other three categories are fulfilled and sustainable.
> (Walker et al., 2019).

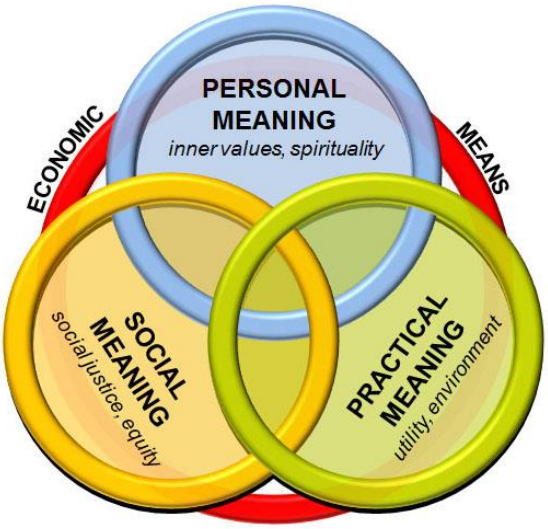

Figure 2.6. The Quadruple Bottom Line of Design for Sustainability
(Walker, 2014, p.45)

The QBL builds up a worldview that sustainability is a state of meaning-making through both collective creation and individual inner growth. It advocates a balance of sustainable development between the external and internal, and sets new values for design such as evolving continuously, accommodating change, maintaining and repair, more considered and less distracting design, new enterprise model of internalizing impacts (2011, pp.133-134). These design values emphasize the ideas of slow change, continuity, attentiveness and connection which can be found in local craft production and traditional practices. These values also resonate with the propositions of many other scholars, for example, Manzini (2012) put the cosmopolitan localization at the central place of design for sustainability and social innovation. Scruton (2012) argues that the spirit and sense of being sustainable can be found through community, family and home practices, and traditions (p.399). According to Van der Ryn and Cowan (1965), sustainability is embedded in processes that have occurred over a long period of time in particular places, e.g., “a steady process of cultural accretion practiced by local craftsmen” (p.85).

The QBL proposes a local-globe model for the transition to sustainability, which is linked to many more recent holistic sustainable design approaches, e.g., Slow Design, the ecological science courses at Schumacher College, and the curriculum of

Transition Design[4]. Because of its close relationship to human values, localization and craft, the QBL will be used as a framework for this research in analyzing the values of craft later in Section 8.1.4.

2.3.2 Two Categories of Design Approaches to Sustainability

Based on the theoretical concepts of sustainability, there are numerous activities enabling solutions and initiatives that have emerged over the past two decades. In the design field, and more specifically in the area of design for sustainability, there are many ideas and approaches: from the early stages of Green Design which popularized “3R rules” to “Cradle to Cradle”; from Biomimicry Design to Product-Service System design; from the “upcycling” concept (McDonough, 2013) to Systemic Design (Barbero and Toso, 2010); from “Permaculture Design” (Mollison, ed.1991, 1st ed. 2013) to “social innovation” (Manzini, 2014) initiatives; and from the speculative design practices of Progressive Design (Walker, 2017, 2018) to the recently established curriculum of Transition Design (Irwin, Tonkinwise and Kossoff, 2015).

The first classification here is by Ceschin and Gaziulusoy (2016), in which all the approaches are classified into four levels: *Product level, Product-service system level, Spatio-social level*, and *Socio-technical system level* (Figure 2.5). The other is by David W. Orr, in which he defines the approaches to sustainability as either *technological sustainability* or *ecological sustainability* – both are coherent responses to the global environmental and social issues but are very different from each other in their visions (Van der Ryn and Cowan, 2007, p.20). According to these two classifications, approaches to design for sustainability fall into two major categories: the technology-industry-based approaches and society-people-based approaches. These two categories are summarized in Table 2.7.

4 Transition Design is a curriculum developed by a group of scholars based on holistic and systemic thinking which emphasizes the locally based approaches with the aid of cosmopolitan technologies and ideas; it draws upon a wider body of literature within design, sociology and philosophy fields (Irwin, 2015)

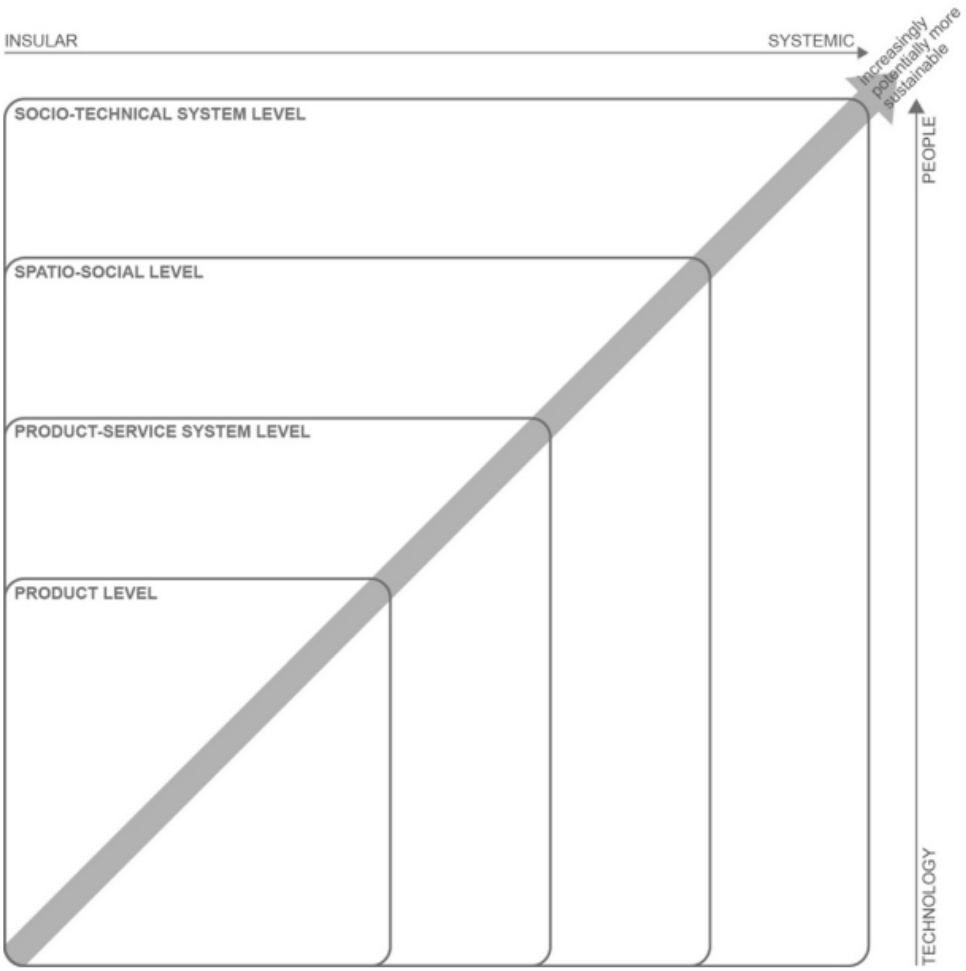

Figure 2.7. The DfS Evolutionary Framework, source: Ceschin and Gaziulusoy, (2016, p.143)

Table 2.5. Two categories of design approaches to sustainability

	Technology-industry-based approaches	**Society-people-based approaches**
Attributes	eco-efficiency and effectiveness; use of renewable resources; a significant dependence on technology; environmental aspect of sustainability; focusing on products and systems with ever-advancing technologies and design; business-as-usual-model; incremental change instead of systemic transformation (Van der Ryn and Cowan, 2007; Walker, 2015; Ceschin and Gaziulusoy, 2016)	human-centred approaches; focusing on social and cultural domains such as poverty alleviation, social cohesion, and quality of life; systems thinking; resilient thinking; emphasis on diversity, interdependence and interconnectedness; recognition of individual's spiritual and inner developments (Walker and Salt, 2006; Kossoff, 2015; Capra and Luisi, 2014; Ceschin and Gaziulusoy, 2016, p.145; Walker, 2014)
Representatives	Green Design; Eco-design; Cradle to Cradle, Biomimicry; Eco-efficient Product-Service-System Design; Systemic Design; Sustainable Product-Service-System Design, Product Design for the Base of the Pyramid	Progressive Design Praxis; Design for Sustainable Behaviour; Emotionally Durable Design, Design for the Base of the Pyramid; Design for Sustainable Social Innovation; Design for System Innovations and Transition

2.3.3 Current Critiques on the Two Categories of Design Approaches to Sustainability

Views of sustainability deal with a common issue – "the art of longevity" for the planet, humans and generations to come (Orr, 2002, p.10). These views share common concerns with environmental integrity, social justice, and economic profit. The practices and discourses of sustainability have yielded an unprecedented mix of ideas and approaches, but it has created some polarization. The discourse of sustainable design tends to range between Utopia and bureaucracy, between grassroots bottom-up diverse models and centrally controlled top-down paradigms. The debates on these two categories of design approaches are becoming more frequent.

2.3.3.1 The deficiency of technology-industry-based approaches

According to the approaches presented in Section 2.2.2.1, ecomodernist approaches such as Cradle to Cradle and Biomimicry are narrowly focused and technology-centred. As is known in the discourse of criticism of modernity, these approaches to sustainability can be traced back to the Renaissance (c. 1400s–1600s) when secularism and rationalism began to germinate. This long history of modern worldviews and paradigms creates a deep-rootedness of naturalistic materialism and rationalistic instrumentalism which have dominated innovation and enterprise over several centuries. However, these techno-centric models were described by Orr (cited in Van der Ryn and Cowan, 2007, p.20) as "every problem has either a technological answer or a market solution", and he argued that "long lists of solutions can still not solve the larger problem" (Orr, 2003). Similarly, E. F. Schumacher once identified that "human problems are not solvable by rational means alone" (Schumacher, 1977, cited in Orr, 2003). Meanwhile, according to the understanding of sustainability within the QBL, technology-industry-based approaches merely look at the level of practical meaning while neglecting deeper causes such as individual behaviours, motivation, value systems and sociocultural issues (Walker, 2015).

Ulrich Beck (1992) argues that the notions and practices of sustainability based on technology in the contemporary context have created, apart from external risks,[5] enormous risks in broad spheres ranging from the environmental and social to the technical and economic. According to Beck, ironically, the current sustainable solutions and practices are producing ecological and social risks. As the object "Neophobias"[6] displayed in the "Design for Life" exhibition indicates, our current technological solutionism is constantly "empathetic" with "imperfection" (Morozov, 2014). Morozov fiercely attacks solutionism and even the techno-intellectuals of Silicon Valley, astutely pointing out the genuine profit-driven purpose of techno-solutionism. Implicit in the

5 External risks refer to natural disasters that are perceived as produced by non-human forces. Here external risks are in contrast to manufactured risks that are produced by production and distribution of human activity.

6 Neophobias is an object made by Walker (see http://www.designforlife.website/)

"Neophobias" object, a variety of ailments or concerns (inadequacy, superficiality, indifference, etc.) can be linked to techno-novelty and cyber lifestyles. Ironically too, these causal pathogens in return are designed to cure the illness caused by the pathogens themselves. There is serious delusion and a vicious circle metaphorized in the commodified bottles, which alluded satirically to the ailments of consumerism. This resonates strongly with William Davies' (2015) words "Our anxiety is their revenue opportunity". For the experts and the proponents of technological sustainability, every problem has "either a technological answer or market solution" (Orr, 1992). Nothing needs to be fundamentally changed; techno-optimization and incremental patching and novelty fit well into the "business-as-usual" paradigm (Walker, 2014b, 2015; Van der Ryn and Cowan, 2007, p.25). As Walker critiques, the notions of *Cradle to Cradle* (C2C) and Ecomodernism are over-optimistic about science and technology and tend to ignore the organic relationship between human, society and the natural environment (2019, p.270).

From the theoretical and philosophical level of understanding sustainability, C2C, ecomodernism and similar ideas are, according to Walker (2014b), one-dimensional and "empty" and thus have narrow meanings (p.288). Merely relying on eco-efficiency is insufficient and is a static view of thinking about dynamic and systemic problems. Nevertheless, as practical methods and tools, these approaches would have significant impact on practical aspects and developing more specific solutions (Ceschin and Gaziulusoy, 2016). In addition, these views and approaches of sustainability are grounded in the nature of rationalism and evidence-based logo-centric modernism, and are therefore destined not to be essential approaches leading to sustainability.

2.3.3.2 The emergent society-people-based approaches to sustainability

In recent years, the theory of chaos and complexity has been informing the changes in visions of and approaches to sustainability (Briggs and Peat, 1990). At the frontier of science and sociology research, there is a new body of interdisciplinary literature addressing and exploring the new forms and untapped areas in the existing world. Critical ingredients of this body of literature are "people", "place" and "connectedness",

which serve to reshape our understanding of sustainability and human existence. In the field of *design for sustainability*, it pushes the boundaries from a narrow focus on "product" and "technology" to more holistic domains that include community/society, people, meaning, and intrinsic aspects of life and things (see Figure 2.5, Evans et al., 2017 and Walker et al, 2018). This new body of knowledge is informed by discoveries in physics, biology, neuroscience and sociology. It holds that nature and living systems evolve non-mechanically, diversely and autonomously. This body of literature suggests four key ideas in common:

1. Reductionist thinking is no longer adequate for addressing the interconnected living systems based on organic abundance (Capra, 2014), which implies that there is a need to develop context-specific approaches to specific cultures, places, communities and individual needs (Walker et al., 2018).

2. Apart from reasoning and analytics, narrative interpretation and intuitive imagination are very important ways of thinking about nature (Walker, 2000, pp.52-54, 2017, p.137; Kossoff, 2015, p.28);

3. Nature and society should be perceived as a dynamic, "belonging together" network (Bortoft 1996, pp.59–60); "interconnectedness" and "interdependence" are the important quality of viable society and culture (Kossoff, 2015, p.30);

4. Eastern philosophies which focus on the concept of universal, interrelated oneness, unified harmony and intuition, contrasting with the western views of separated individuals, reductionism, rationalism and hierarchy, have a potential to inform and inspire the new thinking and approaches of sustainability (Capra, 1982; McGilchrist, 2009; Kurokawa, 1991).

Informed by these emerging theories, many aspects of the current dominant paradigm in design for sustainability are challenged, including:

1. The centralized, linear, cause and effect paradigm is inadequate to solve "complex", "chaotic" problems, known as "wicked problems" (Irwin, 2015,

p.234); e.g. product- and technology-focused approaches in design for sustainability are no longer sufficient (Walker, 2010; Ceschin and Gaziulusoy, 2016, p.144); a global agenda that embraces localization could lead to sustainable processes (Scruton, 2012, p.399). Sustainability is embedded in processes that have occurred over a long period of time in particular places, e.g. a steady process of cultural accretion practised by local craftsmen (Van der Ryn and Cowan, 1965, p.85).

2. In contrast to mechanical concepts of systems design, they propose “authentic” holism that include more flexible and complex forms of life and culture through symbiotic thinking, (Kossoff, 2015, pp.28-30), which means social and human dimensions (value systems, traditions, beliefs, emotion and meaning) have the powerful potential to trigger sustainable change (Walker, 2018, pp.261-293)

3. Quality instead of quantity and should become the most important aspect of nature and life (Capra and Luisi, 2014; Kumar, 2005, p.299), which inspires slow consumption, slow design, design for repair, etc.

According to these emergent ideas, “interconnectedness”, “cosmopolitan localism”, “self-organization”, “co-creation” “participation”, “authenticity” “meaning and spirituality” have been recently added to the vocabulary and discourse of sustainability. Meanwhile, these concepts are coherent with the emergent concept – “resilient culture”[7] in the field of social design. Resilience to risk was first put forward by Walker and Salt (2006) in their book- *Resilience Thinking,* which then inspired the exploration of distributed systems[8] from the social innovation dimension (Manzini, 2012). This exploration of

7 The concept of ″resilient″ comes from physics and describes a quality of a material to regain its original shape after being bent, compressed or stretched (Oxford Dictionaries, 2016). Here it means social techniques have the ability to quickly recover from difficulty conditions and crisis.

8 The innovation of distributed system is summed up by Manzini (2012) into three waves of innovation. It can be concisely concluded as: from hierarchical structure to new, networked ones; green technology based on small highly efficient and renewable energy; from the global to the interconnected local.

resilience is accompanied by a series of community-based bottom-up social initiatives.[9]

In the field of *Design for Sustainability*, as presented in Section 2.3.3.2, the emergent design initiatives such as Design for Social Innovation, Transition Design and so on, are informed by, and responsive to, the theories of QBL and the ideas stated above. Compared to technology-based approaches, these are more holistic and touch the root problems which are caused by unsustainable production and consumption. However, there are still many shortcomings to these approaches. For example, designers' lack of systemic and comprehensive awareness and knowledge to tackle the problems so that they often give unrealistic solutions (Ceschin and Gaziulusoy 2016); it often gives a "too big picture" and lacks concrete tools for focusing on products and service (ibid.). However, these approaches are still in the very early stages, which need to be revised and refined in the process.

2.3.4 Findings on Design for Sustainability

According to Table 2.5 and Section 2.3.3.1, technology-industry-based approaches to sustainability are narrowly focused and fail to consider the whole, while, according to Section 2.3.3.2, emergent holistic approaches such as Transition Design and Design for Social Innovation often give "too big a picture" and lack more concrete and definitive tools to realize the visions. Taken collectively (Sections 2.3.1, 2.3.2 and 2.3.3), a series of concepts and ideas emerge from the literature. Based on the four elements of Walker's QBL, these concepts and ideas are summarized in five key concepts and presented in Table 2.6.

9 These initiatives include Transition town movement in the UK, Latin America, Asia and Africa (Transition Network.org), and Culture of Resilience project initiated at University of the Arts, London which is devoted to rediscovering the value of socially redundant labour resources and making it potential for sustainable economy and society (culturesofresilience.org).

Table 2.6. Key concepts of design for sustainability

Key concepts of design for sustainability
Technology-industry-based approaches
• **Eco-effectiveness** is the core of any technology-based approach. The central principle of eco-effectiveness is “waste equals food.” It is a nature-inspired concept and approach to sustainability, which was developed in response to perceived limitations of eco-efficiency. However, many scholars criticize it because it focuses mainly on technological and productivity aspects and fails to address issues from the societal and human aspects (Gaziulusoy, 2015, Ceschin and Gaziylusory, 2016). • **Economic viability (profitability)** is a foundational factor to sustain all the design and practices existing in contemporary economy and society. It is recognized as one of the three elements of the TBL of sustainability (Elkington, 1997, p.70).
Society-people-based approaches
• **Cosmopolitan localization** emphasizes community-based, local distributed systems, with the ability to share and exchange information and knowledge through ever-improving technologies and global networks (Irwin, 2015, p229). It was created by Wolfgang Sachs in 1992, and later developed by other scholars (e.g. Manzini, 2014, p.202) as a vision and an alternative way of transition towards sustainability in the design field. This concept aims at first generating a resilient social mechanism and productive system to cope with the ever-deteriorating climate and social crises, while being coherent with another notion of sustainability – diversity. Both concepts are informed by the sociological and scientific theories of holism and symbiosis. This concept implies that designers should have the capability to mediate “between big and small networks, between global and local” (Ferrara, 2011, p.8). • **Resilience of self-production system** challenges the linearity of single-ordered systems, (Fuchs, 2003). Flexible, robust self-organization, self-development and self-production are regarded as critical to holistic sustainability (Walker & Salt, 2006) and are recognized as valuable factors to be imitated and used in system design for manufacturing (see Leitão, 2008). In recent decades, these concepts have inspired *a movement towards self-production*, which opposes Fordist mass-production and outsourcing, and which has been expanding in Europe since the 1990s (Ferrara, 2011, pp.5-13). It was initially inspired by craftsmanship that retrieves traditional techniques of craft, thereby helping to revive small-scale, customized production and accelerating the integration of craft and modern design. In addition, this cultural trend encourages consumers to participate in the production process rather than simply purchasing the products off-the-shelf (Atakan, 2011). In the design field, self-production is based on co-creation that “represents the act of mediation

between areas of knowledge" (Mazzarella and Engler, 2014).

- **Contextualized/authentic lifestyle:** lifestyle and everyday routines concern fundamental issues of human behaviour relating to sustainability. Lifestyles are driven by needs and desires (Kossoff, 2015, p.31). Max-Neef (1992 cited in Irwin, 2015, p.239) holds that human needs are finite. However, the ways in which humans choose to satisfy these needs are infinite. Here, it is necessary to clarify the difference between needs and desires. Modern technology and modern design, operating within a market economy, continuously fuel people's appetites. Constantly longing for improved products and new gadgets is not a matter of needs but of desires, because it inevitably results in constant dissatisfaction. While modern living brings many benefits in terms of efficiency, productivity and information sharing, it has also created a dependent, passive, emotionless and homogenized lifestyle. This lifestyle, as Walker (2014, 2017) points out, is highly distracting in terms of using products and dealing with everyday affairs. Modern lifestyles, fueled by continual change and constantly creating desires but failing to meet people's essential needs, are criticized by Davies (2015) "at the root of many wicked problems" (Irwin, 2015, p.240). Therefore, it is essential to revise modern lifestyles – norms, expectations, behaviours – in accordance with authentic model of work and life.

2.4 Synthesis Resulting in Key Findings from Literature

This section presents a synthesis of findings from literature by bringing craft in general (Section 2.1), design for sustainability (section 2.3) and crafts in the YRD of China (section 2.2) together. Through this, the relationships between craft and sustainability emerge, and key findings are summarized.

2.4.1 Craft and Sustainability: A Relationship Revealed

As stated in Section 2.1.2, craft has six principal characteristics, which form a systemic view of the nature of craft (summarized in Section 2.1.3). However, the literature on crafts in the YRD (Section 2.2.4) indicate a series of practical difficulties and socioeconomic struggles being encountered in contemporary society. In addition, sustainability, as many scholars argue, is not an understanding that comes only from the ideas expressed through the *Triple Bottom Line* and a series of technology- and industry-based approaches. A more holistic and deeper comprehension of its nature and implications were reviewed in Section 2.3.3.2 and these are represented by five key concepts (Section 2.3.4).

By bringing the findings from these three areas together, strong connections are revealed, but there are also incompatibilities and contradictions. This relationship between craft and sustainability can be separated into two aspects, as Table 2.7 shows: *accordances*, in terms of localization, eco-effectiveness, resilient system, authentic lifestyle; and *tensions*, in terms of cosmopolitan irrelevance, cost-effectiveness, and economic viability.

Table 2.7. The relationship between craft and sustainability

Accordances		Tensions	
Localization	• Craft utilizes local resources, local knowledge, and aims to satisfy local human needs. • Craft contributes to community-based lifestyles and cultural identity and is therefore consistent with the cultural diversity and place-based living systems of sustainability.	**Irrelevance to cosmopolitan life**	• Cosmopolitanism is a key concept of sustainability, which means the ability to exchange knowledge and technology between communities. • Crafts have deep relations with specific places, which can make them insular, isolated and lacking in a global view and reluctant to engage in exchange. • Many traditional folk crafts are located in remotely rural areas where they are isolated from the global economy and modern aesthetics.
Perceived eco-effectiveness	• Craft often features natural pre-industrial materials, most of which are within the closed loop of an eco-system, such as wood, bamboo, clay, cotton, metals. Also, many crafts are produced using only human labour, without machines or electrical energy. This is in accord with the aim of effective sustainable approaches (circular economy, C2C) – i.e. not necessarily efficient but effective, waste from one process is a resource for another (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2012).	**Low efficiency and high cost**	• Craft based on the traditionally pre-industrial technique is uncompetitive against the modern machine and advanced technology in terms of productivity (but modern production generally ignores the full social and environmental costs) • Generally, craft production takes more time to produce. As this time is human labour, costs will be higher. A handmade iron pot may take days or weeks to finish, while an industrial equivalent may take minutes or hours.
Resilient system	• Modern production systems are recognized as fragile and pose a risk to living systems (Walker and Salt, 2006). “Local” is the central vision of holistic sustainability to overcome this fragility (Manzini, 2012; Walker, 2018). • Craft production is small-scale, diverse and distributed and has the potential to operate as usual when facing climate, social and economic crises.	**Economic unviability**	• Most crafts cannot maintain financial viability in the modern economic system. Craftspeople cannot make a living from making their craft. Compared to their investment in production, the market price does not match the value and cost.

Authentic sense of being	• Lifestyle is an essential issue within the holistic understanding of sustainability while it also closely relates to the making and using of crafts. • Modern lifestyles are rather distracting in terms of using products and dealing with everyday affairs. • Authenticity is claimed as one of the traits of craft. Traditional crafts are made for meeting human needs through an authentic (local, culturally relevant) process. In the whole making process, people manipulate materials and tools with creativity and human intimacy; when the product is used, this authenticity in the making often arouses a real appreciation and empathy. • Values are created through this process so as to construct an authentic lifestyle that helps rectify the currently unsustainable one.		

With reference to Table 2.7, craft can be understood as being in many ways inherently consistent with the vision of sustainability in terms of four accordances. Therefore, craft should not be regarded as somehow at variance with contemporary life; on the contrary, it should be embraced as “a modern way of thinking otherwise” (Adamson, 2010 p.5). However, there remain difficulties in terms of tensions, which need particular interventions.

The three tensions (cosmopolitan irrelevance, cost-effectiveness and economic viability) result from our fast-paced modern technologies and economic demands. Cosmopolitanism and high productivity can benefit human civilization and progress, but criticism of these characteristics of modernity and technology is not new. Constantly pursuing productivity and profits without consideration of environmental and societal

costs together with a lack of more holistic systems thinking are widely condemned as creating a potentially catastrophic risk (Beck,1992).

2.4.2 Key Findings from Literature

According to findings from literature, craft represents a comprehensive system with six principal characteristics (Section 2.1.3) and should be viewed and understood through a systemic lens (Section 2.1.1). To a considerable degree, this is consistent in nature with the key concepts of design for sustainability (Section 2.3.4). They share common characteristics that include the interconnectedness and interdependence of resilient systems and nature-people-society integration. The accordances collectively (Table 2.7) suggest that craft has great potential for serving as an agency for sustainability transformation. This, therefore, results in:

> **Key Finding 1**: **Craft-sustainability consistencies in nature**: craft is a systems-based activity and as such has potential for sustainability transformation, which needs to be viewed through a holistic lens and researched systemically.

According to the relationship between craft and sustainability (Section 2.4.1), in forming a comprehensive ecology, craft is, to a significant degree, consistent with sustainability. However, also like sustainability, craft causes tensions and contradictions within the contemporary social condition (Table 2.7). This can be summarized as:

> **Key Finding 2: Craft-sustainability tensions within contemporary socioeconomic conditions:** craft cannot sustain itself in contemporary society because of its economic unviability, cost-ineffectiveness and cosmopolitan irrelevance.

Key Findings 1 and 2, in terms of the consistent yet contradictory relationship between craft and sustainability in Table 2.7, are condensed in Table 2.8.

Key Findings 1 & 2 Combined: Relationship between Craft and Sustainability	
Accordances	**Tensions**
Localized, communal living Local resources, knowledge, local human needs, community-based living systems, diverse cultural identities	Irrelevance to cosmopolitan life Closed, isolated from technology and economy, lack of global view, being out of step with modern aesthetics
Perceived eco-effectiveness Natural materials, renewable resources, closed loop ecosystem	Low efficiency and high cost Pre-industrial technique, uncompetitive, while modern production generally ignores social and environmental costs.
Resilient production system Small-scale, diverse, distributed, resilient to risks and crises	Economic unviability Low-paid, low price, value diminished, cost-income gap
Sense of being Authentic, relevant, creative, responsive, contextualized	

Table 2.8. The relationship between craft and sustainability (condensed version)

According to the findings on crafts of the YRD, there are a considerable number of high-quality heritage crafts in the region, some of which are recognized as Intangible Cultural Heritage (Sections 2.2.3.2), especially in porcelain/ceramics and textiles (Section 2.2.3.5). Craft practices in the YRD are also diverse and dynamic in terms of forms of development and collaboration (Sections 2.2.2, 2.2.3.4). However, while major crafts in this region tend to be at an industrial scale (Section 2.2.3.3), they are often out of step with contemporary expectations and norms in terms of design, economics and value (Section 2.2.3.6). In addition, there is an epistemic lack for researchers in the understanding of Chinese craft from the individual maker's perspective. Though there is emerging anthropological research on craft communities and craftspeople, the makers' role in craft is generally overlooked in the literature, and the social status of craftspeople is perceived as very low (Section 2.2.1.2). These can be summarized as:

> **Key Finding 3**: **Craft, history and development in the YRD**: crafts in the YRD offer great opportunities for sustainable transformation in terms of long-standing

history, dynamic forms of development and top-down government supports, while also facing challenges including lack of innovation, irrelevance to everyday life, and craftspeople's low social status, especially in porcelain/ceramics and textiles. These findings can be characterized as opportunities and challenges which are presented in Table 2.9.

Key Finding 3: Craft, History and Development in the YRD	
Opportunities	**Challenges**
Long-standing craft history • Rich craft resources, among which are those recognized as ICH; • Porcelain and textile are major crafts with over 1700 years of history.	Lack of innovation • Outdated designs; • Changelessness of forms, materials, functions, techniques and processes.
Dynamic and interdisciplinary development • Time-honored craft enterprises; • Place-based craft industries and communities; • Collaborations between artists, artisans, crafts sectors, e-commerce and design schools at universities; • A distinction between the craft sector and the "makers" community.	Irrelevance to everyday life • Mainly two directions: as gifts for export well-established crafts for collection • Few crafts made for everyday use market; • An industrial model of production renders the loss of sense of being and meaning
Top-down governmental supports • Financial and policy supports; • ICH Inheritor programme; • Training courses for ICH inheritors • Publicization of ICH activities at primary and secondary schools	Low social status of craftspeople • The personal aspect and social role of craftspeople are neglected; • Lack of research on individual craftspeople
	Difficulty in the passing down of crafts • Lack of motivations and incentives for the younger generation to learn craft skill and choose it as a career option.

Table 2.9. Craft, history and development in the YRD

2.5 Discussion

This section discusses the key findings from literature through which further research opportunities emerge and are identified.

According to Key Findings 1 and 2 (Table 2.8), craft can be understood as being inherently consistent with the vision of sustainability in terms of four accordances, yet

there remain difficulties in terms of three tensions. It is clear that there is a need to address these accordances and tensions, so that craft can more effectively contribute to the development of a sustainable society.

However, as Key Finding 3 (Table 2.9) shows, crafts in the YRD are facing some challenges that are not compatible with the accordances, especially the detachment caused by an industrial way of making that undermines the consistency with tradition and craftspeople's sense of being. On the one hand, crafts in the YRD are not innovative enough. On the other, the region is currently embracing a consumer culture with a highly developed economy that demands high-quality cultural goods. This might be an opportunity for traditional crafts to revitalize into contemporary life through modern design and technical innovation, but it also implies a risk that sacrifices the intrinsic quality of craft – that China wants to protect above all – for innovation and the constant new. Therefore, apart from a need to address the three aspects of tensions, it also requires careful consideration to balance the aspects of both accordances and tensions.

2.5.1 A Design Intervention in Crafts is Needed in the YRD

It is commonly believed that craft is a field situated between art and design (Nugraha, 2012). Essentially, craft is the form of pre-industrial design that, by nature, according to Svengren Holm (2014), forms a close relationship between them. Design has the potential to make a difference because it is able to contribute meaningful solutions to multidisciplinary problems (Irwin, 2015). In the field of design for sustainability, design has pushed its boundaries to encompass a broader area including socio-technical design and social innovation (Section 2.3.2). According to Buchanan (2001, pp.3-23), design has evolved from designing single products to focusing on interaction, systems and activities. Within the spectrum of the four orders of design (ibid., p.5): graphics, products, interaction and systems, craft as a human-centred object and activity can be supported by each of these.

In addition, design thinking and design-led participatory approaches have increasingly

become more and more acceptable and effective across a wide range of research (Steen et al., 2011). The expanding field of design and design approaches greatly enhances its capability to cover a more comprehensive area which is able to facilitate the generation of solutions to the problems craft is facing in contemporary society.

In craft research, design has been widely used in revitalizing traditional practices worldwide (e.g. Tung, 2012; Evans et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2019; Chudasri et al., 2020;). This research focuses on making traditional crafts relevant to present-day life and raising their perceived value through design, and it suggests that design can make a contribution in a variety of areas including products, processes, packaging, branding, marketing and knowledge transfer, etc.

As found in Sections 2.2.2, 2.2.3.2, and 2.2.3.4, craft practices in the YRD offer positive opportunities for transformation to sustainability, especially its outstanding craft history and the currently flourishing ICH initiatives, top-down policy supports, developed economy, and cross-boundary collaborations between craft, commercial design and creative industries. However, as summed up in Table 2.9, crafts in the region are also facing significant challenges: traditional crafts generally lack design and innovation; the personal aspect and social role of craftspeople are neglected; an industrial model of production renders the loss of sense of being and meaning; and difficulty in the passing down of crafts. How to take advantage of these opportunities and overcome the problems warrants exploration.

2.5.2 Four Potential Directions for Moving Crafts towards Sustainability Identified as Field Research Opportunities

As Key Finding 2 shows, craft conforms to the principles of sustainability in terms of localization, eco-effectiveness, resilient systems, and authentic sense of being. This suggests a significant potential direction for craft's development, namely:

1. Preserving traditional crafts through continuation of well-established practices, i.e. conforming to traditional materials, forms, processes, skills, culture, customs, etc.

However, craft contradicts the principles of sustainability in terms of cosmopolitan relevance, cost-effectiveness and economic viability in the contemporary conditions, and crafts in the YRD are detached from everyday life. In addressing the identified tensions and problems, a further three potential directions emerge:

2. enhance cosmopolitan relevance by revitalizing into everyday life etc.;
3. address cost-efficiency concerns through (technical) innovation etc.;
4. raising perceived value and develop entrepreneurial skills etc.

These four potential directions are presented in Figure 2.8 and discussed below.

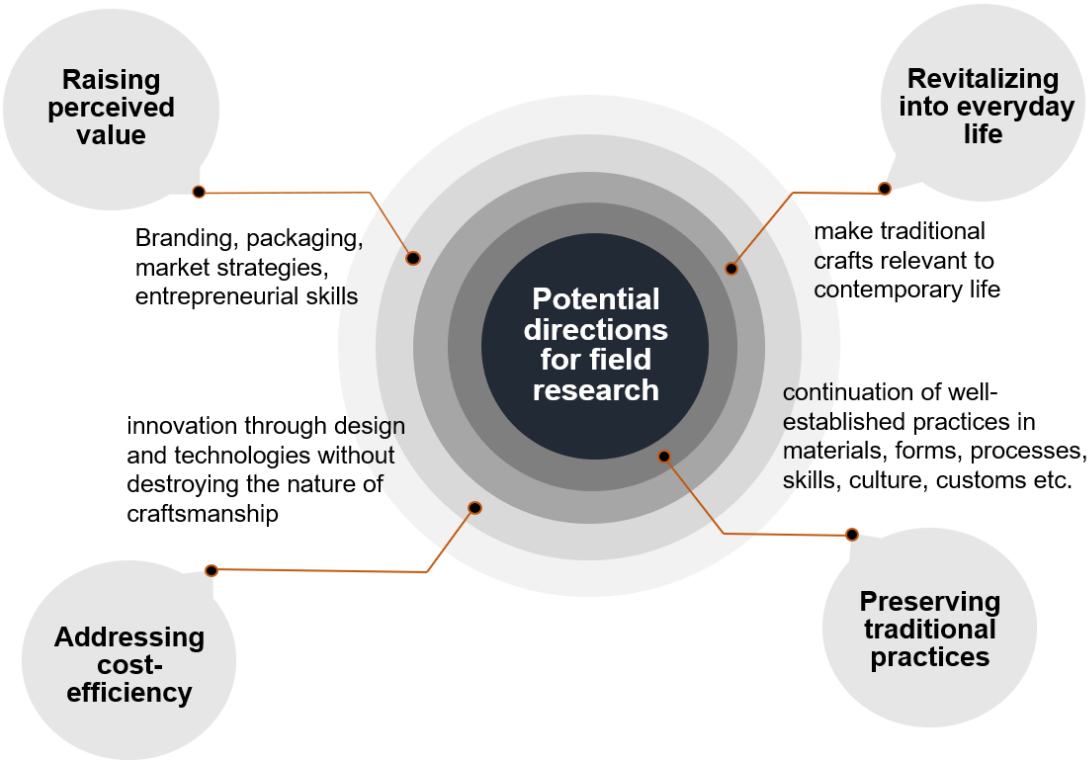

Figure 2.8. Potential directions for field research on moving crafts in the YRD towards sustainability

Preserving traditional crafts through continuation of well-established practices: This is more an ICH conservation approach which basically means to preserve heritage craft practices as what they were, especially for those well-established culturally significant crafts. Though crafts in the YRD are becoming well protected in the form of documentation, such as museum displays, performance, and cataloguing in books, through the powerful top-down government initiatives and recognition, there is a lack of

protection for the practices themselves and for sustaining production (Xie, 2014). The reality in the craft industry is particularly negative in supporting this direction: younger generations lack the incentive to learn craft skills in this field because it is time consuming and poorly paid (Section 2.2.3.6). Meanwhile, as a means of safeguarding ICH, protection of production is the most recognized undertaking but also the most complex and controversial (Zhao and Li, 2013). This is because it is difficult to compete with modern industrial production and the craft products cannot compete with mass-produced goods on price. Except for government's "salvage" conservation policies and supports, what approaches and strategies can help sustain the productions of these well-established culturally significant crafts so that they can continue into future?

Revitalizing traditional crafts into everyday life: findings from literature suggest that passing down place-based craftsmanship over generations in terms of materials, skills and the making process is a way to revitalize it and reintroduce it into everyday life. In this direction, we should be aware that the domain of everyday life (Kossoff, 2015, p.35) is a key factor, which means consideration of contemporary culture, lifestyle, market and other related factors should be taken into account. The market and commercialization are very important and sensitive issues that need particularly thoughtful intervention. This might be misunderstood as expanding the scale and increasing productivity for the sake of economics and employability. According to some research findings (Li, 2006; Zhang, 2010; Chudasri, 2015), the revitalization of traditional crafts into commercial productions in ways that are consistent with the principles of sustainability is very challenging. Given the prevailing consumerism in the YRD today, what is the effective way (s) to balance between economic issues (improving productivity, increasing income and welfare, etc.) and retaining craftsmanship and tradition?

Addressing cost-efficiency problem with innovation and technologies: the issue of cost-efficiency is an inevitable problem if crafts are meant to enter commercial production and everyday life. Recent years have witnessed an acceleration of collaborative innovations among making (craft), new technologies and entrepreneurial

approaches (KPMG, 2016).10 These include: improving and innovating traditional crafts by appropriately adopting alternative materials, engineering and technologies; improving its efficiency and productivity, yet not compromising its nature and craftsmanship. However, there is no evidence showing that the quantity of material goods contributes to human well-being; rather that an overabundance of commercial products lies at the root of an unsustainable lifestyle and people's unhappiness (Walker, 2014a; Davies, 2015). Meanwhile, as reviewed in Section 2.3.3.2, there is an experimental trend that encourages design for repair and upgrade to prolong a product's life-span and reduce resource consumption (Lockton, 2013; Mead, 2015). In traditional Chinese philosophy, natural materials are regarded as bestowals by the heaven and should be made into best objects and cherished (Gao and Jia, 2017). Given the conflicting nature between the productivity increase through application of technology and the unstainable lifestyle caused by surplus of commercial goods, how to balance between these two effects requires careful consideration and further examination in the specific context.

Raising perceived value and developing entrepreneurial skills: the values attributed to crafts in the YRD are underestimated and need specific renewal and promotion. This means that it is necessary to raise their perceived value to more people. It is believed that craft's value is based on the craft itself (know-how, materials, processes), as well as its social ethics and cultural connotation. Those values can help restore craft's meaning to makers, people in the community and, potentially, people elsewhere. In reality, perceived value could be raised by exploring the leading possibilities on a business scale (Dodgson, 2011). Packaging, branding, and marketing in terms of storytelling, creating points of sale and online presentation are effective methods to raise craft's perceive value (Walker et al., 2019, p.89; Chudasri, 2020, p.105). The new trend of innovation and value creation for craft could, for instance, rely

10 These cross-sector collaborations are driven by a series of explorations of opportunities for economic growth in the UK, whose impacts are expected to be coherent with the anticipated industrial transformation – the fourth industrial revolution (Schwab, 2016).

on mass customization and innovative products and services instead of reducing costs and increasing efficiency (Hughes, 2013). Compared to Italy, France and the UK, internationally well-known brands and trademarks are scarce among crafts in the YRD, and most of those existing in the market are not competitive. One possibility, therefore, is to create high-quality brands and high-value crafts by developing entrepreneurial skills based on the principles of value creation. However, we need to rediscover what we mean by value, and what value a craft contains, especially for crafts in the YRD.

From the four potential opportunities above, a series of questions is raised:

1. how to continue traditional crafts in a consumer society, protecting their traditional production and intrinsic quality while integrating it into contemporary conditions?
2. what the intrinsic quality/value actually is for crafts in the YRD and how to raise their perceived value?
3. how to innovate traditional craft and integrate it into the present life and economy, and what principles and approaches should we conform to for this integration?
4. if design can help, what are appropriate areas and strategies that can enable sustainable development in the YRD crafts?

All these issues and questions require a systemic investigation and exploration of real cases and practices. According to these four directions and based on secondary data, the researcher made a review of three best examples of craft revitalization (Appendix F2); in order to identify the scope for field research, initial areas for design in craft practices of the YRD were also explored and proposed to inform specific guidelines (Appendix F3).

2.6 Conclusions Leading to Research Questions

The chapter has presented a literature review on craft in general (Section 2.1), crafts in the YRD (Section 2.2), and design for sustainability (Section 2.3). Through combining

and synthesizing the findings from these three areas in Section 2.4, three key findings emerged. In Section 2.5, four potential opportunities for field research were identified and the associated questions raised through discussion. Potential directions for future design research and the associated questions raised will inform specific research questions and shape the framework for the field research in the YRD.

Research Questions

Although there is a certain amount of research addressing design in relation to contemporary craft and sustainability, it is still limited and insufficient. In China, the practices of craft resurgence are particularly vibrant and there are some initiatives that could help to revitalize traditional crafts for the contemporary economy using modern design: for example, design is helping to revive ethnic minorities' crafts based in the community in products, processes, services, marketing and social media promotion, such as the Gamel brocade project (HUN Design, 2019); collaboration with high-end brands like Shangxia Brand collaborating with Hermes to generate craft's market value (Lane Crawford); and government-led ICH conservation programmes. However, there is little research on these craft practices as to whether they can effectively protect crafts and transform them into a sustainable state. In addition, there is little research linking crafts in China, particularly in the YRD to *design for sustainability*, especially holistic sustainability, which explores the principles and approaches of craft development in a systemic manner.

As suggested by Lewis (2003), research questions need to be "focussed, but not too narrow", "relevant and useful", "capable of being researched through data collection", and "informed by and connected to existing research or theory, but with the potential to make an original contribution". Taking this consideration and the associated questions raised in discussion collectively, the following research questions for an in-depth investigation are put forward as overarching guidelines for the field research.

RQ1: How can we understand the characteristics and values of crafts and the resurgence of traditional practices in the YRD?

RQ2: What are the appropriate and effective approaches in line with sustainability principles to ensuring the long-term development of crafts in the region?

RQ3: Can design make a constructive and meaningful contribution to enabling a sustainable transformation in crafts of the region, if so, in what areas?

Based on these research questions, the research aim will strive to address the issues related to craft in a systemic and contextualized manner. Accordingly, five main research strategies emerge as a plan of work for field research. These are:

1) **Identifying the characteristics and manifestations of crafts in the YRD context** by aligning it with principles of holistic sustainability through empirical data collected from the field. Literature review identifies that craft's role and position in sustainability are not only about green materials and environmentally friendly production, but also about ethics, culture and spiritual connotation. Findings from literature are merely theoretical explorations and have yet to be tested in the real world. Therefore, understanding the values and meaning of craft within the YRD context is the key to setting a contextualized approach to inform potential criteria and interventions.

2) According to the contextualized understanding from 1), **generalizing initial concepts and developing criteria for assessment and direction**, and testing the validity and feasibility.

3) With the criteria generated from 2), **understanding and assessing the resurgent craft practices in the YRD and identifying (from field research) the particular issues facing crafts in the region**. From secondary research, it is apparent that there is renewed interest and a resurgence of craft in the YRD (Sections 2.2.2, 2.2.3). However, whether these current practices can sustain crafts in the region towards a sustainable future remains unknown. Assessing the current craft revitalization practices and recognizing the intrinsic causal relationships between related elements are critical to finding the directions in which design can make an effective contribution.

4) **Identifying the role of design** in overcoming the issues facing crafts in the region and **the ways** in which design can make the most meaningful and constructive contribution. Design's role in crafts of the YRD has yet been researched systemically, although in practice design is collaborating with the craft sector in many forms (Sections 2.2.2.3, 2.2.3.4). Therefore, the role of design in crafts within the context of holistic sustainability needs further exploration.

5) **Combining 2 and 3, determining potential approaches and the areas** where design can make valid and meaningful contributions to ensuring long-term viability of crafts in the YRD while continuing to enrich their culture.

Chapter 3. Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research methodology applied in this project. It includes the research types and approaches, research design, data collection methods, data analysis, the validation of the research findings, and ethic approval.

The main aim of the research is to address three research questions that seek to investigate crafts and traditional practices in the Yangtze River Delta and the values embedded in them within the context of sustainability, exploring appropriate and effective approaches, including design contribution, to assisting crafts to achieve a sustainable future.

RQ1: How can we understand the characteristics and values of crafts and the resurgence of traditional practices in the YRD?

RQ2: What are the appropriate and effective approaches in line with sustainability principles to ensuring the long-term development of crafts in the region?

RQ3: Can design make a constructive and meaningful contribution to enabling a sustainable transformation in crafts of the region, if so, in what areas?

To answer these research questions, the **five key objectives** are:

1. To understand the characteristics of crafts in the YRD, and identify the particular issues among craft communities from field analysis;
2. To understand the-state-of-the-art of the current resurgence in craft practices, and identify their patterns and manifestations;
3. Based on information from the previous phases, to generate initial insights and concepts to inform further directions;
4. To review the outcome(s) developed from Objective 3, and explore potential approaches and strategies within a real craft community;

5. Based on the above, to determine approaches including areas for design contribution to enabling a sustainable transformation in crafts of the YRD, and to make recommendations for discussion and validation.

3.1 Research Types and Approaches

An effective organization of the research process is essential to realize the research aim and objectives. How to devise and conduct the research depends largely on the nature and purpose of the research. The research types in terms of paradigm and purpose, and the research approaches are discussed in the following sections.

3.1.1 Research Paradigm

There are two main types of research paradigm based on two broad worldviews – “positivist” and “interpretivist”. These two have opposing assumptions about reality and the view of the world (Blaxter et al., 2006). Whereas the aim of positivist enquiry is explanation, prediction and control, the aim of interpretivism is exploration and emancipation (Willmott, 1997). Positivism is the belief that the world is relatively stable and can be objectively measured and understood as well as broadly generalized (Mertler, 2016, p108). This research paradigm is mostly used in scientific enquiry by an independent researcher who is concerned with predicting outcomes and drawing generalizations such as cause and effect (Saunders and Tosey, 2013). Highly structured and replicable methodology is used in positivist research to test hypotheses and theories (Gill and Johnson, 2002).

In contrast, interpretivism is a belief that the world is seen and understood as values-bonded meanings from the subjective experience of individuals. It has philosophical roots in Gadamer’s hermeneutic theory, which attempts to understand human beings in a social context through iterating between considering the interdependent meaning of parts and the whole that they form. An interpretive researcher is more concerned with “gathering rich insights into subjective meanings than providing law-like generalisations” (Saunders and Tosey, 2013). Unlike the positivist, a researcher who uses the interpretivist paradigm is concerned with understanding how the world is seen

by the subjects of a study (Glaser, 2004; Miles and Huberman, 1994). Therefore, interpretivist research is often conducted amongst people rather than with objects, in which qualitative methods are used to generate qualitative data from in-depth investigations with small samples (Saunders and Tosey, 2013).

Since this research aimed to investigate crafts in a social-cultural context, to gather rich insights about the meaning of crafts held by individuals and particular groups of people, and to understand multiple realities, it was conducted under an interpretivist paradigm. This choice determined that the research was pursued from a constructivist point of view (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This involved interacting with craftspeople in their own environment and seeking to comprehend their ideas, thoughts and actions in order to understand how they make sense of their crafts and craft practices and how they want them to be transformed towards a sustainable future. Therefore, this research project is an in-depth inquiry on crafts and craft communities into a socially and culturally constructed reality through the collection and analysis of qualitative data, and developing meanings out of it (ibid).

3.1.2 Research Purpose

According to Robson (2002), Yin (2009) and Neuman (2007), exploratory, descriptive and explanatory are three mainstream research types that serve different purposes. In addition, as an emerging research typology, emancipatory research has been increasingly used in fields such as feminism, disability, race, and gender (Barnes, 2001). It aims to produce knowledge of emancipation through research that benefits disadvantaged people and society (Noel, 2016). In many cases, it accompanies participatory research to act as an approach to support facilitation in social actions (Traina, 2016). The attributions of the three mainstream research types together with emancipatory research are summarized in Table 3.1

Table 3.1. Purpose-based research types (Robson 2002; Neuman, 2007; Yin, 2009; Noel, 2016; Ledwith, 2017)

Research types	Descriptions
Exploratory research	• To clarify and define the nature of a problem; • To generate more recent information and ideas; • To assess phenomena in a new light; • To generate new ideas, conjectures, or hypotheses; • To formulate more precise issues for future research; • Usually qualitative research.
Descriptive research	• To describe and interpret the characteristics of the specific details of a situation, social settings or relationship without investigating causal relationships; • To locate new data that contradict past data; • To clarify a sequence of steps or stages; • To document a causal process or mechanism; • To report on the background or context of a situation; • The basis for all other forms of research • Mixed use of qualitative and quantitative methods
Explanatory research	• Seeks an explanation for a situation or problem, traditionally but not necessarily, in the form of causal relationships; • To explain patterns relating to the phenomenon being researched; • To identify relationships between aspects of the phenomenon; • Mixed use of qualitative and quantitative methods
Emancipatory research	• With social justice at its heart, involves critical consciousness to challenge dominant narratives; • Seeks to empower the subjects of social inquiry; • Similar to participatory action research that recognizes the power imbalance in research; • To create opportunities and the will to engage in social action; • Often in a form of “research with” instead of “research in or for”; • Usually with qualitative methods.

According to the characteristics of the research questions of the study, and the findings identified from the literature, the research seeks a contemporary understanding of the nature and values of crafts in the YRD, China, and to explore the approach(es) as well as design’s contribution that can move them towards a sustainable future. There is only limited published evidence regarding the approaches and design’s contribution in China’s craft revitalization through a holistic lens, especially at a general theoretical level. Therefore, this research is predominantly exploratory in nature. Although the research inevitably involves some description and explanation of causal relationships

(e.g. describing or interpreting some phenomena that happen in craft societies and communities for certain reasons, or explaining why a prototype or design method suits a specific intervention proposal), these are not the principal constituents of the research objectives.

In addition, even though the status of craft in China has been slightly raised since the state's decision to promote the nation's ICH (Intangible Cultural Heritage) and the introduction of its ICH promotion policies, crafts are peripheral with respect to the economy, and craftspeople remain marginalized from contemporary society. In light of this, the research also adopts an emancipatory perspective throughout the research.

3.1.3 Research Approaches Chosen

This section justifies the research approach adopted for this study. All four types of research in Table 3.1 may lead to the use of either, or both, qualitative and quantitative research approaches (Yin, 2009). Exploratory research "rarely yields definitive answers, and it must be creative, open minded, and flexible" (Neuman, 2007). Therefore, qualitative methods are mostly used in exploratory research. According to the nature of the research, this study primarily employs qualitative research approaches though it does involve some quantitative data, such as statistics of ICH craft items in the literature review and the scoring tool of a values-based appraisal of crafts in the case study.

Craft practice is commonly understood as a community activity involving a variety of elements. Centred on craftspeople, it includes skills, materials, community and culture (Section 2.1.3). Given that the research is explorative in nature and the research questions involve both "how" and "what" questions, three approaches were considered: grounded theory, case study and participatory action research approaches.

Grounded theory approach

Grounded theory approach aims to generate middle-range theories from data collected during the research (Glaser in Walsh et al., 2015). A grounded theory approach is particularly useful in new, applied areas where there is a lack of theory and concepts to

describe and explain what is going on (Robson, 2002). Grounded theory is a method to study concepts which categorize and normalize patterns while not being descriptive (Glaser, 1967). As stated in Research Objectives 1 and 2, the research requires an exploration of the nature and characteristic of crafts in the YRD from a situated perspective in order to identify criteria for assessing and directing crafts' sustainable transformation. As evidenced by the literature review, there is a shortage of theory about the relationship between craft and sustainability in the YRD, and there is very limited research concerning what the values of crafts are in line with the principles of sustainability. Thus, the grounded theory approach is employed to generate – from the ground up – ideas, concepts and patterns emerging from the real-life situations with the data collected from the YRD region.

Case study approach

Yin defines the case study approach "as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (2009, p.4). According to Hoey (2014), an intensive study on particular crafts could allow the researcher to zoom into the research subject and reveal rich and in-depth understandings of people, place, and process.

Craft has been a community practice for centuries. Case study allows the researcher to obtain information about various areas, especially "knowledge …, behaviours …, attitudes, beliefs and practices" (Huerta, 2010 cited in Chudasri, Walker and Evans, 2013). As found in the literature review, (See Chapter 2, Section 1), craft making is situated in a community in which an ecology of craftspeople, material, culture and specialized knowledge forms. The design research methods originated from the *Design Ecology* project also suggest that people, place, past and present are four major factors in understanding local craft practices and production (Walker et al., 2018).

The region of Yangtze River Delta is quite vast (ca. 99,600km2) and crafts in the region are very diverse (Section 2.2.3.2), but craft industries in the region share some common characteristics. Anthropologists in China have conducted research on different

craft communities of YRD, such as porcelain crafts in Jingdezhen, embroidery crafts in Suzhou, and Celadon porcelain in Longquan, Zhejiang province. This research identifies a similar feature in these communities; that crafts are produced through a collaboration between local craftspeople and modern creatives on a large scale (Fang, 2017; Zhang, 2010). Therefore, one particular case was chosen to conduct an in-depth study. New knowledge on crafts and sustainability, craft practices and cross-disciplinary collaboration could be created through these thorough investigations into real practice and craft communities (Hall and Hall, 1996, p.42; Clark, 2009).

Participatory action research approach

Participatory action research is an accepted approach in medicine, design and engineering that aims to influence or change an aspect of social practices, innovations, policies, or services for the better (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2003; Skains 2018). It seeks to produce knowledge through the simultaneous process of taking action and doing research, which are linked through critical reflection (Chevalier, 2013). The reflective process is “directly linked to action, influenced by understanding of history, culture, and local context and embedded in social relationships” (Baum et al., 2006). It is context-specific research that involves researchers and participants of particular groups working together to understand a problematic situation, promotes democracy and challenges inequality (participatorymethods.org). A typical feature of participatory research is the close collaboration between the researcher and the individuals who are the focus of the investigation. As found from the literature, craft can be viewed as a system of interdependent elements in which craftspeople are the core (Section 2.1.3); however, craftspeople in the region have low social status and have been overlooked throughout history; now, more and more artists and designers are joining in the current resurgence of craft practices through collaboration with local craftspeople (Section 2,2,4); Research Question 3 is on design interventions and strategies to enable a sustainable transformation in craft practices, which seeks to produce reflections and enable changes. All these factors warrant a participatory action research approach that values democracy, emancipation and equality of the research.

Consequently, a mixed use of grounded theory and case study with a participatory action approach was adopted according to the needs of the research questions and objectives at each planned phase.

3.2 Research Design

Saunders and Tosey (2013) hold that the overall configuration of the research can enable the researcher to make informed decisions not only on the methods of data collection and analysis, but also on the ways of synthesizing information and its interpretation. Based on the explorative purpose of, and the approaches chosen for, the project, the research was designed in phases to answer the research questions and realize the objectives. The main research activities included data collection (2016-2018), data analysis (2017–2019), organization and writing up of the research findings (2017–2020), and the validation of the research findings (2017–2019). The field research was carried out in two phases, i.e. Field Research Phase I and Phase II.

- **Field Research Phase I** employed a grounded theory approach and aimed to understand in depth the context, characteristics, patterns and manifestations of crafts and craft practices in the region in a general sense, involving five types of crafts. The work was undertaken in the four cities of Shanghai, Suzhou, Hangzhou and Jingdezhen from May to December 2017.
- **Field Research Phase II** is an in-depth case study on porcelain crafts conducted with a participatory action approach, aiming to consolidate and review findings from Field Research Phase I and explore potential directions, areas and strategies for design to make an effective contribution. Informed by Mazzarella's service design research with textile artisan communities (2018), a 4-stage research activity was designed as a strategy to develop the study: **1) ethnography** allowed the researcher to obtain a deep understanding and familiarization of the craft community context; **2) sense-making** activity was used to capture participants' tacit knowledge, perceptions and priorities as well as make sense of values and sustainability, building on the preceding stages; **3) co-creation workshop** was to

co-develop situated propositions for ensuring the sustainability of the values in porcelain crafts as well as to review the findings from Phase I; **4) practice-based experimental project** was used to test the propositions gained from the workshop and develop insights further.

Together with the literature review and validation this research constitutes four phases. Table 3.2 illustrates the research design of this project, considering the objectives, methods and outcomes for each phase of this investigation.

(See next page)

Table 3.2. Research design for the project

Phases/methods	Objectives (1-5)	Outcomes
1. Knowledge gap leading to RQs – Literature review (2015-2016)		
Desk research	**To critically review literature** on theories and current status of craft, crafts in the YRD and design for sustainability	• Three key findings leading to • Research Questions
2a. Field Research Phase I – General study in the YRD (2017-2018)		
Grounded theory approach • semi-structured interviews • participant observations	**Objective 1:** To understand the characteristics of crafts and identify particular issues	• Two key findings including 9 individual findings
	Objective 2: To understand the manifestations of craft practices in the region	
2b. Discussion and Development Phase I		
Based on data from field work Phase I and literature	**Objective 3:** To compare findings from the field and from literature, and develop initial insights and concepts to inform future directions	• Three new findings • A typology of craft values
3a. Field Research Phase II – An in-depth case study in Jingdezhen, YRD (2018)		
4-stage participatory action approach • ethnography • sense-making activity • co-creation workshop • practice-based experimental project	**Objective 4:** To review the typology of craft values and explore potential approaches and strategies	• Three key findings • Reflection on the typology of craft values
3b. Discussion and Development Phase II (2019-2020)		
Based on information from the phases above	**Objective 5:** Based on the above, to determine approaches including areas for design contribution to crafts	• The refined typology of craft values – *Combined Values Model* • Five main research findings and one outcome • Recommendations
4. Validation – Publications, conference presentations, and forums (2017-2019)		
The initial findings have been validated respectively in the form of peer-reviewed journal articles, conference presentations, academic forums and within the two field research phases. See Section 3.5 for the detail of the research validation and Section 1.3.6 for the publication list.		

3.3 Data Collection Methods

This research includes secondary source (desk) research and primary source (field) research. The researcher collected a certain amount of data from secondary research by reading literature and information from documents, websites and digital media (Twitter and WeChat) relating to the research topic and issues (see Chapter 2). Primary research involved the researcher collecting data via a range of methods including semi-structured interviews, ethnographic methods in terms of participant observation and unstructured interviews, co-creation workshops, documentary analysis, and additional methods such as field notes and photography. Details of the tools, procedures and participants can be found in Chapters 4 and 6. According to the designed research phases, the rationale behind the choice of the multiple data collection methods is given in the following paragraphs.

3.3.1 Literature Review

In order to identify the knowledge gap, the aim of this phase was to conduct a critical review of the literature on craft in general, crafts in the YRD, and design for sustainability. This process was developed in order to review key topics related to the research field and to find relationships among them. Keyword searches were used in Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science and other research databases accessible from the Lancaster University library and the Chinese language-based CNKI databases. The researcher reviewed the three areas of research separately and drew conclusions on the theoretical implications and opportunity directions to guide field investigation into crafts in the YRD. The literature review contributed by identifying a gap in the knowledge of a relationship between crafts and sustainability, especially in the context of current resurgence of the YRD crafts. To fill this knowledge gap, four directions resulting from the literature review were developed and challenged, both at the theoretical level through further literature review and in field investigation through the two phases of field research.

Literature data involved two languages (English and Chinese) and was drawn from a

wide variety of sources including books, journals, reports (produced by government organizations and companies); popular media (newspapers and magazines); and internet-based materials (websites, social medias, blogs, etc.). This list is in line with recommended literature sources identified by Blaxter et al. (2006) and Creswell (2009).

3.3.2 Field Research Phase I

The aim of this phase was to understand the context and current situation of crafts and craft practices in the region to address Research Objectives 1 and 2. Semi-structured interviews and participant observations were the main methods used to collect data in the field.

Semi-structured interviews – Kvale (1996) suggests one research method that can be both fixed and flexible is interviewing. It typically reflects variation in its use of questions, prompts, and accompanying tools and resources to draw the participant more fully into the topic under study (Galletta, 2013). Among the three types of interviews – i.e. unstructured, structured and semi-structured (Neuman, 2007) – semi-structured interviews are situated between structured and unstructured interviews and can provide and organize flow of information from the researcher's perspective while also allowing informants to freely give their insights about the issues that arise (Edwards and Holland, 2013). Therefore, semi-structured interviews were used to acquire focused and qualitative data for this research phase.

According to the research questions, a series of interview questions were designed, followed by open-ended questions designed both in advance and spontaneously during the interviews. Twenty-seven interviews were conducted either at the participants' workshops or an arranged meeting place. Each interview took approximately forty-five minutes. All interviews in this study were audio recorded and some of them were translated into English and summarized in note form. During the interviews, key messages were jotted down in the field notes. Field notes helped keep the interviews on track and ensured that all the research questions were answered. According to the research questions, questions asked in the interviews were originally designed and

revised as the interviews proceeded (Appendix B).

Identification of interviewees: This study utilized two main strategies for the identification of interviewees – theoretical sampling and snowball sampling (Burns and Grove, 2005). Both suggest that interviewees be identified through the changing situation of data collection. In theoretical sampling, data collection was controlled by the developing theory. As information was gathered from the first few interviews, the underlying theory became extended and informed the investigator as to which group(s) were appropriate to interview. In snowball sampling, a person, who was identified as a valid member of a specified group to be interviewed, was asked to suggest names of others who fitted the requirements. This suited the situation as the interviewer did not know potential members of the sample.

As evidenced in the literature, proposed contributors of this research would be craftspeople, maker-designers, craft researchers and related *Intangible Cultural Heritage* organizations and companies. Accordingly, four groups of people were identified to be the major contributors – **Makers**, e.g. craftspeople, craft-designers, craft-artists; **Buyers**, e.g. retailers, suppliers and managers; **Supporters,** e.g. NGOs and regional development officials and design company directors; and **Researchers** (academics) in the YRD. The prospective key informants were sought via published journals, books, design and craft conferences, enterprises and websites. The number of informants chosen from each group was initially in line with Hall and Hall's (1996) methods of interviewee identification. The informants comprised 14 makers, 10 supporters, 3 buyers and 3 researchers. More than half (n=16) of the informants claimed to have one or two secondary roles besides their primary role. Such numbers ensured that sufficient data was collected "to yield interesting results" (ibid, p.18). According to the snowball sampling strategy, the first round of informant recruitment relied mainly on the accessibility of informants with whom the researcher was acquainted. As the interviews proceeded, further potential interviewees emerged from the information acquired from the earlier interviewees. The details of the four groups of informants are given in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3. Four informant groups and their key attributes for Field Work Phase I

Group	Attribute
Makers (M) (n=14)	Informant in the Makers group can provide a variety of information related to research questions from a micro perspective. According to literature and personal observation, the roles of craftspeople consist of five main types in China: **ICH inheritors**, **MCA masters** (Master of Arts and Crafts), **artisans** (regular craftspeople)**, designer-makers** and **craft-artists**. Designer-maker refers to people who graduate from art and design schools and involved in craft design and making. Craft-artist refers to artists who are art objects using craft materials and skills. These fourteen interviewees have an average of 15 years' experience and at least 10 years' working experience in craft industries. Among the fourteen makers, six informants (M1-6) are from the **porcelain industry** in Jingdezhen. Five (M7-11) are from the **textile industry** based in Hangzhou, Suzhou and Shanghai. The other three (M12-14) are based in Hangzhou, and are **a woodcarver, a bamboo umbrella maker** and **a bronze-work master**. They were interviewed and stated that they could provide information specific to the craft they make, and about their experience with craft enterprises in this region.
Supporters (S) (n=10)	Informants in the Supporters group include three types: **regional development officials** (S15, S17, S22) who can provide information from an overarching perspective about cultural heritage protection, and how craft is valued and perceived from the political level, as well as policy-supporting issues; **directors of design studios** (S18, S19, S23) who are involved in facilitating craft revitalization and development, and can provide information from a designer's perspective as to how craft can be facilitated in a given situation and concerning any problems in this regard; and **institute, museum and NGO staff** (S16, S20, S21, S24) who can offer information from a non-political and non-commercial perspective concerning the problems and challenges of crafts in a specific category or generally. Their experience in the field ranges from 10 to 30 years.
Buyers (B) (n=3)	Informants in the Business group are stakeholders who are closely connected to the market and to business. They are well-equipped with knowledge about craft trade, the market share, innovation, and management skills. They offer a perspective in which craft relates to commodities and the market in the contemporary economy, society and lifestyle, as well as on

	innovation and responsibility in craft enterprise. They consist of one business manager (B25), one porcelain retailer (B26), and one craft agent advisor (B27).
Researchers (R) (n=3)	Informants from the Researcher group are mainly from academic institutions, who have researched in craft-related fields for several decades and possess deep knowledge with insightful views. One researcher (R28) is an educator and expert in ICH and Chinese crafts. One researcher's (R29) expertise is in the theory of traditional Chinese crafts and ICH. One researcher (R30) is from the field of textiles and design, and is also a practitioner, so could provide an insight from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

Participant observation – "ethnographic methods of participant observation are particularly widely used as a route into exploring the interconnectedness of the different aspects of community life" (Crow, 2018, p.6), as well as case-related social and cultural settings (Yin, 2009). A strength of participant observation over extended periods of time, which traditionally range from several months to years (Emerson et al, 2001, p.354), is that researchers can discover the conflicts between what people say and what they actually think and do, or between different aspects of the phenomena (Dewalt et al, 1998, p.270). Crafts in the YRD are based on communities, and their sociocultural aspects involve complex human relations and many factors. Therefore, participant observation was chosen to understand the complexity of multiple aspects of crafts and craft practices, especially regarding the collaboration practices, making processes and background settings.

In addition, Yin (2009, p.23) and Crow (2018, p.6) suggest that "multiple sources of evidence" should be used in case-related studies. Meanwhile, according to Lucy Suchman (2011), "method (as ethnomethodology has extensively demonstrated) presupposes an open horizon of competencies and contingencies on which its efficacies depend, but which it can never fully specify"; therefore, some other additional methods should also be employed as long as they relate to generating meaningful data.

Other methods – group conversations and discussions in the research sites might be employed simultaneously with the main data collection methods. A period (ca. 12 days) of observation and conversations with stakeholders in markets and fairs in Jingdezhen and Suzhou were also conducted according to the information from preceding semi-structured interviews.

3.3.3 Field Research Phase II – the In-depth Case Study

The aim of this research phase was to conduct an in-depth case study on particular crafts in the YRD in order to address Research Objective 4 – "to review the outcome(s) developed from previous research, and explore potential approaches and strategies within a real craft community". The case study employed a participatory action approach that was designed in four stages as per Table 3.2. The rationale for the selection of the case study, participant recruitment, and the methods used in each stage of the case study is given in the following paragraphs.

Identification of in-depth case study

A theoretical sampling and snowball sampling strategy that were used to identify interviewees in the first phase were also employed to select the case study (Burns and Grove, 2005). According to literature, porcelain and textiles are major crafts and there has been a resurgence in traditional craft practice in the YRD region. Therefore, the research had some initial criteria regarding how to choose the case study sample. The selection criteria were then developed through an iterative process in which the researcher and informants collaborated. Informants included an advisor and staff of governmental agencies, a craft expert of an NGO and university professors. Some were informants who had participated in the semi-structured interviews, some were colleagues of the researcher at crafts and arts schools and institutes, and others were new to the researcher, recommended by acquaintances or found on websites. The selection criteria were reviewed through site visits and discussions with experts in the craft sector. As a result, a number of criteria were defined: 1) traditional material, techniques and processes; 2) in line with the major craft types in the region; 3) long-

standing history of traditional crafts, preferably ICH crafts; 4) representing the state-of-the-art of the current craft resurgence in the region; 5) reputation in the craft section.

In line with these criteria, three initial case study samples of similar size were proposed.

- Jingdezhen porcelain making community, where there is the largest pottery industry in the region with a history of over 2000 years; the traditional processes and methods were awarded national ICH status in 2006 and have been revived in recent decades (Fang, 2015);
- Longquan celadon pottery community has also existed for over 1700 years – Longquan celadon was listed as a world ICH in 2009;
- Zhenhu embroidery community in Suzhou – silk embroidery is a major textile craft in the region and was awarded national ICH status in 2006.

Due to the similarity of these places and the scale of each case as well as time limitations, only one case study was realistic and the Jingdezhen porcelain community was selected. There are several reasons for this selection. First, according to the semi-structured interviews, the ecologies of production in the three proposed cases have similar characteristics, i.e. historical records (over a thousand years of history); community size; collaborative production among craftspeople, designers and artists; and policy influences. Therefore, an in-depth case study on one of them is more efficient to thoroughly grasp the current state of the craft resurgence than conducting partial studies on two or three of them. Second, informants agreed that porcelain making in Jingdezhen is a typical craft phenomenon which represents the essence of the current craft resurgence in the YRD due to its long-standing porcelain-making heritage, as well as its vigorous revival through collaboration between local craftspeople and contemporary creatives. Third, as identified from literature and informed by the first phase of field research, the porcelain community in Jingdezhen has been undergoing tremendous economic, social and cultural change, representing the major trends crafts have undergone in the region (Fang, 2015; Gillette, 2016).

In addition, in comparison to the other two places, the researcher was offered greater support in Jingdezhen. This was given by the local specialist research institutes (the Jingdezhen Ceramic University and the Fang Lili Institute of Art Anthropology) where they provided space for the co-creation workshop, porcelain making materials, and logistical support for the practice-based experimental project, as well as ensuring efficient and reliable participant recruitment.

Identification of participants

Since the case study employed a participatory action approach, participant recruitment became an essential part of the research preparation. The sampling strategy can be defined as a link with the external validity of research findings, because the plan is to ensure that the participants selected for the research represent the population of the case study (Robson, 2002). In line with the qualitative type and explorative nature of this research, focused on understanding the porcelain community within its social, cultural and economic contexts and not achieving statistical representativeness, a purposive sampling strategy was chosen (Mays and Pope, 1995). Such a strategy was subjected to the judgement of the researcher who selected participants according to their knowledge relevant to answering the research questions (Bowling, 2002). The selection criteria were developed based on the information from the first phase of field research and revised at the ethnography stage of the case study. Table 3.4 summarizes the criteria used to guide the selection of participants in the in-depth case study. (See Appendix C2 for five groups of the participants and their attributes)

Table 3.4. Sampling strategy used for the in-depth case study

Stages/actions	Sample
1. Ethnography – September and December 2017	
Unstructured interviews Participant observations to understand the context	Based on the information collected from informants in Field Research Phase I, an additional group of artists and designers was identified as a potential participant group, apart from Makers, Supporters and Researchers identified in the previous research phase (see Table 3.3). Information for this stage was collected from eighteen participants in the groups above.
2. Sense-making activity – November 2018	
Contextual interviews with stakeholders on values and sustainability	Based on the four groups of porcelain producers initially identified from the ethnography stage (see data analysis result in Table 6.8), four groups of potential participants for the sense-making interviews are identified as Artisans/masters, Artists, Designers, and Supporters. Priorities give to the people who have heritage know-how, with over 10 years' experience of porcelain production, whose knowledge represents essential parts of the porcelain production, and are interested in knowing the values and care about sustainability of porcelain crafts. Eleven participants were finally chosen.
3. Co-creation workshop – 2nd December 2018	
Co-designing propositions Validating previous findings	Based on the types of informants identified from the previous stages: relevant participants in porcelain field were recruited (see Table 3.3), including ten participants from the sense-making activity. Sixteen participants were finally chosen and identified as five groups of Artisans/masters, Artists, Designers, Supporters, and Researchers.
4. Practice-based experimental project – 16th to 23th December 2018	
Coordinating and observing to review the propositions and further develop insights	Chosen from the participants of the sense-making and the co-creation workshop, who have ongoing projects or planned projects to collaborate with each other; Selection criteria: 1-2 teams to conduct 1-2 individual making projects; according to the nature of porcelain making process (involve multiple specialist artisans, i.e. throwers, decorators, mould makers, etc.) each team has one designer or artist and two-three artisans.

The 4-stage participatory action study and relative data collection techniques

Throughout the in-depth case study, multiple anthropological and co-design methods were used to collect data. The following paragraphs discuss the rationale for the choice of data collection techniques and the method of thematic analysis used for the in-depth case studies, while details of the procedures and tools can be found in Chapter 7.

- **Ethnography**: Ethnography is a commonly used qualitative research method where researchers seek "holistic insights into people's views and actions, as well as the nature (sights and sounds) of the location they inhabit, through the collection of detailed observations and interviews" (Scott et al., 2008). Craft is a human-centred production and activity, and a significant amount of research into crafts is carried out by anthropologists using ethnography studies (e.g. Layton, 1991; Marchand, 2010; Yarrow and Jones, 2014; Ingold, 2015; Fang, 2015). In the design field, an anthropological perspective is often adopted by design researchers in a variety of human-centred design fields, e.g. Mazzarella's PhD project on service design for textile artisan communities (2018). In participatory action research, ethnographic methods (i.e. participant observations and unstructured interviews) were used to identify the cultural context regarding production of porcelain crafts and how makers perceive their crafts and making practices, in order to experience and make sense of their lives and their work (Robson, 2002).

- **Sense-making** is a narrative-based methdology that "captures and analyses experiences and observations in order to help detect emergent patterns, trends, and weak signals within a complex adaptive system" (Walsh, 2017). It largely depends on participants' perspective, and intepretation (Kolko, 2010) which is "the ongoing retrospective development of plausible images that rationalize what people are doing" (Weick et al., 2005, p. 409). Characteristics of sense-making include: constructive, empathic, personal, framing, communal, focused on and by extracted cues, and driven by plausibility rather than accuracy (Weick, 1995; Kolko, 2010). In line with tha anthropological nature of the research, sense-making was chosen as a method to empathise with the participants, capture and reframe

values from new perspectives, and create shared understandings between the researcher and the participants (Kolko, 2010). Sense-making activities were conducted with makers in their workspaces, with the aim of prompting them to reflect on values and concepts of sustainability and discuss “what the sustainability of values means”. Since these values are closely related to their work context, contextual interviews with makers in their workshops or workplaces were an appropriate method to provide a deeper understanding of the makers’ values (Holtzblatt and Beyer, 2017). Therefore, contextual interviews were employed as the main method for collecting data in the sense-making process. Prompt cards and concept maps were used as tools to guide the interview. The details of the procedure can be found in Section 6.2.4.

- **Co-creation workshop:** In line with the participatory action research approach, a co-creation/design was adopted to address the problems identified in the previous stages (ethnography and sense-making), and to validate previous findings. The researcher espoused Sanders and Stappers’s (2008) vision that various stakeholders need to be engaged in co-creating new values and solutions to suit their context. Such an approach aimed at collectively drawing on stakeholders’ local, situated knowledge, because it can overcome the limits of traditional approaches in terms of the specific nature and diverse needs and values. According to Mattelmäki and Slesswijk Visser (2011), such a co-creation/design approach engages the researcher and participants in a collaboration of exploring, envisioning and developing solutions. Therefore, co-creation workshops were conducted as an “act of collective creativity” through multiple stakeholders working together across a co-design process (Sanders and Stappers, 2008). The findings from previous stages were shared and refined and also informed the co-creation workshop (Stickdorn and Schneider, 2011). The aim of the co-creation workshop was to review the findings and propose context-based propositions for ensuring the sustainability of the values of porcelain crafts. During the workshop, the researcher played the role of facilitator. Design facilitation plays an important role

in supporting co-creation in terms of a contextually designed process and facilitation tools (Aguirre et al., 2017). A set of facilitation tools were selected and adapted from various sources (explained in Section 6.2.4) to stimulate participants' collective creativity. The data were captured in given templates and audio recorded.

- **Practice-based experimental project:** In order to tackle the challeges and test the propositions gained from the co-creation workshop, as well as further develop insights in identification of potential areas and concepts for design intervention, a one-week practice-based making project was employed as an act of both validation and generation. Practice-related investigation as a methodology of inquiry is one of the features of action research. This refers to field-based projects and participatory experiments as opposed to laboratory tests (Reason and Bradbury, 2001). In practice-based research, "the act is an experiment, whether or not the work itself is deemed 'experimental'" (Skains, 2018). Many researchers recognizes that the result from the designed experimental research "might not stand up to rigirous statistic scrutiny" because many pre-existing factors may influence the degree and quality of participation (Shuttleworth, 2008), such as participants' way of communication, personality, state of mind etc. However, it is common believed that as long as these shortcomes are recoginzed these experiments could be a very powerful tool (Ibid) . In line with the participatory action approach, the researcher integrated an experimental project as the final stage of the study to apply the proposition gained from the workshop to real life practice. This project was conducted with an invited group of artists, designers and local artisans in the model of an "immersive making" collaboration which was proposed in the co-creation workshop. Participant selection and design procedure was based on the reality of the procelain production practice in Jingdezhen, i.e. porcelain crafts are produced through collaboration between local craftspeople and immigrant creatives (designers and artists) in a deconstructed industrial model. Six participants were invited and subdivided into two teams to work on two individual

creations. The researcher, who has a background in design, played the role of coordinator and observer at this stage but deliberately withheld her role as researcher from the participants. Participant observation, conversation and field notes were used to collect data during the project. The detail of the practice-based project implementation can be found in Section 6.2.4.

Techniques and tools used to collect data throughout the field research were mainly: face-to-face unstructured and contextualized interviews; records; field notes; enquiries and discussion via phone; photographs and videos; templates used in the co-creation workshop; additional documents; and sketching and mapping the acquired data to help organize and visualize factual information, so as to inform and refine further questions for the next steps.

3.4 Data Analysis

There are two steps of analyzing data suggested by most methodologists (Mason, 2002; Flick, 2006) – first, sorting, indexing and categorizing; second, translating and interpreting the data with critical, imaginative and speculative thinking (Richie and Lewis, 2003; Denzin, 1997, cited in Evans, 2010, p.112). Many researchers claim that data analysis is an iterative process which often occurs throughout the research (e.g. Blaxter et al., 2006). The data collected from this field work was thematically analysed, following the method described by Miles and Huberman (1994) encompassing data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (findings identification).

Analysis began with the first stage of data reduction and preparation. Rapley (2007) notes “what is key to remember is that you base your analysis upon the recordings and field notes and not just upon the transcription”. Therefore, recordings with common characteristic features in accordance with field notes were transcribed. The data was read thought iteratively accompanied with note-taking, which helped to develop an affinity with the data. Combined with the key and summary notes taken from interviews, the data was first sorted by key words and their descriptions, which were then classified into folders.

At the second stage, a coding process was undertaken. Most of the codes were derived from data analysis through a data-driven inductive process, with a few from *a priori* themes derived from previous phases of the field research itself. In developing codes, data were compared critically and inductively using Post-it notes and visualization since this method allows flexibility and observability to correlate the patterns of the data as well as making the process “living” and “evolving” (Visser, 2009). The detail of the coding system can be found in relevant sections of the field research chapters. Data displays were created by the researcher using Microsoft Word to draw tables and charts, which, when suitable, were visualized using the graphic design software Adobe Illustrator.

In the final stage, conclusions were drawn through identifying clusters, themes, and outlining relationships between them, after which research findings were organized and mapped out to develop into chapters. Details of the coding systems can be found in Chapters 4, 5 and 7.

3.5 Validation of the Findings

Creswell (2007) and Guba and Lincoln (1994) state that qualitative research focuses more on validity to determine whether the account provided by the researcher is accurate, can be trusted, and is credible. Validity comes from the information collected from the informants and from the analysis of the research (Creswell, 2009). Over the course of the research, the data and the findings were validated through various methods.

The accuracy of the data was checked with informants and participants during data collection in the field using these techniques:

- Making enquiries of relevant informants to review the interview transcripts;
- Providing visualized information for discussion with relevant informants individually and collectively;
- Observation of relevant people, crafts, making processes and events.

After data collection, aspects of the analysis of the findings were validated and revised

through methods, such as:

- Expert interviews on the categorization of crafts with four experts (see Sections 5.1, 5.2.2 for details)
- Peer-reviewed journal articles (see Section 1.3 for the publication list);
- Presentations of research papers in Rome (2017); Cincinnati (2017); and Manchester (2019);
- The research findings from Field Research Phase I were validated in the in-depth case study in Jingdezhen in 2018, through the validation session of the co-creation workshop in particular (Section 6.3.4);
- Invited presentations in several universities during 2018-2019 (i.e. University of Manchester, Beijing Institute of Technology and Chongqing University).

3.6 Ethic Approval

Research should be conducted in a safe and ethical manner. Since this project involved human subjects, it was necessary for the researcher to follow ethical considerations in order to protect the interviewees and participants and their interests throughout the research process (Flick, 2006). Therefore, this research project followed the standards and codes of conduct defined by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Lancaster Management School Research Ethics Committee of Lancaster University. The research ethics approval were applied by the researcher and validated by the University. Participants were asked to take part in the research project via an email/phone invitation. Upon acceptance, they received a participant information pack (Appendix A) with further details about the background, purpose and schedule of the studies, including information about their right to withdraw from the study anytime they wanted to. In order for the interviewees and participants to agree to take part in the study and to have their contribution recorded, the participants signed an informed consent form at the beginning of each data collection session. Their consents permitted that anonymized quotes could be used in future research outputs, acknowledging their expert participation in the project. Finally, to assure participants confidentiality of their

information, the data collected were stored securely, accessible only by the researcher and in conformity to the Data Protection Act of 1998, as recommended by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Lancaster Management School Research Ethics Committee of Lancaster University.

FIELD DATA ACQUISITION AND ANALYSIS – PHASE I

Chapter 4. The Characteristics of Craft(s) in the Yangtze River Delta

This chapter presents field research on the characteristics of crafts in the Yangtze River Delta (YRD). It consists of methods and data acquisition (4.1), data analysis and results (4.2), discussion and findings (4.3), and chapter summary (4.4).

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this field work is to understand the nature and characteristics of craft in the YRD of China, in order to identify particular issues and develop a context-based approach to the following research.

The specific objectives of this work were:

1) To understand the nature and significance of crafts and craft practices;
2) To identify key characteristics of craft(s);

4.1 Methods and Data Acquisition

The work was undertaken in four cities, namely Shanghai, Suzhou, Hangzhou and Jingdezhen during May 2017 – December 2017 (Figure 4.1). The methods used are mainly adapted from anthropological research methods in the form of semi-structured interviews and observations (as stated in Section 3.3.2). Twenty-seven semi-structured interviews with thirty key informants were conducted. The key informants consist of four groups of people including thirteen Makers, eleven Supporters, three Buyers and three Researchers, as identified in Table 3.3 (Section 3.3.2). The semi-structured interviews were completed along with observations and informal conversations at markets, studios, museums, events, and exhibitions.

Figure 4.1. Research map for field work

4.1.1 Key Informants and the Crafts Involved

Thirty informants from four different groups were interviewed. The majority of informants were involved in five categories of crafts. Eleven Makers were working in porcelain and textiles; three makers worked in woodcarving, oiled-paper umbrellas and bronze crafts. Five Supporters, two Buyers one Researcher were particularly involved in porcelain and textiles; the other five Supporters, one Buyer and two Researchers were dealing with multiple crafts, including but not limited to the five categories which involved the Makers. The detail of crafts and key informants is given below and presented in Table 4.1.

Porcelain: Ten key informants were interviewed at their workshops, studios and offices in Jingdezhen. They consist of: six porcelain Makers including throwing masters, porcelain painters, specialist kiln operators, ceramic designers and ceramic artists; three Supporters including one institute leader and two regional development officials; and one Buyer.

Textiles: five Makers (craft masters), one Supporters (one studio director), one Buyer and one researcher in ***woollen needle tapestry, silk carpet weaving, silk embroidery*** and ***blue calico*** were interviewed in Shanghai and Suzhou (Figure 5.1). Textile products in these four types of crafts range from traditional crafts to modern everyday use products, from high-end to middle-low-end.

Woodcarving: A Maker (woodcarver) and his father were interviewed together in Hangzhou. He was educated at a design school and learned traditional woodcarving skills from his father, who is a recognized district/county level ICH inheritor. The Maker runs a studio where he makes modern woodware with traditional woodcarving skills for the middle-to-high-end markets.

Oiled-paper umbrella: A Maker of oiled-paper umbrellas was interviewed in Hangzhou. He has been making this craft for 40 years and recognized as municipal level ICH inheritor. His grandson who graduated from a local design school is now working with him.

Bronze craft: a family-run bronze enterprise with over 140 years' history was visited and the fourth generation of family masters, who is a highly accomplished national level ICH inheritor was interviewed. Bronze craftwork produced in his workshops ranges from everyday use products and small decorative displays to large art installations.

Table 4.1. Key informants with specific crafts

<table>
<tr><th colspan="6">Key informants with specific crafts</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Craft types
(n=5)</td><td rowspan="2">Porcelain</td><td rowspan="2">Textiles</td><td colspan="3">Multiple crafts</td></tr>
<tr><td>Woodcarving</td><td>Oiled paper umbrellas</td><td>Bronze crafts</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Key informants
(n=30)
Four groups: Makers, Supporters, Buyers and Researchers</td><td>6 Makers
3 Supporters
1 Buyer</td><td>5 Makers
1 Supporters
1 Buyer
1 Researcher</td><td>1 Maker</td><td>1 Maker</td><td>1 Maker</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">6 Supporters in multiple craft areas</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">1 Buyer in multiple craft areas</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">2 Researchers in multiple craft areas</td></tr>
</table>

4.1.2 Data Collection and Thematic Coding

Data was collected mainly through semi-structured interviews and observations using multiple tools including audio recordings, field notes and photography (Figure 4.2). It consists of five themes derived from the analysis of data collected through the semi-structured interviews. The interview questions (see Appendix B) were set according to the *seven elements* of the relationship between craft and sustainability (Section 2.4.1), and *the four potential directions* for moving crafts of the YRD towards sustainability (Section 2.5.2), both of which were concluded from literature.

The analysis of the data results in five themes:

- Environmental impact and ethics
- Communal engagement and social division
- Cultural continuity and vitality
- Personal fulfilment and well-being, and
- Economic potential and polarization

The data was analysed with the use of thematic coding emerging from the interviews themselves. The coding systems for data collected is presented in Table 4.2.

Figure 4.2. Data collection in the field through audio recordings and field notes

Table 4.2. Coding system for data collected for the characteristics of craft in the YRD

Themes	Subthemes
Environmental impact and ethics	• Makers' view • Supporters' view • Buyers and Researchers' view • Overall view • Environmental ethics and eco-wisdom
Communal engagement and social division	• Collective endeavour • Sense of belonging • Sense of unity and cohesion • Occupational ethics and behavioural norms • Social status and divide of craftspeople
Cultural continuity and vitality	• Identity and distinctiveness • Traditional normal practice and customs • Vitality of the culture
Personal fulfilment and well-being	• Affirmation and sense of pride • Self-fulfilment and freedom
Economic potential and polarization	• Informants' overview • Potential for commercialization • Regarded as cultural capital/assets • Economic polarization

4.2 Data Analysis and Results

This section presents the analysis and results on crafts and craft practices in the YRD. The data analysis is organized into five sections: environmental impact and ethics, communal engagement and social division, cultural continuity and vitality, personal fulfilment and well-being, and economic potential and polarization.

4.2.1 Environmental Impact and Ethics

The questions concerning the environmental aspects of craft were: *Is the environmental aspect of craft making a matter of concern in (your) craft practices? Do you think the craft (you make) is pro-environment or harmful, and why do you think so?* Informants from the four groups gave a variety of responses. Half thought craft had a low environmental impact; however, some informants gave the opposite opinion, and some were unsure how to answer. A large number of informants mentioned that craft practices contain rich environmental ethics. For each particular craft, the opinions were identified by three labels: *low impact, high impact* and *hard to define.* Tables 4.3-4.5 show the informants' views of Makers, Supporters, Buyers and Researchers respectively. Summing up the total views of Tables 4.3-4.5, Table 4.6 shows an overview of all the informants. The results indicated by these tables were analysed in detail with quotes from informants.

4.2.1.1 Makers' views

Table 4.3. Makers' views on environmental impact of crafts

Makers' views on the environmental impact of crafts															
Groups	Makers (n=14)														
Craft categories	Porcelain						Textiles					Multiple crafts			
												Wood-carving	Umbrella	Bronze ware	
Main materials	clay, paints, glaze						silk, cotton, wool, natural dye					wood	bamboo paper	bronze	
Main energies	gas, electricity, wood				wood										
Low impact	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9
High impact					✓	✓									2
Hard to define		✓		✓										✓	3
Code	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	M13	M14	Total

As Table 4.3 shows, the makers interviewed are mainly from the porcelain and textile industries, plus one each from woodcarving crafts, umbrella making and bronze work. The resources for textiles, woodcarving and umbrella making are mainly natural resources such as natural dyes, wood and bamboo. However, the resources for porcelain and bronze work include the use of unsustainable energies such as wood for fuel, and high emissions from the use of gas or electricity for heating and machinery. Most craftspeople in the Makers group thought craft was eco-friendly and had a low impact on the environment, as one porcelain maker responded:

> *Porcelain is made out of clay which I think is eco-friendly, the clay we mostly use is from other places. It is cheap so I think there must be abundant clay resources in the country, otherwise it becomes expensive and hard to buy…Clay is not an issue for us…the kaolin clay in Jingdezhen is rare since it has been overly exploited, but we don't use kaolin clay now…we don't use a mass-production mode as some porcelain companies use in Dehua [a city in Fujian province where porcelain is mass-produced]. Not like before, we now mostly use gas or electricity to fire which is much cleaner and more economical than fuelled by wood. All is made by hand.* (M2)[1]

A Suzhou embroiderer also stated:

> *The materials [silk and cotton] we use are natural, which seldom involves heavy chemical resources. Sometimes we dye the yarn ourselves with natural dyes. The processes are all done with manual work, and are all handmade without using machines. I think that these crafts have very low environmental impacts.* (M11)

A woodcarver echoed the above and expressed the relativity of material consumption and interplay of production and consumption of rare-wood crafts:

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1 As indicated in Chapter 3 Methodology, each of the thirty informants was given a code for reference, i.e. M1- M14 refer to fourteen Makers; S15-24 ten Supporters; B25-B27 three Buyers; R28-R30 three Researchers.

> *These works are all handmade…The wood we use to make furniture is actually renewable like pine which grows relatively faster than others…those rare woods which grow slowly such as rosewood are mostly used for rare objects and also sold at a high price; we carve them and recognize that this is what Nature bestows on us, so we cherish these materials and would like to do our best with them… so we consume the rare wood much less; people buy them and also value them, so don't buy many; these objects can last longer. To some extent, I would say the market and the characteristics of precious materials controls the balance of wood plantation and deforestation".* (M12)

Despite this, two porcelain makers who mainly used wood fuel thought it had a significant impact on the environment. One of them responded:

> *It [porcelain firing] consumes a huge amount of firewood compared to electricity, it costs more and is also not clean - polluting the air…electricity and gas's emission is much cleaner than logs… Logs are scarce nearby because of the deforestation, so the government controlled further logging and we need to log on remote mountains far away…This is not good for sure for environmental protection.* (M5)

In addition, two porcelain makers and one bronze craft maker were unsure of the environmental impact of their work and thought it needed a dialectical thinking. One responded:

> *I think it's very complex and hard to say. Wood is widely known as not clean and causes serious smog, but gas and electricity also have emissions and how much less it is than wood, I don't know. And you know, …electricity and gas are not renewable energies while woods can be replanted as long as you don't log them very fast. I think you cannot calculate it simply. It is complex. How many products we produce also influences how much energy we use and pollution we produce.* (M14)

4.2.1.2 Supporters' views

Table 4.4. Supporters' views on environmental impact of crafts

Supporters' views on environmental impact of crafts											
Group	Supporters (n=10)										
Attributes	Institute, museum and NGO supporters				Directors of studios			Regional development officials			
Crafts involved	Multiple			Porcelain	Multiple		Textile	Multiple	Porcelain		
Low impact	✓						✓	✓		✓	4
High impact			✓	✓		✓			✓		4
Hard to define		✓			✓						2
Code	S16	S20	S24	S21	S23	S19	S18	S17	S22	S15	Total

As Table 4.4 shows, four people from the Supporters group thought that craftworks were eco-friendly and had a low impact on the environment. This comment is representative of this opinion:

> *It [craft] is for sure, I think, environmentally friendly and has low impact [on environment]. The materials - silk for embroidery, cotton for weaving, wood, bamboo and stone for carving, and clay etc. are typical natural materials sourced for crafts in this region. Natural dyeing, handweaving and these manual works require the energy of human labour which is renewable. These have endured for thousands of years and the traditional way of producing them is proved to be more ecological - the waste could degrade into the natural environment instead of polluting it.* (S23)

In contrast, four people including two involved in porcelain crafts thought that craftworks were unsustainable and had a high impact on the environment. The reason is that they think porcelain crafts consume a huge amount of energy to fuel them, and the production volume is often very high, as one supporter stated:

> *Porcelain uses so much energy [gas, electricity, especially wood] to fire the kiln, some even need to be fired two or three times, especially artistic works and "imitative" porcelain that need a wood-fuelled kiln for firing...they [porcelain makers] produce so many products that actually surpass our needs - so many on the market, it looks very flourishing but do we really need so*

> *many? Not just porcelain, other crafts also have this problem, like some souvenir crafts - they are cheap but there are so many on the market.* (S20)

The phrase "*they produce so many products that actually surpass our needs*" raises another issue, namely, the differentiation between needs and desire, which is also a criticism of modern mass production and mass consumption. This quote also raised a question about craft making, especially in the porcelain industry: can crafts be mass-produced by hand?

Meanwhile, two supporters responded that it was hard to define and calculate the impact contemporary craft had on the environment, because they thought it involved complex processes, and that scientific measurements are necessary, as one stated:

> *It depends on the materials, resources, processes and circulation involved in these crafts, for example, woodcrafts, compared to those which are made out of plastic and compound materials, are seemingly more eco-friendly. However, if the materials are not so renewable, the sourcing and transporting processes are energy consuming, and the circulation of crafts is beyond the local market and sold all over the county or even the world…these are rather complex issues and need in-depth research*. (S24)

4.2.1.3 Buyers' and Researchers' views

Table 4.5. Buyers' and Researchers' views on the environmental impact of crafts

Buyers' and Researchers' views on the environmental impact of crafts								
Groups	Buyers (n=3)				Researchers (n=3)			
Crafts involved	Textile	Porcelain	Multiple		Multiple	Multiple	Textiles	
Low impact	✓		✓	2				0
High impact				0	✓			1
Hard to define		✓		1		✓	✓	2
Code	B25	B26	B27	Total	R28	R29	R30	Total

As Table 4.5 shows, except for one researcher who dealt with multiple crafts thought craft had a high impact, two people from these groups thought craft had a low impact. As a buyer who dealt with multiple crafts stated:

> *I've visited many paper-making, textile dyeing, metal smithing and weaving workshops. Most of these workshops retained the traditional ways of sourcing and processing which is preindustrial. The end products are mostly from the combination of natural materials without adding modern chemicals. Although it is not absolute, compared to modern industrial manufacturing, it is much more pro-environment and green. For example, the calcination involved in metal crafts producing air and water pollution can date back to the Bronze Age, but the pollution produced by mass production of modern metal industries is very much worse.* (B27)

Three informants thought craft's environmental impact is hard to define and is a complex issue. As one researcher responded:

> *By seeing the raw materials used and processes involved, many crafts are made by hand and out of natural materials, so they are seemingly eco-friendly, but this might not be the whole truth. Generally speaking, the Nantong indigo calico cloth [a naturally dyed cotton material] is an eco-friendly material for the garment industry. However, as production of it increased at a great rate to meet the demand of manufacturing a variety of products, there was a shortage of the natural dye and material, and this will eventually affect the ecological balance. This is such a complex system which cannot be analysed from a single perspective*. (R30)

In addition, informants from the Buyers' and Researchers' groups suggested replacing some non-renewable materials with renewable and biomaterials. This suggests an introduction of new technologies and biomaterials in craft making, as an academic said:

> S*ome crafts use more raw materials than machines because of the inaccuracy of human techniques, such as carving with precious wood and stone, even though most crafts are often made out of natural materials…and some natural materials are non-renewable. Partially employing machines like CNC and 3-D printing could save materials and energy. Many biomaterials are degradable*

and cheaper which would be an alternative in some cases. (R28)

4.2.1.4 Overall view

Table 4.6. Overall view of informants' views on the environmental impacts of crafts

The overall statistic of informants' views on environmental impact of crafts					
Groups	Makers (n=14)	Supporters (n=10)	Buyers (n=3)	Researchers (n=3)	
Low impact	9	4	2	0	15
High impact	2	4	0	1	7
Hard to define	3	2	1	2	8
					Total

Table 4.6 shows that approximately **half the informants** (15/30) thought craft is eco-friendly because most crafts are made out of natural materials and are processed in a recyclable and renewable way, thus saving energy consumption as analysed above. **Seven informants** (7/30) expressed the opposite opinion. **Eight informants** (8/30) were unsure and felt that environmental impact is a complex issue. There are many cases demonstrating crafts' ecological nature in terms of material, processing and mode of production. As one researcher in craft and design theory pointed out, a craft that can last and survive to the present day demonstrates its balanced ecological interaction with the natural environment, in his words, "*the harmonious relationship between heaven, earth and people"* (R28).

Most of the Makers (9 out of 14) thought craft is eco-friendly. However, Supporters, Buyers and Researchers tend to be more rational and reflective, and suggest that systematic examination and analysis of material, processes of making and circulation of crafts are required, so as to better understand crafts' environmental impacts.

4.2.1.5 Environmental ethics and eco-wisdom

There is another aspect that is frequently mentioned by informants, that is the "environmental ethics" embedded in craft practices. Though half the number of informants thought crafts are not necessarily pro-environment in terms of their material and energy use, a large number expressed that traditional practices contain many age-

old eco-wisdoms and beliefs, and they thought these are very important aspects of crafts' environmental value, because this wisdom can influence our behaviour and attitude.

> *There has been many ecological ethics and beliefs in traditional craft practices that respect nature, cherish materials, promote durability of artifacts and practise human-environment harmony*. (R28)

This is especially mentioned by the Makers, as the maker who makes oiled paper umbrella said:

> *When I was little, people made umbrellas for their own use or sold to other people; each household in our village used oiled paper umbrellas. When they were broken, people brought them back to be repaired. Unlike now, when you can get another nicer, fashionable umbrella immediately, at that time, people really cherished goods – it was really not easy to make. It needs 72 processes. Each process is not easy. Logging and processing bamboo are also difficult. But I still go to log the bamboo in person very often. I like being in the bamboo mountain.* (A12)

Informants from Supporters group also mentioned:

> *Some craft practices tell us the idea and notion of ecology and environmental stewardship…the patterns, the ways of sourcing and making them are always telling the story of harmony between man and nature.* (S17)

4.2.2 Communal Engagement and Social Division

Regarding the answers to the questions *"Is there any connection of (your) craft practice(s) to your community or the people you work/live with? If so, how do you think making crafts affects these connections; what does this practice(s) bring to you/them with respect to community relationships and notions,* and *how do you/they contribute or benefit from these practice(s)?"*, the data falls into four sub-themes which are

presented below.

4.2.2.1 Collective endeavour

Chinese people view craft knowledge from a collective perspective. This includes:

Intergenerational and collective learning: a number of informants[2] said craft skills are "collective and passed-on knowledge" that is learned within local communities. As one said:

No one can create it oneself, you didn't invent it…you learned from your grandparents or tutors and you might add a bit to it with new techniques, novelty or change the shapes, but the knowledge is formed from generation to generation through the accumulation of skill". (M3)

For example, embroidery skills were learned through mother-daughter and neighbour-neighbour apprenticeships in Zhenhu town. Women of all ages, ranging from girls to elderly women, often worked together in their homes, which created a community among them.

Non-individualistic, place-specific knowledge: A supporter gave a representative answer:

Skill is not individual but formed by craftspeople through their grasp of knowledge about the local environment and communities, and conforms to their social needs, norms and rituals, and therefore, craft knowledge is knowledge about community and society. (S23)

A sense of community-related responsibility: According to nine makers[3], it is their responsibility to pass on and develop the craft skills within the communities. One oiled-paper umbrella maker said:

It is our obligation to pass on the traditional skills. Oiled-paper umbrella making skill has over 270 years history in our community. It is our heritage. We

2 These informants are M3, M7, and M12-13.

3 These nine informants are M2-3, M7-11, and M13-14.

shoulder a responsibility to enable more people to know about it. (M13)

The grandson of the umbrella maker, who came back to the village, a suburb area of Hangzhou, and continued his work, said that more and more people went back to their hometown to carry on their family crafts after graduation from college.

4.2.2.2 A sense of belonging

This is held by a number of informants[4], as a supporter responded:

Some craftspeople who are compelled to give up their craft careers to take up new jobs as migrants in modern cities often feel lost…When they encounter conflicts with urban people, society and culture, they don't have a sense of belonging. In their heart, they are always from the places where they built up their personal, social and economic relations through their particular collective craft production and practices. (S16)

The son of the woodcarver who gave up his job in Shanghai as a graphic designer and returned to his hometown to reinstate himself as a woodcarver stated:

When I was younger, I longed for the outside cities, modern goods…everything. Though my father has been working on this throughout his life, I didn't want to continue. My father also didn't want me to do this job as he had. And I really went away, working as a designer in Shanghai. But just because I left my place, I left the craft that I took for granted, I realized how unique this is. People outside our community recognize it as important heritage. They asked me "Why don't you go back to become a woodcarver, you have the advantage of inheriting it!" (M12)

4.2.2.4 A sense of unity and cohesion

This is especially observed in Zhenhu town, a Su-embroidery-based craft town in the

4 These informants include M2-3, M8, and M10-13.

northeast of Suzhou city. Before urban-rural planning projects by the government, women did embroidery together in an open-community way. The new urban-rural planning projects brought these women into newly built flats in large apartment blocks which prevented them working in group. Now, these women embroiderers moved to the utility rooms on the ground floor of the apartment blocks, even though the rooms were not as comfortable as their apartments. One embroiderer told the researcher:

> *Here we can work together. Here is like the place where we used to work. I like it here because my fellow women embroiderers can come any time they want and we can set up our preferred equipment, and allow us to share information, learn from and compete with each other…Working in my flat alone makes me isolated from my fellow embroiderers.* (M8)

A researcher in textiles gave an opinion as to why embroiderers in Zhenhu liked working together in the utility rooms:

> *Though they could continue working in their homes, they felt isolated and lost their passion and interest. The utility rooms are more like the working places they built in the past, which gives them a sense of unity.* (R30)

4.2.2.5 Occupational ethics and behavioural norms

Certain ethics associated with conduct and occupational norms had been formed over time that the guild members had to obey, but these guild ethics that protect local industries and livelihoods have been eroded by open market competition in recent decades. Some informants[5] thought that the extinct guild ethics should be reintroduced since they are protective of local crafts and the important heritage of the past craft practices. A master said:

> *Potters helped each other within the same guilds…he [a provider of materials] was willing to sell his paints to the potters within the guild at a low price even though other potters from the outside wanted to buy them and would pay a*

5 These informants include M1-2, M6, M7, M10, M12 and S15.

> *higher price; artisans who threw pots were not encouraged to learn and work within the kiln technology, in order to ensure more sophisticate and professional skills in their own specialist areas and avoid "taking bread from others' mouths"* (M1).

A regional development official also commented:

> *Apart from serving as platforms for skill and information exchange, they also protect their members' interests. So different craftspeople go to different guilds and associations to seek job protection and career security, because there are certain unwritten rules and norms that prevent competition that is merely driven by profits.* (S15)

4.2.2.6 Social status and divide of craftspeople

The general social profile of craftspeople began to rise after the state initiated the ICH projects to promote traditional crafts. Some craftspeople gained political status through the state-endowed *Intangible Cultural Heritage* inheritor programme. For example, Yunjing Brocade and Longquan Celadon are recognized as national level ICH items and are also listed as world ICH, and the inheritors are well respected. Some have become guest professors at Art and Design schools and sit on the boards of craft and cultural associations.

However, this is not the full picture. The data[6] collected during this research show a divided image of craftspeople, as a supporter commented:

> *The emerging tendency of economic and social division between high profile ICH inheritors and other craftspeople who haven't be recognized is increasing. This is a problem and might deviate from and inhibit the original intentions of the state's ICH programme. One of these intentions is to alleviate poverty, in order to reduce the difference between the rich and the poor, but it is causing another division among craftspeople themselves.* (S23)

6 The data is collected from informants M2-6, S22-23, and R29-30.

High social status of master/artists with titles: Craft masters with nationally sanctioned titles and ceramic artists showed a high level of affluence, fame and esteem. This is a representative quote:

High-profile masters and artists have an advantage. They earn significant financial rewards and are highly respected. For them it is much easier to get funds, resources and fame and even authorship of the works, even though some of them do not make the works themselves. Masters earn most of money, while artisans who make them just earn a small fraction. (R29)

Low social status of artisans: in contrast to the above, some informants complained that most craftspeople and their professions were not sufficiently recognized. Craft skills were not widely regarded as intelligent and high-level in the same way as artists, as a designer-maker said:

There is a common bias – craftspeople, especially artisans, were often informally educated and don't need a high level of literacy to master the skills. They just do repetitive work without any creativity…their skills were often not related to intelligence of well-educated people. (M6)

This distinction is corroborated by other informants[7], as one stated:

Unlike artists and engineers who have sophisticated knowledge, the manual work was inferior. Many people thought it resembled repetitive mechanical labour, and most artisans are in effect reduced to be tools for artists, designers and fashion houses. (R30)

4.2.3 Cultural Continuity and Vitality

Data analysed in this section is mainly in response to questions such as *"do you think the craft (you make) contains any meaning or something important that you value? If so, what do you think are they, and do they have any relationship with your (the) place and tradition?"*. A series of subthemes regarding craft's cultural implication emerged

7 These informants include S22-23, and R30.

from the analysis.

4.2.3.1 Identity and distinctiveness

This is the aspect that is most frequently mentioned and addressed by informants[8], as an embroidery master said:

> *I come from there (Zhenhu town, a town on the outskirts of Suzhou city) where it is known we are embroiderers from Zhenhu. You know we have over a thousand years' history of producing Suzhu-embroidery which is unique from other embroideries elsewhere. This craft conveys not only the history of producing this material textile but also the history of our place. Su-embroidery has become the identity of this place*. (M8)

This notion is supported by a woodcarving master:

> *I was brought up in this place with many people here doing woodcarving, including my grandfather from whom I mainly learned my woodcarving skills. In this community, through practising, I developed my tastes and picked up the collective cultural habits of most woodcarving families and communities here, which are different from others.* (M12)

4.2.3.2 Traditional normal practice and customs

are also mentioned by makers[9]. These are representative quotes:

> *We [women embroiderers in the community] learned our traditional weaving skill from our mothers or grandmothers, and it had been like this generation after generation. In the past, women normally wove for family members and for themselves… although the society changed a lot, we still got used to it…This is the root of our culture.* (M7)

A ceramic artisan said:

> *This is a custom which has been practised since a long time ago, and it is also*

8 These informants include M1-M4, M7-M13, S15-S24, B27, and R29-R30.

9 These makers include M1, M4 and M7.

the way we carry on our belief in our local deities and ancestors, which is why we worship deities and ancestors before we put the greenware into the kiln. (M4 kiln operator)

4.2.3.3 Vitality of the culture: some informants held that innovation in crafts is important, otherwise they would be eliminated and would not have survived until today, because craft represents:

A developed traditional culture: two informants gave two examples:

One is the blue and white porcelain at its inception during the Tang dynasty in Jingdezhen.

The blue and white porcelain was not out of nothing in Jingdezhen but was formed by absorbing and acclimatizing the style and techniques from the Islamic countries as well as northern China. *Culture has been always changing with cross-cultural influences and innovations with time.* (B26).

The other example is a provincial ICH item - handmade lace in Xiaoshan, on the outskirts of Hangzhou. A supporter (S20) commented that Xiaoshan Lace was imported from Venice in the early twentieth century. Craftspeople later developed more techniques and integrated local culture and styles into it. They didn't invent it on their own, but they did make it their own through innovation. According to Liu and Xu's (2019) research, European lace, especially Venetian lace, was imported to the YRD of China through Catholic missionaries to Shanghai in the second half of the nineteenth century, but yet to Xiaoshan in Hangzhou until the early of twenties century (pp.42-45). As documented in Historiography of Early Modern Chinese Industries, this type of lace is first introduced to Xiaoshan by a merchant from Shanghai who opened a lace factory in Kanshan town of the district in 1919 and sent four skilled Christian women workers to the factory teaching women the lace craft (Peng et, al., 2014, pp.142-143). However, lace market was not successful at the beginning because of the limited patterns and styles and lack of changes; lace workers

were compelled to change and invented new patterns and types to suit market needs; this craft and its techniques had been developed gradually over the following decades and formed to the current Xiaoshan style (Liu and Xu, 2019, p.43).

Keeping up with the times: twelve informants[10] held a similar view that crafts' innovation and revitalization wouldn't harm the original culture, but could help create crafts' continuity and revitalize them, given that the quintessential tradition was retained, as one expert supporter said:

Nothing is immutable and frozen in time. Heritage crafts, if not changed and kept relevant to the time, will eventually die. Compared to crafts put into museums, crafts for everyday use are kept vital…. If crafts are meant to be used, then craftspeople will try their best and use inventiveness to adapt the traditional design to present life, by which a traditional culture represented by the crafts is sustained. There are many examples in history. (S17)

4.2.4 Personal Fulfilment and Well-being

Regarding the questions "*except for material and social issues, how do you feel about your work and does your work bring any meaning to you in your life? Does it make you happy or does it make you suffer hardship?*", many informants expressed that their work gave them a sense of mental and spiritual meaning in terms of two subthemes: affirmation and sense of pride; self-fulfillment and freedom. These are analysed below.

4.2.4.1 Affirmation and sense of pride

These include two aspects.

Affirmation – recognition from others and as ICH inheritors, mentioned by five makers[11] as the representative quotes state:

Weaving makes me happy. Especially when my work is recognized by museums or exhibitions and when people say they like them…when I finished this piece, I

10 These twelve informants are M3, M5, M6, M8, M11, M14, S17-18, S23, B26-27 and R30.

11 These five makers are M2, M3, M8 and M12-13.

really felt what I invested in the process – time and effort – has paid off. I felt proud of myself. (M8)

Being awarded the master title for me is meaningful though it is not necessarily something I pursued. This recognition gave me a platform to communicate with other highly skilled peer ceramicists and artists and to inspire my ideas and thoughts. (M2)

Sense of pride – cultural confidence and honour: many craftspeople[12], especially those who are recognized as ICH inheritors, believe their practices contribute to a sense of cultural confidence and honour. Because this sense of pride in craft practices had never been experienced by them like it is today, they felt their individual meaning of life embodied in their practices was now connected to the greater culture of the country.

Diverse crafts and culture are the great treasure of our country. Our government recognizes it. Twenty years ago, I didn't find this greatness in my work. Though I still cannot fully economically support myself by making these umbrellas, as an inheritor, I feel a sense of honour and pride. (M13)

4.2.4.2 Self-fulfilment and well-being

Many craftspeople[13] expressed that craft practice is a self-fulfilling process and good for their mental well-being. They have continued making crafts even though the work cannot earn them much/any money or fame. An embroiderer in Suzhou made this statement:

I didn't expect to earn much money from this work [making silk embroidery] or earn any fame or get any title. I just like doing it. Weaving let me calm down and it is a self-fulfilling way of improving myself. I embroider all by hand and it is very slow… I can just make a few small pieces in a month and it has been several months since the last one was sold.…The income is very low, but it is worth it.

12 These craftspeople are M2-4, M7, M10 and M12-13.

13 These craftspeople include M2, M5, M6, M7, M8 and M11.

(M7)

Curiosity and being creative in the making process, as a textile master said:

I have the freedom to apply my ideas and designs to the work… I can experiment; I can explore and use trial and error. New ideas and designs just emerge in response to material behaviours and features. I don't draw but my design is created and developed during the making process. (M5)

Autonomy and integrity of a fully engaged process, represented in the quote:

The workshop is my little world. Each step is connected to the last and the next…Everything is within my hands but is well organized and in order…I do most of the processes which makes me confident and know where is wrong and where is right. Here I control and am confident in everything which you cannot do when you work in offices [refers to working with computers and systems controlled by machines]. You know, working with hands makes me feel I can control and connect the things within my boundaries. (M11)

Intimacy with materials and environment, as a porcelain master (artist) said:

I enjoy working with clay – clay has life, when you care about every step you take: knead, paint and carve. Clay is the media through which I explore the material world. I express how I see the world through clay where the clay speaks back to me about the material world. (M2)

A few makers[14] even compared doing craft to some kind of religious training, e.g. a textile maker felt she was practising meditation and healing when she was weaving, because the rhythmic action and the attentiveness involved in it can contribute to mental well-being.

4.2.5 Economic Potential and Polarization

This section presents the analysis and results of data collected from questions such as

14 This includes M6 and M8.

"Can you make a living by only making crafts…how do you see crafts economically? Do you think the craft(s) you are involved in is (are) economically viable or unviable, Why?"

4.2.5.1 Informants' overview

Among thirty informants, there were twenty-seven valid answers. Six informants[15] held that crafts in the YRD were fully viable in the current economic system and flourishing in their niche markets; whereas six[16] informants expressed the dilemma of whether crafts can make a decent income; and fifteen informants17 said that crafts were generally flourishing but the economic polarization among different craftspeople and crafts was widening significantly. Therefore, economically "flourishing", "unviable" and "flourishing but polarized" were identified as three attributes to describe crafts' current economic state in the YRD, as visualized in Figure 4.3.

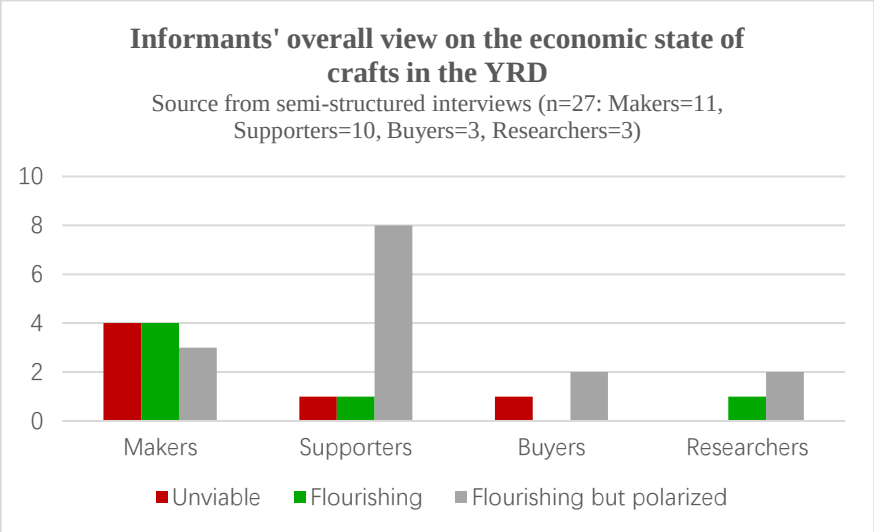

Figure 4.3. Informants' overall view on economic state of crafts in the YRD

According to Figure 4.3, 21 informants think that, in general, crafts in the YRD are economically flourishing (p=21/27) while six informants think that crafts are unviable (p=6/27). In addition, among the twenty-one informants who hold the view of

15 These informants are M1, M3, M5, M14, S22 and R28.
16 These informants are M6, M9, M12, M13, S16 and B27.
17 These informants are M2, M7, M11, S15, S17-S24, B26, B28 and R29-30.

“flourishing”, fifteen think there is an economic polarization in the craft sector (p=15/27). This suggests that crafts in the YRD generally have a great potential for the economy.

According to Figure 4.3 and more detailed qualitative data on the economic issue, another three subthemes emerged from the analysis.

4.2.5.2 Great potential for commercialization

Many informants think that crafts in the YRD are undergoing commercialization. Both centrally and locally, people are making multiple efforts to revitalize them, and this revitalization is driven particularly by tourists and the creative industries. This opinion is supported below:

> *Craft in China has been undergoing a significant transformation to modern life in recent years. From government to media to the folk domain, many people talk about it; many initiatives have put into action; revitalization, practice and training everywhere from the commercial domain to NGOs to schools and universities. The craft economy had an exponential growth from 2002 to 2012 and now it continues to contribute to tourism and the creative and cultural industries.* (S15)

4.2.5.3 Cultural capital and assets

Many informants use the word “cultural capital/assets” to describe how they see the economic value of crafts. For a family or a community, those cultural capital/assets can be passed on from their parents to the sons, daughters or other people in the community.

> *Crafts are Intangible Cultural Heritage…Like those ci er dai [the second generation of ceramic families]in Jingdezhen or chuan er dai [the second generation of ICH inheritors], are lucky because their parents passed on these intangible assets to them, and they just need to carry their family crafts forwards.* (S21)

4.2.5.4 Polarization among crafts and craftspeople

According to Figure 4.3, among the twenty-one informants who held the view of “flourishing”, fifteen (p=15/27) thought there was a stark economic polarization among

makers and crafts.

> *Though China is witnessing a great revival of traditional crafts, the situation is not as optimistic as it appeared. There is a polarization of luxury objects and "vendor products" [low-end cheap gadgets]. There is also an increasing socio-economic disparity among craftspeople – work made by artists with titles is sold well at high prices while few buy crafts made by "nobody" craftspeople.* (R30)

- **Flourishing – those crafts that are:**

  Relevant to everyday life: a regional official stated that crafts that are more relevant to everyday life are economically viable.

  > *Some crafts like porcelain and utilitarian Su-embroidery have quite a good market share and the prices are good…now people are better off and willing to buy quality handmade products for everyday use. Some ICH crafts, like those that are time-consuming and just for old-fashioned decoration, are generally declining, because those crafts have to be expensive, thus few people buy them.* (S17)

  Made by high-profile makers/artists: A national-level ICH inheritor of bronze crafts was supported by the central and local governments, and his products were sold at very high prices. The official who commented above also thought that for the same crafts, craftspeople with titles and fame are far better off than those without. His view is supported by another supporter:

  > *My friend…is a woodcarving Master who has been awarded the title of National Master of Art and Craft. One small piece of his work could be sold at a good price as high as 3000 yuan (equivalent to £338.40, 2018), and he told me he could sell on average ten pieces per month…there is quite a good craft market out there.* (S23)

  A maker in Jingdezhen who has been awarded the title of National Technical Master also said:

> *I could make a living without doubt by making porcelain ware. There are many orders and sometimes if I hire enough helpers, I could make all of them… you know there is a good market out there, and the handmade Jingdezhen porcelain attracts more clients than industrial porcelain ware… I also run advanced training courses for artists and students which contribute an extra part to my income though making profit out of training is not my purpose.* (M2)

Regarding the reason for the market success of some craftspeople, a supporter explained:

> *The market success of his works lies in his entrepreneurial skill and flexibility to the new opportunities offered by online social media, platforms and new social activities…he had his stores online, attended exhibitions and competitions, and he and his work were featured in magazines.* (S21)

Adaptive to new commercial modes: a Master opened his stores on China's largest online store, Taobao, and recently joined the Chinese craft platform of Dongjia. He also enthusiastically took part in a variety of craft events, exhibitions and competitions. In addition, he wrote blogs on his WeChat "public account" to disseminate his work, skills, taste and aesthetics.

Innovative in design:

> *The traditional craftworks that are designed with modern creativity and innovation, that are co-designed or co-made between designers and artisans, are more welcome on market. These works are popular among contemporary consumers, sold at a good price and account for a larger market share.* (S23)

- **Unviable – those crafts that are:**

  Time-consuming: according to Figure 4.3, six informants expressed pessimistic attitudes. The majority of them were craftspeople (n=4/14) in textiles, woodcarving and handmade umbrella making. These crafts are all time-consuming. An

inheritor of Shanghai Woollen Tapestry said:

> *Now the sales are not as good as before. The orders both from abroad and at home have decreased…the income for workers here is unfair. The work is very time-consuming, but the price doesn't match the cost of time and effort"* (M9)

Irrelevant to life with pure traditional methods: the situation of an umbrella maker provides representative evidence of this. He was recognized as ICH inheritor and had a number of apprentices. He told the researcher that after several years apprenticeship, many of his apprentices eventually gave up this career and worked in other fields. He said:

> *They couldn't support themselves. Not so many orders, people don't by them anymore. It's just for some decoration and ceremony…We used to produce the structure for the umbrella company, but they have advanced to a machine production line. They don't need us anymore.* (M13)

A conversation with a traditional winemaker sheds a similar light. An architectural designer who also learned traditional wine-making skills by apprenticing himself to distillers and winemakers while he was at university. He recently set up his own winery in Hangzhou. He told the researcher:

> *I chose the best ingredients and invested significant time in the testing and revitalization of traditional formulas, but I had to sell the wine at a market price if I wanted any buyers. So, I had to continue my job as an architectural designer to supplement the winery.*

Made by low-profile makers: a Supporter lamented:

> *I don't believe the normal craftspeople had a role in China's economic transformation, as the state intended. Craft's significance is just for artists and masters, or as a romantic work for rich people as a hobby. "Nobody" craftspeople who make crafts with truly traditional methods and processes couldn't make their living out of it.* (S17)

The researcher's observations in the ceramic community of Jingdezhen also confirm this polarization. Artists' or MCA masters' works are sold as high-end artwork for collection, whereas artisans' work or skills are paid poorly. For example, a throwing-artisan in Jingdezhen normally earns c.a. 300-500 *yuan* (£33-55) a day. On the contrary, on a visit to a famous ceramic artist's studio, the researcher was informed that the artist's work could command a price ranging from 1000 to 5,000,000 *yuan* (£110-£553,000, 2017).

4.3 Discussion and Findings

Through bringing together the five themes of the results presented in Section 4.2, five findings in terms of five characteristics of craft in the YRD emerge. These five characteristics were then organized into positive and negative aspects, which are presented in Tables 4.7 and 4.8.

Finding 1: Crafts in the YRD are not necessarily pro-environment at a practical level while the practices are deemed to be environmentally ethical

According to the overall statistic of informants' views on environmental impact (Table 4.6), approximate half the number of informants (p=15/30), especially makers, think that crafts tend to have a low impact on the environment. However, some (p=8/30), especially researchers and supporters, think the impact is hard to define, and it requires both a scientific and systemic investigation. There are also seven informants (p=7/30) that think crafts have a high impact on the environment, due to, on the one hand, high energy consumption, and on the other, excessive production and consumption of craft products.

This indicates that craft's environmental impact cannot be measured by merely relying on qualitative inquiry. Research in material and environmental sciences could also provide substantial references. There needs to be more systematic investigation into material sourcing, energy and supply chains, and the lifecycle system of crafts.

In addition, some informants hold that the ecological ethics and beliefs contained in craft practices were the most significant aspects of craft that could support sustainable

behaviour change, as one researcher commented:

> *Craft and the craft mode of production are not necessarily pro-environment at a more immediate level, but I think the key value and significance of them is the value of local material, culture, and tradition which is passed on generation by generation. The environment is a complex system… I think the ecological concept of cherishing and revering materials in crafts will in turn affect environmental protection.* (R29)

This suggests that the intangible aspects of culture, traditions and beliefs embedded in practices must be taken into consideration. For example, even though some crafts are made out of unrecyclable material or unrenewable energy, if these crafts are made to last longer and are emotionally endurable, this serves to reduce the quantity of consumption and thereby offset their environmental impact.

Finding 2: Crafts in the YRD are associated both with rich communal engagement and with social division

According to four subthemes in Section 4.2.2, craft represents communal engagement and cohesion through:

- Collective endeavour (Section 4.2.2.1)
- A sense of belonging (Section 4.2.2.2)
- A sense of unity and cohesion (Section 4.2.2.3)
- Occupational ethics and behavioural norms (Section 4.2.2.4)

These are rich communal values that craft offers to community and society. However, ironically, there also exists a social division between artists/masters and artisans (Section 4.2.2.5):

- Recognized craftspeople tend to be highly respected (higher level ICH inheritors, etc.)
- “Regular” craftspeople tend to be regarded as labourers (lower-level ICH inheritors, unrecognized, and artisans)

Consistent with findings in Section 4.2.5, there is a stark economic polarization among craftspeople in the region, as indicated by the subthemes:

- It is easier for craftspeople with titles to be better off,
- “Regular” craftspeople find it hard to sustain themselves.

This economic polarization between entitled craftspeople and common craftspeople reflects more of a social problem than an economic one.

Finding 3: Craft represents the consistent, distinctive and living culture of a place

According to Section 4.2.3, craft in the region maintains consistent culture of a place by:

- Identity and distinctiveness (Section 4.2.3.1)
- Traditional normal practice and customs (Section 4.2.3.2)
- Vitality of the culture (Section 4.2.3.3)

Apart from consistency, innovation and vitality, the other subtheme of always matching crafts to contemporary needs, lifestyle, technologies and aesthetics is another important factor that sustains the very identity of a craft. This suggests that to inherit a craft means to keep innovating it within the contemporary era. A researcher commented:

> *Traditional crafts have been changing all the time. They never stay the same as when they were first invented. Compared to the pre-industrial era, we are living in a time where there are exponential changes happening each year – that’s why we feel those traditional crafts are changeless. As long as we retain the* ***quintessence*** *of the traditional crafts, it doesn’t matter what materials they are made of, ways they are produced, and forms they take.* (R28)

Finding 4: Craft represents a personally fulfilling activity and, as such, can improve people’s sense of mental well-being

According to Section 4.2.4, makers in the region expressed that mental qualities in craft

making make it a meaningful activity for people's well-being and their culture. These qualities are:

- Personal fulfilment and sense of pride coming from recognition (Section 4.2.4.1)
- Mental well-being of freedom and creativity of practices (Section 4.2.4.1)

Affirmation and sense of pride coming from recognition and reward is resulting from **external** factors, in terms of being recognized appreciated, bought, awarded, and entitled by others and by institutional organizations. However, the other two qualities are produced by **internal** experiences of autonomous, enjoyable processes of craft making for its own sake.

Finding 5: As cultural capital/assets, crafts in the YRD are undergoing an imbalanced economic flourishing and transformation

According to analysis and results in Section 4.2.5, crafts in the YRD, as a type of cultural asset, have great economic potential. However, the results also show a stark economic polarization among crafts and craftspeople. Some are in a good economic condition, whereas some cannot economically sustain themselves. The polarization is reflected in these areas:

- Crafts relevant to everyday life vs. those that are time-consuming to make and irrelevant to everyday life;
- Crafts innovative in design and promotion vs. those stick wholly to tradition
- Crafts made by high-profile masters/artists vs. those made by low-profile craftspeople;

These results suggest that crafts in the region are undergoing an imbalanced economic growth and transformation. From the three areas above, it is also indicated that crafts used in everyday life and updated in design, technique and promotion are in a better economic condition.

These five characteristics of craft in the YRD not only depict the significant qualities of craft, but also imply some associated negative tendencies. The positive and negative characteristics are summarized in Tables 4.7 and 4.8 respectively.

Table 4.7. The positive characteristics of craft in the YRD

Characteristics	Attributes
Low environmental impact Rich eco-ethics/wisdom	• Eco-friendly materiality materials, resources, energy, processes • Intangible factors boosting eco-value cultural attachment emotional durability traditional beliefs
Collectiveness, cohesion and responsibility	• Collective endeavour • Sense of belonging • Sense of unity and cohesion • Occupational ethics and behavioural norms
Consistency, distinctiveness and vitality	• Identity and distinctiveness • Traditional normal practice and customs • Vitality of the culture
Personal fulfilment and well-being	• External affirmation and pride social recognitions cultural self-confidence and pride • Inner fulfilment and freedom autonomy from the integrative and fully engaged processes creativity of the process intimacy with materials and environment
Economic potential	• Majority of informants hold a positive view • Potential for commercialization • Regarded as cultural capital/assets

Table 4.8. The negative characteristics of craft in the YRD

Characteristics	Descriptions
Economic polarization	• Some crafts that are relevant to life and innovative are in a good economic condition, whereas some crafts that are more traditional and time-consuming to make cannot be sustained • High-profile artists or masters are financially better off than low-profile artisans; masters with titles are prosperous, whereas the majority of artisans cannot sustain themselves
Social inequality	• Recognized craftspeople tend to be highly respected (higher level ICH inheritors, etc) • “Regular” ones tend to be regarded as labours (lower-level ICH inheritors, unrecognized ones, artisans)
Environmental impact (tends to be high)	• Excessive production and consumption offset crafts’ advantage of low environmental impact • Some crafts are perceived by informants not eco-friendly (e.g. porcelain causing high carbon footprint)

4.4 Chapter Summary

Chapter 4, which has dealt with the characteristics of craft and craft practice in the YRD, contributes to our understandings by filling a gap in the knowledge of a contextualized understanding of crafts in this region.

This chapter results in a principal finding:

The five characteristics of crafts in the YRD which comprises five individual findings on crafts in the YRD:

- Crafts in the YRD are not necessarily pro-environment at the practical level, but the practices are deemed to be environmentally ethical; however, excessive production and consumption increase its environmental impact;
- Crafts in the YRD result in both rich communal engagement and social division;
- Crafts represent the consistent, distinctive and living culture of a place;

- Craft practices can be personal fulfilling and be conducive to the practitioners' sense of mental well-being;
- Crafts in the YRD are undergoing an imbalanced economic flourishing and transformation

These findings represent five characteristics of crafts in the region and they have both positive and negative aspects, as presented in Tables 4.7 and 4.8; these are summarized in Table 4.9. The positive characteristics of craft can be recognized as qualities and values of craft, whereas the negative characteristics require mitigations and interventions.

Table 4.9. The characteristics of crafts in the YRD

Positive	Negative
Rich eco-ethics/wisdoms Eco-friendly materials and processes	High environmental impact by excessive production High carbon footprint of some crafts (e.g. porcelain)
Communal engagement/cohesion	Social division/inequality
Cultural consistency, distinctiveness, and vitality	
Personal fulfilling practices	
Economic potential (Cultural assets)	Economic polarization

Chapter 5. The Manifestations of Crafts in the Yangtze River Delta – Four Categories of Crafts

This chapter presents field research on the manifestations of the resurgence in craft practices of the YRD. It consists of methods and data acquisition (5.1), data analysis and results (5.2), discussion and findings (5.3), and chapter summary (5.4).

Aim and objectives

In order to understand the multifaceted nature of the current resurgence in craft practices, an identification of patterns or categories according to different purposes and directions is necessary. Therefore, the aim of this field work is 1) to identify these patterns and 2) to understand the manifestations of craft practices in the YRD.

5.1 Methods and Data Acquisition

The work was undertaken at the same time as the Fieldwork Phase I presented in Chapter 4, during May 2017 – December 2017. The places visited, methods used, informants interviewed, and the types of crafts involved in this work are the same (see Section 4.1 in Chapter 4). Through data analysis between July 2017 – January 2018, an identification of four categories of crafts was established as an embodiment and manifestation of crafts in the YRD. The final result is attained from an iterative combination of data analysis and validation.

In order to make a coherent presentation of this iterative work, the chapter also presents the validation of the results (the categorization of crafts) conducted during May 2018 – February 2019. The validation was mainly done through interviews with four experts who have at least 20 years' experience working in the field of crafts in the YRD. Two of them are key informants from previous semi-structured interviews (Table 5.1). The interviews were conducted both in person and via WeChat. The validation

was also attained through participation in academic forums and acquiring feedback.[1] The result of the categorization was revised and refined according to the overall feedback. This categorization then was used as *a priori* themes to analyse the manifestation of crafts.

Table 5.1. Experts interviewed for the validation of the categorization

Experts	Attributes
B27	A craft agent advisor, over 20 years' experience
S24	Director of a public art institute, the member of local Intangible Heritage Conservation Expert Committee, 18 years' experience
Expert 1	An academic in ICH research and development, over 30 years' experience
Expert 2	Master of Arts and Crafts, ICH inheritor, over 30 years' experience

5.1.1 Data Collection and Thematic Coding

Data were collected mainly through semi-structured interviews and observations using multiple tools including audio recordings, field notes and photography. Feedback data from interviews with experts are also included. The data were thematically analysed and organized into three sections:

- The categorization of crafts in the YRD;
- Validation of the categorization;
- The manifestations of craft practices in the YRD.

The data were analysed with a mixed use of thematic coding emerging from the interviews themselves (Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2); *a priori* coding (emerging from the

1 This participation includes presentations in research forums at College of Art, Chongqing University (November 2018), College of Design and Arts, Beijing Institute of Technology (February 2019), and an invited talk at Sustainable Consumption Institute, Manchester University (July 2018).

results of earlier stages of data analysis); and photographic illustrations (Section 5.2.3).

- The data analysed in Section 5.2.1 come from data on categorization collected from semi-structured interviews and observation, which results in a categorization in terms of four craft categories;
- The data in Section 5.2.2 are feedback data collected from validation interviews with four experts and feedback from academic forums, which results in a revised version of the categorization of crafts;
- The four craft categories derived from Section 5.2.1 and validated and revised in Section 5.2.2 were then used as *a priori* themes to analyse data on the manifestations of the craft practices in Section 5.2.3.

The coding systems for data collected were organized into three sections and are presented in Tables 5.2- 5.4.

Table 5.2. Coding system for data collected for categorizations of crafts in the YRD (the analysis and results presented in Section 5.2.1)

Themes	Sub-themes
Categorizations by key informants	• Supporter expert's categorization • Researcher expert's categorization • Buyer experts' categorization • Other informants' categorization • Synthesis of the categorizations
Result	• Traditional-decorative crafts • Cultural-functional crafts • Utilitarian craft-goods • Contemporary objets d'art

Table 5.3. Coding system for feedback data collected for validation of the categorization (the analysis and results presented in Section 5.2.2)

Themes	Sub-themes
Feedback	• Expert 1's feedback • Expert 2's feedback • Expert B27's feedback • Expert S24's feedback • Feedback gained from research forums
Result	• Traditional crafts • Modified crafts • Innovative crafts • Objets d'art

(Table 5.4 on the next page)

Table 5.4. Coding system for data collected for the manifestations of crafts (the analysis and results presented in Section 5.2.2)

Themes	Sub-themes
Traditional crafts	• Limited number of ICH recognition • ICH craft courses lack attraction to young generations • High spiritual value but difficult to pass down • Copy and repetition • “Outdated” design and “insensitivity” to modern needs • Main outlets • Economic dilemma
Modified crafts	• Simplification and introduction to contemporary use • Improvement of making technique and processes • Small-batch, customizable production • Maker-customer relationship building • Packaging and branding • Marketing through social media • Difficulties in the balance between adaptation and tradition
Innovative goods	• Rapidly innovated and/or repurposed • Environmentally friendly materials/mass-production • Technology intervention • Cost-effect purpose • Concern of authenticity and the loss of craftsmanship
Objets d”Art	• Art objects for the gift market/gallery display • “Positional” goods and “high” tastes • Collaborative production • Two different views regarding the issue of inequality

5.2 Data Analysis and Results

This section presents the analysis and results on the manifestation of crafts and craft practices in the YRD. The data analysis is organized into three sections: the categorization of crafts; validation of the categorization; and the manifestations of craft practices.

5.2.1 The Categorization of Crafts in the YRD

The information about craft's classification collected from semi-structured interviews is plentiful and diverse. Regarding the question "*apart from classification by material and technique, how many types of craftworks are there in the YRD and how do you classify them according to their contemporary practices"*, ten informants were asked. Among them, four experts with over 20 years' professional experience gave substantial and valid answers (one from Supporters group, one from Researchers group and two from Buyers group). The other six informants gave more general opinions. Their classifications are presented below.

5.2.1.1 Categorizations by experts

The four experts from Supporters, Researchers and Buyers groups who were identified as Experts 1-4 each gave a categorization. Experts 3 and 4 agreed with and gave complementary classifications to those of Experts 1 and 2. The categorizations are presented in Tables 5.5-5.8.

Expert 1, a professor at an institute of arts and crafts, gave the classification below according to purpose of use (R28).

Table 5.5. Expert 1 (Researcher)'s categorization

Types	Descriptions
Decorative crafts	Crafts whose use in contemporary society has faded; now produced for decorative purposes; representatives include fine art silk embroidery, oiled-paper umbrellas and fans, as well as notionally utilitarian goods, such as ceramic bowls and vessels, that are produced today for decorative rather than functional use.
Cultural-utilitarian crafts	Plain, functional everyday items; with strong local characteristics fitting local needs; may or may not be decorated; frequently used in contemporary Chinese culture; examples include handmade bronze teapots and tea sets, modified bamboo umbrellas, handbags with woollen needle tapestry and porcelain tableware.
Symbolic crafts	High-culture, symbolic artefacts; tend to be made out of rare materials; primarily produced for ceremonial use, to show good fortune or social status, and/or to sustain important traditional craft practices, knowledge and processes, i.e. the "intangible cultural heritage" of a region or country; representatives include ivory carving objects, enamelware, rosewood carving objects, and the Scholar's Four Jewels (writing brush, ink stick, ink slab and rice paper).
Contemporary objets d'art	Contemporary art objects, such as the artworks made out of wood, ceramics, metal and glass with particular traditional craft skills; primarily conceived and designed by artists and designers and made by artisans; representatives include ceramic artwork, bronze sculptures, and Artist Ai Weiwei's installation *Seeds* made out of porcelain by Jingdezhen potters.

A curator of a craft museum and leader of an NGO, identified as Expert 2, classified crafts in the YRD into four main types as presented in Table 5.6 (S16).

Table 5.6. Expert 2 (Supporter)'s categorization

Types	Descriptions
High-culture crafts (traditional/ICH)	Many of this type are imperial/literati crafts that used to be made for royal families or upper-class; primarily decorative; many are well-established crafts; extremely refined with sophisticated skills; extremely time-consuming; involving intricate design and patterns; mostly for auction and collections; representatives including cloisonné, enamelware, traditional woodcarving, silk embroidery and exquisite porcelain; most of them have been recognized as ICH.
Low-culture folk crafts (traditional/ICH)	Most of these crafts used to be made for people's everyday use; some are utilitarian and some are decorative, serving for ceremonies or folk customs; they may or may not be as refined as high-culture crafts; time-consuming; bearing strong sense of local culture; some include historical stories or folk legends; representatives including porcelain produced in folk kilns for ordinary use, bamboo weaving and Gaeml brocades by the Gaeml nationality; some of them have been recognized as ICH.
Industrial crafts (primarily traditional)	Primarily mass-produced low-middle-end crafts for souvenir market; with stereotypical patterns or symbols of traditional crafts or element; machine made or semi-handmade; some are copies of high-culture crafts but of a poorer quality; market share of these crafts is shrinking but they still account for a certain percentage; representative including products on markets of small arts and crafts in Yiwu and Suzhou.
Innovative crafts (hybrid of modernity and tradition)	Simplified traditional design and forms; with modern aesthetics and looks; relevant to everyday life; modified with new functions/designs for modern use; mostly made by collaboration of designers and artisans. representatives ranging from contemporary porcelains, redesigned bamboo umbrellas, handbags of needle woollen tapestry, and new products of porcelain and bronze tea services.

A project manager of a craft-related company, identified as Expert 3, classified the crafts into three categories with three levels from a market perspective (B25). In addition, he agreed with Experts 1 and 2's classifications.

Table 5.7. Expert 3 (Buyer)'s categorization

Types / Levels	Traditional crafts	Creative crafts
High-end	Bespoke, high culture and tradition, exquisite/intricate, sophisticatedly crafted by masters, most are recognized as ICH, Old-Brand crafts, primarily decorative, examples include needlepoint paintings and delicately painted porcelain.	Bespoke, high culture, innovative, with contemporary art/design sensibility, designer-brand crafts, primarily decorative, examples include ceramic artwork and ceramic/bamboo tableware of Shangxia brand
Middle range	Small-batch, changeless designs and patterns, handmade by artisans, examples include silk embroidery products, imitative porcelain of Jingdezhen.	Customizable, small-batch, for creative markets, innovative, redesigned or rebranded with storytelling, examples include bronze teapots/tea services and redesigned umbrellas.
Low-end	Mass-produced survivors, stereotypical symbols or patterns, machine made or semi-handmade, examples include products in traditional souvenir shops.	Mass-produced quasi-industrial goods, disruptively innovative, modified by industrial design, examples include tealeaf containers of the Story of Blue and White brand.

A curator of local International Design Week, consultant of arts and crafts business, identified as Expert 4, agreed with Experts 1 and 2's classifications and gave a complementary classification. (S17).

Table 5.8. Expert 4 (Supporter)'s categorization

Types	Descriptions
Bespoke crafts (exclusive)	High-culture, high tradition, objets d'art, sophisticatedly crafted, gallery objects or private collection, high perceived value, in traditional style or creative fashion, examples include ceramic artwork and woollen needle tapestry paintings.
Small-batch crafts	Customizable consumer products, middle-high end, everyday use objects, utilitarian or decorative, combined traditional craft with modern sensibility, examples include bronze teapots and tea sets, redesigned bamboo umbrellas, handbags of woollen needle tapestry and porcelain tableware.
Mass-produced crafts	Low-culture, industrial mode of production, with a primary consideration of cost-effectiveness, intervention with industrial design, examples include tealeaf containers of the Story of Blue and White brand and products on traditional souvenir shops.

5.2.1.2 Categorizations by other informants

Six informants also gave brief, general classifications, which are summarized in Table 5.9.

(See next page)

Table 5.9. Other informants' categorizations

Informants	Types/descriptions
A supporter in porcelain (S22)	**Utilitarian items**: daily use functional crafts, small-batch production **Artistic objects**: high-end artworks, decorative and aesthetic
A studio director in multiple crafts (S18)	**Utilitarian crafts:** functional, everyday use, redesigned and repurposed **Decorative crafts:** traditional crafts, ICH items, faded use, changeless **Aesthetic crafts:** high-perceived value, objets d'art, creative
A regional development manager in multiple crafts (S23)	**Pure heritage crafts:** high tradition, intricate/exquisite, ICH items **Cultural crafts:** with local/cultural identity, for creative market **Industrial crafts:** mass-produced, intervention with industrial design
A researcher in textiles (R30)	**Utilitarian crafts:** functional, everyday use, redesigned and repurposed **Decorative crafts:** non-functional, use faded **Outsourcing works:** handmade parts or semi-finished products, OEM
A master in bronze crafts (M14)	**Traditional crafts:** ICH items, high-tradition, exquisite/intricate **Cultural crafts:** redesigned, repurposed with local culture and tradition **Peripheral products:** for other use beyond product level, like ceramic and bronze crafts used for architecture
A master in blue calico crafts (M11)	**Daily-use products:** primarily utilitarian, middle-low end **Artistic/aesthetic works**: primary decorative, high-end, high-culture

5.2.1.3 Synthesis of the categorizations and the results

According to Tables 5.5-5.9, there are many overlaps among the categorizations:

- decorative, utilitarian and artistic/aesthetic crafts are three main categories identified most frequently;
- the traditional and the innovative/creative are two main directions in terms of the degree of change;
- the bespoke/small batch and mass-made/industrialized are another two main directions in terms of production model;
- artistic crafts basically refer to art objects that are collectable;
- most categorizations cover a spectrum ranging from the high-end such as high-culture, aesthetic, artistic crafts, middle range such as cultural-creative, small-

batch utilitarian crafts, to the low-end such as mass-made/produced, low-culture crafts.

In addition, “cultural-creative crafts” were frequently mentioned by informants to refer to some particular types. However, what informants called “cultural-creative crafts” refer to a variety of craftworks ranging from the utilitarian and the decorative to artistic works. For example, a master referred to bronze tea-pots and bronze incense-burners as cultural crafts whereas a ceramic artist referred to his decorative ceramic artwork with little utilitarian use as cultural products. Therefore, what informants called “cultural-creative crafts” primarily mean modified creative products with a deep cultural connotation and connection, as a Supporter commented:

> *I think the terms “cultural-creative crafts” or “creative crafts” can mean everything. I think they basically mean those that are modified with modern design to suit contemporary use including both the gift and everyday use markets. They have a strong connection to their traditional versions and culture.* (S18)

In order to comprehensively understand the categorization of crafts in the YRD, the researcher conducted a review of literature on taxonomies of crafts in China (see Appendix F1 for the review summary). By referencing the taxonomies and looking collectively at the categorizations from informants, these can be consolidated into four main categories of crafts, as presented in Table 5.10.

(See next page)

Table 5.10. A synthesized categorization of crafts based on informants' responses

Categories	Attributes
Traditional-decorative crafts	Well-established traditional crafts, pure heritage, mostly ICH items, intricate/exquisite, high-middle-end, the use has faded, changeless and not used in contemporary Chinese culture, primary decorative, including traditional collectable items as art objects
Cultural-creative crafts	Both decorative and utilitarian; modified to suit present-day use, with strong local identity, redesigned with contemporary elements and sensibilities, small-batch/bespoke, high-middle-end
Utilitarian craft-goods	Innovated with modern design/new technologies, close relationship with modern product design, mostly utilitarian, may or may not be handmade, primarily conceived or made by designers or engineers
Contemporary objets d'art	Contemporary art objects, primarily aesthetic or symbolic, high-end, high-culture, handmade, sometimes extravagant, primarily conceived by artists, made by artisans

5.2.2 Validation of the Categorization

The result of the categorization in Table 5.10 was validated in the interviews with four experts, and in the academic forums where the researcher presented the initial findings.

The four categories (*traditional-decorative, cultural-creative, utilitarian* and *contemporary objets d'art*) with representative photos were presented by the researcher to four experts in the validation interview (see Appendix D for the visual presentations). All the experts thought the categorization made sense and they made significant comments and suggestions, some of which are presented below.

B27 thought that clearer distinction between creative-cultural and utilitarian should be made, and that some decorative innovative crafts such as those using digital silk weaving cannot be included in any categories of the current categorization.

> *I think the boundary between creative-cultural crafts and utilitarian craft goods blurs though they could mean very different products. Some decorative craft that used modern technologies like the digital weaving craft is hard to include in any categories, so I think it's better not to limit it to "utilitarian". It can include both decorative and utilitarian though most are utilitarian products that use ICH craft elements.* (B27)

Expert 1 thought that cultural-creative and utilitarian can be similar in many aspects and suggested distinguishing them by their method of production – the cultural-creative tends to be small-batch and made by hand whereas the utilitarian tends to be mass-made and uses machines.

> *The cultural-creative can be either utilitarian or decorative, or even both. For me, a bit of sense is made that we usually refer utilitarian to those that are mass-produced for use in daily life. The language in the Chinese context is in this sense, even though we know that many cultural and creative stuff are utilitarian. So, it's better to clarify these two categories with other attributions.* (Expert 1)

Expert 2 suggested moving "traditional art object" that was initially included in the traditional category to the fourth category to form "objets d'art" including both contemporary and traditional "art objects".

> *Contemporary objets d'art seems not to include traditional ones. Traditional crafts also include some art pieces, but the original purpose of these crafts was as place-based artifacts used in their cultural or daily life, which is different from their function today – as art pieces to appreciate and collect. Therefore, I think it's better to put them [both traditional and contemporary] together to form the category of objets d'art.* (Expert 2)

Two experts pointed out that the name of creative-cultural crafts should be revised, and the word "cultural" creates ambiguity in an international context:

> *The name of "creative-cultural crafts" does make sense in the Chinese context and it is even used officially in texts. but the name is in fact not so accurate. The word "cultural" gives a broad sense, so does "creative"; other crafts also have these attributes.* (S24)

Some feedback was also gained from the academic forums. Collectively it suggests that it is better to make looser distinction between the categories, and especially not to make distinctions between decorative and utilitarian, or between traditional style and contemporary style. In addition, some researchers recommended that the categorization could be made according to different purposes and directions, characterizing the range of craft development in the region.

By synthesizing all the feedback, the researcher revised the categorization and determined the final version of the categories that can embody the crafts and craft practices in the YRD as *traditional, modified, innovative* and *objets d'art*. The revisions are presented in Table 5.11.

(See next page)

Table 5.11. Revision of the categorization according to synthesized feedback

Previous Categories	Reasons for Revision	Revised Categories
Traditional-decorative crafts	• Make looser definition to include a broad variety such as some utilitarian ones	**Traditional crafts** That fully conform to traditional materials, processes and forms, primarily decorative
Cultural-creative crafts	• The word “cultural” gives a broad sense; other crafts also have cultural attributes • “Modified” would be a proper name compared to traditional but without significant change; it can also be distinguished from innovative crafts	**Modified crafts** Aiming for revitalizing traditional crafts into contemporary use through modifications in forms, colours, materials, techniques, processes, etc.
Utilitarian craft-goods	• Change to include both utilitarian and decorative (there are some for decorative purpose)	**Innovative crafts** Aiming for cost-effectiveness, Technique breakthrough Close relationship with modern product design
Contemporary objets d’art	• Includes both traditional and contemporary styles; many people don’t see a difference between these two – they are both art objects, especially in porcelain crafts. • So, put objets d’art of a traditional style that were initially in *traditional crafts* into this category	**Objets d’art** Aiming for artistic attainment Aspire to display in galleries Gift goods Exclusive prestige items

These four categories of crafts were used as *a priori* themes to organize data collected regarding the manifestations of craftwork and craft practices in the YRD. The data analysis on the manifestation is presented in Section 5.2.3.

5.2.3 The Manifestations of Crafts and Craft Practices

In order to make sense of the data collected on the manifestations of different crafts and craft practices, the analysis of the data was organized according to the four

categories identified in Section 5.2.1 and is presented in the following paragraphs. The manifestations are analysed in detail according to data collected through semi-structured interviews, observation and photographs. Each category includes three or four representatives to illustrate its current situations, features, and circumstances.

5.2.3.1 Traditional crafts

This category of crafts in the YRD is more decorative than utilitarian, e.g., most embroidery, woodcarving and oiled-paper umbrellas are usually not used in daily life but for decoration and ceremony.

Figures 5.1-5.5 show examples of this type of crafts, which represents a significant percentage of traditional crafts in the YRD. These include Su-embroidery (Figure 5.1), imitative porcelain (Figure 5.2), woodcarving (Figure 5.3), woollen needlepoint tapestry (Figure 5.4) and oiled-paper umbrella (Figure 5.5). Through analysing the data related to these crafts, a set of subthemes regarding their current situations and manifestations are presented below.

Figure 5.1. Su-embroidery craft in Suzhou

Figure 5.2. Imitative porcelain in Jingdezhen

Figure 5.3. Woodcarving in Hangzhou

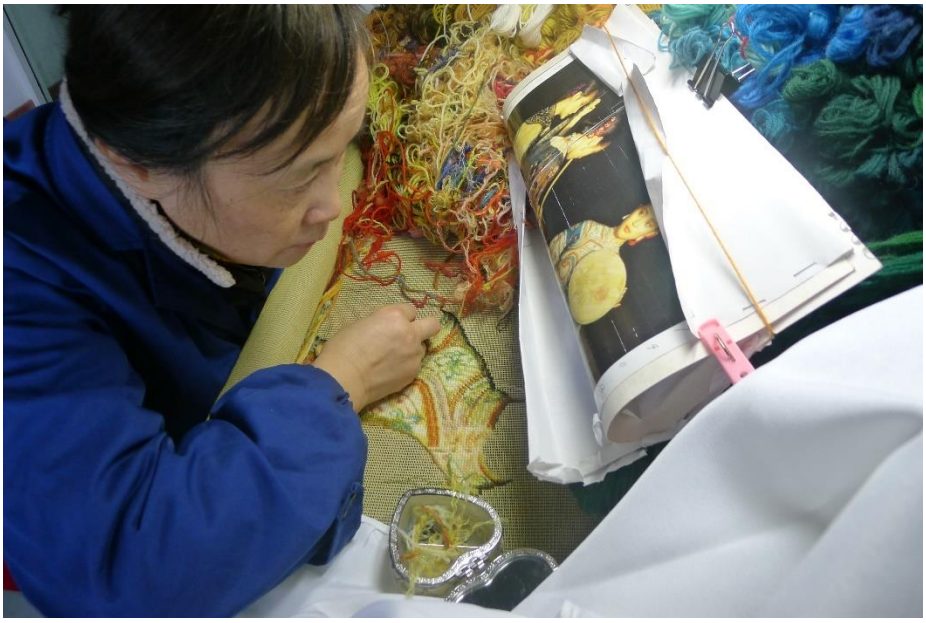

Figure 5.4. Woollen needlepoint tapestry brocade in Shanghai (photo provided by Lihui Bao)

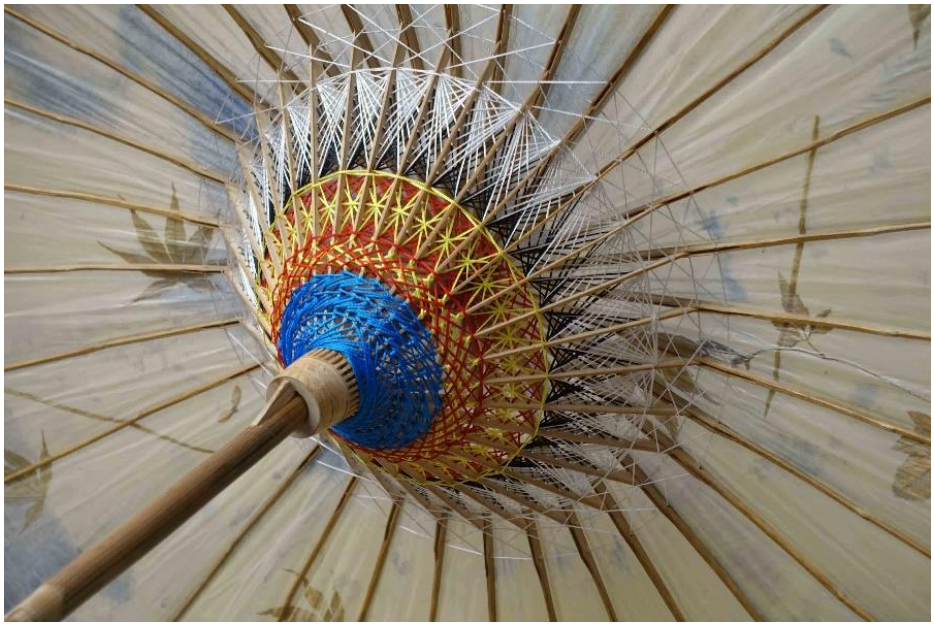

Figure 5.5. Oiled-paper umbrella in Hangzhou

1. A limited number of crafts are protected through the State's ICH programme

A number of people who make these traditional works are recognized as ICH inheritors and MCA masters. ICH inheritors and MCA masters obtain a government stipend and other material and financial benefits, which vary from place to place. Besides an annual financial stipend from the central government, local governments, especially those

more economically developed municipalities like Suzhou, Hangzhou, etc., provide extra supports (i.e. monetary subsidies, health insurance, offering studio space, funding apprenticeship).

According to a national ICH inheritor, as well as national subsidence, she also got health care and extra allowance from her provincial government, which was critical to ensuring her livelihood. However, according to an informant, craftspeople in Jingdezhen who are recognized as ICH inheritors or MCA masters cannot get as much material benefits as those in the more economically developed areas like Suzhou.

According to a researcher, although a few masters are recognized and granted support, the ICH inheritor programme is highly competitive, especially for recognition at national and provincial levels. Just a small number of craftspeople are recognized.

> *Not many people are successful in applying for this title and subsidence. There are many crafts that are not recognized. In addition, many people are doing the same craft, e.g. a group of people making oiled paper umbrellas, but just one of them becomes the inheritor*. (R29)

2. ICH craft courses at schools lack attraction to younger generations

In response to the government's initiative to "move crafts into schools", many traditional ICH craft activities have been added to schedule of primary and secondary schools. ICH inheritors are invited to teach craft knowledge and skills to students. Many informants have reached the agreement that this would be a very helpful approach for the transmission and publicization of crafts among younger generations. However, according to two Supporters who were directly involved in this initiative, these activities were not in fact very successful due to, 1) ICH inheritors lacking modern pedagogy of classroom teaching:

> *These craftspeople are ICH inheritors and masters. They are highly skilled, but they normally don't have experience of teaching children in modern education system. For children, classes are often boring. Most inheritors are not adept in the explanation of craft backgrounds and contexts. Their way of*

> *teaching more suits one-to-one apprentice training but children have different level of cognitive ability and interests from adults.* (S16)

And 2) a lack of systemic curriculum of craft education:

> *Masters come and give a two-to-four-periods class. There are currently no systemic curriculum and books for these classes and all the year groups have the same classes. It is not surprising that children just think it as a kind of "craft techniques" they learned when they were little from online videos because they have little cultural context of those crafts. These activities, I am afraid, are somehow becoming a mere formality to satisfy the government's requirement.* (S24)

3. High spiritual value but few people are keen to pursue it as a career

However, according to the craftspeople employed in weaving, they are content with their work. Although most women weaving in Suzhou cannot earn a good income, they thought that the joy their work brings them makes them feel self-fulfilled and their lives meaningful. When asked: *do you enjoy you work, given that it cannot earn so much money*, one embroiderer in Zhenhu responded:

> *I am satisfied. I have no ambitious to earn much money as long as it can support my basic living. I enjoy the process of making it. When I finish a work, taking a look at it from a distance, what a beautiful piece!... Embroidery makes me find myself, and it is our tradition… it lasts generations, I learned it when I was 6. So, for me, I don't care so much about the economic return as the time I spend on it. I once worked in a factory, just finding that's not my life, though I earned more. But why do I have to work in factory if I can make embroidery? It [embroidery]means a lot to me.* (M8)

Although China has initiated many ICH programmes and training courses to support ICH crafts,[2] it is still ineffective in motivating young people to learn the craft skills,

2 For example, the ICH inheritor programme and some financial support for craftspeople to recruit students, university training courses for craftspeople, etc.

particularly the intricate and complicated ones. A master embroiderer complained:

> *Fewer and fewer of the younger generation are willing to learn this skill. It really needs composure and perseverance. When the government set up some programmes to encourage people to take apprenticeships in traditional skills, a few young people came to learn in our studio, but most of them gave up halfway or after the programme ended. Now I have just one part-time apprentice.* (M7)

> *When I set up my company in 1998, I gathered 20 skilled masters together, but now there are just four masters in my studio, and their average age is over 60. I am really worried about the craft's future.* (M9)

4. Copy and repetition with intricate and sophisticated techniques

The makers of this type of craft are more likely to stick to tradition in terms of motifs, style and process, or even copy the tradition by putting the pattern or painting onto a different type of medium or use it in another craft technique, e.g., many embroideries are found to be a copy of photos and paintings, and are sold as fine-art works to hang on the wall.

When observing Suzhou embroidery in a studio (Figure 5.1) there were five people in one room all embroidering Chinese landscapes and flower and bird paintings by copying the pictures onto a silk base. However, these craftspeople are highly skilled when they adhere to the traditional methods, materials and designs. Regarding technical innovation, a master embroiderer told the researcher:

> *The most valuable part of the embroidery was the innovation of stitch technique because it was very difficult to break through the traditional stitch technique to invent a new one that could enhance the visual effect…Traditional methods are accumulated from generation by generation and it's really hard to overcome that*. (M7)

5. "Outdated" design and "insensitivity" to modern needs

Traditional craft makers are not all formally educated, and some lack awareness of the

modern environment, contemporary aesthetics and market demands. A director of a craft promotion organization, when talking about the crafts from the YRD sent to the Lisbon International Handicrafts Fair 2017, commented from a commercial point of view:

> *Most of the products are pretty outdated. Although they are ICH crafts, they are time-consuming, and the materials are expensive, like the Yunjing brocade, and the Dongyang woodcarving. But the major problem is that these crafts have been made into finished products instead of semi-finished materials like a piece of embroidery or woodcarving. The semi-finished products are more attractive and interesting for buyers because they could bring potential opportunity for future cooperation.* (S23)

Her comments about the old fashioned nature of traditional crafts is supported to some extent by the crafts observed in the field and particularly in the case of ICH crafts. In the woollen needlepoint tapestry studio in Shanghai (Figure 5.4) and the oiled-paper umbrella stand in the Hangzhou Museum of Arts and Crafts (Figure 5.5) the researcher observed similar scenes and craft practices.

6. Main outlets: government commission, museums and collectors

A number of masters in the YRD made middle-and-high end *traditional crafts* in a customizable and bespoke mode. Among the fourteen Makers, eight had their traditional work exhibited and collected by museums, and four produced work under commission by the government.

Eleven said they produce quality crafts for well-established clients such as collectors and business partners. For example, a porcelain artisan who made imitative traditional porcelain only for his regular clients, many of whom were expert collectors from Sotheby's.

> *I only make imitative (traditional) porcelain. They are more valuable because they are made in the exact ways they were made in the dynasty periods. I can only make a few artifacts in a year. These require extremely sophisticated*

> *skills and knowledge as people had in the past. These are just for high-end clients…I have been making porcelain for them for nearly a decade. Each time they gave me sample pictures and specifications taken from museums or collections, I then research and replicate them.* (M4)

However, almost all eleven Makers who produce traditional work for their business partners complained that they cannot sustain themselves by merely relying on selling their high-end traditional work.

7. Few made for daily use market and the economic dilemma

As most of informants reported, another problem is that it is hard to find the market for these exquisite traditional products, as an ICH inheritor of Shanghai Woollen Tapestry stated:

> *Few tapestry works were bought by individual consumers; most of the works were commissioned by government, hotels or emporiums for decoration or furnishing. This is time-consuming and with a high cost, which is not a piece for ordinary people for everyday use.* (M9)

In addition, the owner of this craft enterprise tried to apply the brocade, which was primarily decorative in its origin, to purses, handbags and shoes, but it was not successful because customers found the textile material was not easy to clean and the cost was very high; he had done a lot of market and product research but finally had to return to the traditional way of making decorative art pieces; he said he was concerned about the craft's future because it was no longer a good business and there were just a few people left in his workshop.

Informants from this category of crafts all expressed economic difficulty for them to survive by themselves:

> *We can't support ourselves, few people buy them because no people use them at all…they are not functional…The special orders, you know, are very limited. I've just sold two pieces in the last six months. Government subsidies are not enough …the prices of materials and costs have risen…you know it's*

very difficult. We need to find a way out ourselves. (M12)

5.2.3.2 Modified crafts

This category of crafts changes traditional crafts through modification and contemporary adaptation. Based on their traditional "core" techniques and processes, traditional crafts are modified in terms of forms, colours, materials, techniques and functions. These crafts are middle- and high-end and are welcomed by the majority of middle-class consumers.

Examples include bronze tea service (Figure 5.6), branded tea leaves containers (Figure 5.7), tea service with well-designed packaging (Figure 5.8), and woman's purse using the ICH technique of woollen needlepoint tapestry (Figure 5.9). A set of subthemes regarding their manifestation and situation are presented below.

Figure 5.6. Bronze tea service of Zhubingren bronze craft company

Figure 5.7. Tea leaves containers branded “Story of Blue and White” in Jingdezhen

Figure 5.8. Packaging design of porcelain tea service in a store of a Creative Zone”

Figure 5.9. A woman’s purse using the ICH technique of woollen needlepoint tapestry (photo provided by Lihui Bao)

1. Simplification and introduction to contemporary use

Traditional intricate detail is simplified and optimized in terms of material, form, pattern and producing process, and some even apply traditional pieces onto new product use.

A good example of these crafts is a f bronze tea service made by a family craft brand (Figure 5.6). The person currently in charge is the fourth generation of craftspeople. The major direction[3] for the enterprise was to innovate the bronze works so that they would become “cultural” craftworks for ordinary people for daily use, because formerly, bronze works used to be crafts for royal families and aristocracy only. By reviewing the work named by them as “cultural” products, the researcher recognized that they are rooted in the Chinese traditions or the lifestyle of south YRD. Some of these craftworks reflect the culture through their forms and the techniques, or in the ways of they are used.

The tea plate and saucers in Figure 5.6 have a typical design and style of traditional vessels in the YRD while merging with the master’s new technique of “melting-cooling-crystalizing”.

2. Improvement of making technique and processes

Aiming to solve some problems regarding inefficiency and deficiency of traditional techniques, some craftspeople improved the techniques and processes with some creative inventions. Examples include the improvement of printing techniques of blue calico.

The making of blue calico is very time-consuming and complicated. It needs a series of processes among which the starch swabbing process is the most critical and difficult. There are two types of indigo print – white images/blue ground and blue images/white ground which are produced through two different methods of starch swabbing. To make the former, one needs to swab starch directly on the carving template which is made

3 The other directions for the family bronze works are architectural work, decorative and religious (Buddhism) works, some of which can be classified into the categories of traditional crafts and objets d’art.

out of kraft paper. The latter requires more complicate techniques and is more difficult to control. To solve this difficulty, some craftspeople replaced the kraft paper with a large piece of plastic net which greatly increased the efficiency of the carving and improved the print effect in the detail.

> *If we want to print blue images/white ground, there is more difficult. Because it means we need joint pieces of carving templates and swab them on two sides which makes the processes a bit complicate, difficult to control and the gaps between the joint templates leaves imperfection onto the finished calico. Now we use this new method. It can largely improve productivity and improve the effects in the detail.* (M11)

3. Small-batch, customizable production for target markets: the high-end bespoke and the customized middle-low-end

These craftworks are made by hand in small-batch productions, and less influenced by technologies.

> *These modern, and also traditional, craftworks are welcomed among the rising Chinese middle-class. But the fact is that no single type of crafts can satisfy all consumers. These crafts are not culturally neutral. Most of them have very strong cultural characteristics and local traditions. We build our potential clients among those with a similar cultural background. This is destined to be small-batch for certain people who appreciate them and buy them.* (S18)

There are mainly two types of production mode for these crafts:

1. high-end bespoke – through collaboration with well-known brands, collectors and design museums to raise greater attention via social media and attract potential collaborators and investors, e.g., a series of creative works co-made by ICH craftspeople and designers in the PACC for exhibition, private collection and promotion, especially for crafts such as the woollen needle point tapestry that are finer and more time-consuming.

2. middle-low-end customization – through modifying them into affordable goods for daily use, especially for customers who love heritage crafts and traditional culture, e.g., the crafts such as bronze tea service that are less intricate and can be produced with less time and labour costs, and are geared for the daily marketplace.

4. Customizable production building maker-customer relationship

Many modified crafts are made in a bespoke and customizable mode. For example, a porcelain designer-maker made customized products for his regular clients, many of whom he had known for over eight years. Some makers expressed that this is beneficial for both makers and consumers, because through this mode of production and consumption, a genuine relationship between maker and consumer can be built and a shared value created.

> *I like doing business in this way. It's amazing…it's business while it's not business…depending on how you see it. I have good relationship with my guests[clients]. Now I have two from Taiwan and four from Shanghai. They are brilliant. They know the crafts well and they know me. They never urged me to hand over the work when the dates were due. They also brought me new guests. I seldom advertised.* (M6)

5. Packaging and branding play an important role

As observed in the field, packaging and branding are also important elements of these types of crafts. Taking the tealeaf container as an example (Figure 5.7), the iconic colour and patterns of traditional blue and white were retained in the redesigned and branded products. The patterns were simplified to suit modern taste, but the shapes were the same as traditional porcelain vessels. As one of the iconic symbols of porcelain culture in Jingdezhen, these traditional patterns were used as the major theme of the brand.

> *Traditional blue and white porcelain is so intricate while being out of step with the taste of today's young people. This is a prominent heritage that represents*

> *Jingdezhen's past and culture… We chose typical patterns and themes which best represent this craft. This series is most popular in our store and the new design are really fresh and attractive…80 percent of consumers who bought this series are young people.* (S15)

Some craft makers who did not have enough resources and supports to set up their own brands collaborated with some well-established brands. A ceramic master who used to produce porcelain work of traditional style made partnership with a fashion house company and he modified his work to suit more contemporary market. Through this partnership, the master made his name and his work known in the wider community.

Another example is a porcelain tea service packing displayed in a store of a creative complex in Jingdezhen called Taoxichuan "Creative Zone" (Figure 5.8). A design director thought that good packaging and branding were commonly used in modified crafts, and he pointed out that the way of telling story about related culture of these items is most important because it helps to create a point of sale.

> *Packaging is important. It helps to create a point of sale so as to raise the perceived value of the items. Though packaging is of course commonly used in commercial products, how to differently design packaging is really the matter. Environmentally friendly materials are necessary. Visual design could help a lot in this regard but most important is that design should portray its past, culture and tradition.* (S20)

6. Marketing through social media and its difficulties

Many makers did not like to put their products on the major e-commerce platforms like Taobao or Dongjia because they were not competitive on these platforms due to price competition. Most of makers promote their crafts on the widely used social media application WeChat. Craftspeople post photos, videos and blogs of their work, activities and making process through WeChat's social-networking functions known as "friends circle" and "public account". People get to know them and their work through adding them as friends and following their "public accounts".

> *I normally put my work and videos on WeChat. This makes customers' experience more real and immediate because people can know the real details of my work, processes, and how they are made. If someone likes your work, they will introduce you to their friends, and their friends to their friends…Through this social networking, you establish a word-of-mouth reputation. It is very convenient and useful.* (M2)

However, makers who are not good at photography, design and digital technologies could not produce proper and attractive presentations of their work and therefore, their work are not popular in the market. In addition, a large number of makers expressed that this mode of marketing was time-consuming, and they could not get enough time to concentrate on the work itself. Here is a representative quote:

> *I am not good at taking beautiful photos or making attractive videos. People who are good at promotion or have professionals to help them get more followers and customers. However, we basically make the same things. But I think this kind of promotion is very time-consuming. I often spend quite a long time to make videos, chat with clients, etc. and don't have enough time left for my work.* (M4)

7. Difficulties in the balance between modern adaptation and protection of tradition

There is still a number of heritage crafts that are difficult to transform into daily use due to their characteristic materials, techniques and forms that have little possibility to be redesigned for modern use and appreciation. Representatives include the woollen needlepoint tapestry craft in *traditional crafts* section (Figure 5.4).

A designer, the second generation of the woollen needle tapestry craft who graduated from a design school created a new brand to repurpose the use of the heritage craft (Figure 5.9). The forms and patterns were redesigned and then handwoven into semi-finished pieces. Later they were produced into bags and purses in factories. To sell his repurposed products he ran two models of sale: developing new products for *Taobao* online sales and the relatively high-end for stores in emporiums.

These products were difficult to clean and maintain because of the woollen material. In addition, the prices were not competitive since the costs were so high, especially the handwoven pieces. He stated:

> *Those bags are not cheap. The revenue seems not bad, but the stores take out more than half the profits because of the high cost of marketing. However, the sale volume is still very low.* (M9's son)

When asked if he considered changing the directions of current designs, product use or target consumers or markets, he replied

> *I have studied the market quite a lot. It's a bit hard to innovate because of the characteristics of the ICH item and the material. If it is changed too much including its handwoven part, I wonder what the heritage item can leave for us. It becomes something else.* (M9's son)

5.2.3.3 Innovative crafts

This category of crafts is moving crafts into a more modern way of production with the primary considerations of cost-effectiveness and radical change to traditional forms and techniques. Therefore, modern design concepts for developing new products are widely used, and (semi)mechanization and new technologies are adopted in the, generally, mass production process.

Examples include: a redesigned bamboo umbrella (Figure 5.10); a modern chair made out of oiled paper (Figure 5.11); the porcelain phone speaker (Figure 5.12); and digital weaving with advanced technologies (Figure 5.13). Several subthemes concerning the manifestation and situation of the innovative crafts are presented below.

Figure 5.10. Redesigned bamboo umbrella (*left, photo from http://www.ebumbrella.com/news/82.html)* inspired by the bamboo structure of oiled-paper umbrella craft (*right*)

Figure 5.11. “Paper chair” made of oiled paper and bamboo inspired by oiled-paper umbrella (photo provided by “Rong” Library in Hangzhou)

Figure 5.12. A porcelain phone speaker at a creative market

Figure 5.13. The Chinese classic book *the Art of War* made of silk using the "high-density-digital-simulation-colour-silk-weaving" technique (photo provided by Stuart Walker)

1. Rapidly innovated and/or repurposed with modern use

Traditional materials, techniques and cultural symbols are major elements to be adopted in innovated crafts.

The redesigned umbrella (Figure 5.10) was inspired by the traditional oiled-paper umbrella – a craft recognized as national ICH in Hangzhou. The structures were handmade by craftspeople in the early stages, then manufactured in factories with the finishing touches. The umbrellas were sold at the price of approximately 300*yuan*

(appr. £34.11) for the ordinary version. This umbrella design has been won both Red Dot and IF awards in 2013.

Another example is a “paper chair” in contemporary style made with the oiled-paper pasting technique (Figure 5.11). The chair was created by an industrial designer in Hangzhou when he was learning the traditional oiled-paper umbrella making skill. This design won the Salone Satellite Design Report Award at the Milan Design Week in 2012. The designer formed a team dedicated to revitalizing traditional craft skills in Hangzhou. They made a series of everyday products based on traditional craft materials and techniques in a totally modern style including lamps, tableware, side table, sofa etc.

The director of the team expressed that materials and techniques are key parts of crafts and design has great potential to revitalize them through deconstructing and exploring new possibilities.

> *There are hundreds and thousands of traditional crafts in the areas. Materials and techniques are key parts of the crafts. Our mission is to use theme-based design thinking to analyse these materials to explore new possibilities and how they can inform new design and use. Design can help deconstruct these skills and reconstruct them from a modern product perspective.* (S18)

2. Environmentally friendly materials while being mass-made

Due to eco-friendly considerations, many of these innovative products reduce material use and simplify forms and processes of traditional crafts with radical innovation while retaining the natural and renewable materials. For example, the use of a bamboo structure in umbrellas can greatly reduce the environmental impact, and were thus welcomed by consumers who are aware of environmental issues.

> *These umbrellas are more popular among middle-class consumers despite being more expensive than ordinary umbrellas. For those who long for handmade goods, who are aware of environmental issues, these are ideal products for them to buy and use in everyday life.* (S16)

However, some informants thought that because these crafts tended to be mass-made and rapidly innovated for consumer market, their environmental benefits brought about by their eco-friendly materials at the single product level would be offset in turn by their mass-consumption.

> *This would be a good point of sale especially when consumers begin to care about environmental issues. Design awards also often favour those designs that have some "sustainable" ideas. On the surface, it seems to be very eco-ethical. But if your aim is to produce more and people buy more and then throw them away…how can it be sustainable?* (R28)

3. Technology intervention

Some crafts in the region are being innovative in their techniques and processes by using advanced technologies, e.g. digital technologies in weaving, laser cutting in traditional hand carving, and biochemical materials for blue calico dying.

Taking the case of brocade weaving, a master in Hangzhou invented a revolutionary digital method of weaving entitled "high-density-digital-simulation-colour-silk-weaving" (Figure 5.13). Traditional silk brocade weaving uses a manual technique to dye silk threads – the colours of the threads are often limited and the effects are unrefined. This digital weaving method greatly expands the spectrum of colour to as many as 4500 colours based on five basic colours, and also enhances the effect in the detail. To celebrate its highest technical achievement, this new weaving technology was used to make high-end products in a variety of forms ranging from gifts to bespoke dresses. A number of works by the master were used as gifts by state leaders during their international visits.

4. Mechanized for cost-effect purpose

Some innovative crafts were trying to mechanize the original manual production. For example, the project of the redesigned umbrellas (Figure 5.10) is now in the process of changing the very nature of manual making. According to one of the designers, they were trying to employ auto-machines to improve the making process and increase the

efficiency, so as to eliminate the manual part and reduce the cost.

> *The problem now is that the bamboo structures still need to be made by hand. This is not efficient enough which increases the cost. Our aim is to fully industrialize them so as to entirely integrate this ICH craft into modern production to let more people use them.* (S18)

Some informants thought that the industrial transformation for heritage crafts entering everyday life was inevitable. Here is a representative quotes:

> *It's very important to revitalize those hundred-year-old crafts into daily life for the mass. They were once made by the mass and for the mass. Times changed. We are not in preindustrial time. Society changed. Crafts aren't necessarily the same as they were. The most important thing is the culture they represent…The culture could be essentialized into symbols, elements…Handmade crafts have to be industrialized if we really want to sustain their culture* (S15).

5. Concern raised regarding authenticity and the loss of craftsmanship

Regarding the tendency of industrialization of production processes, rapid innovation in products and technology intervention represented by this category, some informants were concerned about this direction. They thought these products were no longer authentic and the value of craftsmanship was being lost in the process:

> *I think they (oiled-paper umbrella project) have achieved the most of what they can do in terms of innovation. No more, no further. To pursue mechanization is problematic. If mass-production is achieved, except the bamboo material, what can be recognized as a form of ICH that conveys the craftsmanship and local culture of oiled-paper umbrella? Although the original purpose was to revitalize the ICH craft, it turned out to be mass-production.* (R30)

An ICH inheritor and master also pointed out:

> *This is quite dangerous for heritage craft. It is exactly because there are fewer and fewer traditional umbrella makers that the handmade parts need to be retained and*

promoted rather than eliminated. Craftmanship and handmade parts are key in protecting traditional crafts. (M11)

5.2.3.4 Objets d'art

This category of crafts is in the direction of moving crafts into arts. These are decorative pieces that are produced with traditional craft techniques and materials for the gift market or to be displayed in galleries; The people who are engaging in this craft area are artists or masters in collaboration with craft artisans.

Representatives include a porcelain animal mascot (Figure 5.14); a bronze deer sculpture (Figure 5.15 *right*) and porcelain art objects (Figure 5.15 *left*).

Figure 5.14. A ceramic mascot for the Chinese New Year of the Ox for the Spring Festival gift market (photo provided by Qingxin Li)

Figure 5.15. A bronze deer sculpture for display on a desk or side table (*left*); porcelain art objects displayed in a gallery (*right*)

1. Art objects primarily for the gift market and/or gallery display

Techniques and skills in these crafts become less important than "expressive values" such as originality, meaning and artistic ideas. A ceramic artist in Jingdezhen creates different mascot objects themed on the "twelve zodiac animals" for each Chinese New Year and launches them just before the New Year's Spring Festival. Figure 5.14 is a statue based on the zodiac Year of the Ox, and this series is very popular among Chinese consumers. Likewise, the bronze deer in Figure 5.15 *(left)* is made by a well-known bronze master with his delicate "melting-cooling-crystalizing" technique, and thus commands a higher price on the gift and collection markets. This category also includes objects that are made for galleries, such as the porcelain art objects by a renowned artist in Figure 5.15 *(right)*.

2. "Positional" goods that show social standing and "particular" tastes

A large percentage of these crafts are also prestige items made by renowned artists and masters which are exhibited in galleries, and cater to affluent consumers who are willing to buy them. However, according to some informants, these objets d'art can be distorted by consumerism, and are bought to display social standing and "high" taste. Here is a representative quote:

> *These crafts are expensive and often limited-edition items. Consumers buy them not necessarily because of their craftsmanship or ideas. Some even have no time to really understand and appreciate the work…many buy them for their*

symbolic value because they can perfectly show, as consumerism promises, the owner's privileged standing and exclusive or posh tastes. (S20)

3. Often conceived by artists and made by craftspeople/artisans

Most of objets d'art are created through collaboration between artists and craftspeople/artisans in which the artists design the project and employ or collaborate with craftspeople/artisans who make them. In this way, artists may or may not master the necessary craft skills. For example, a French artist produced his artwork by employing local artisans in Jingdezhen to make it for him (Figure 5.16).

Some of these works are produced through outsourcing technical work to specialist artisans.

Many artists have come to Jingdezhen and what they wanted was not to make utilitarian crafts or copy old porcelain versions. They wanted to make their own artworks with the help of local artisans/masters. Most of the jobs are made by artisans, from form making like throwing and mould making, glazing to firing, and even painting. (R29)

Figure 5.16. A French artist's work made through collaboration with local artisans in Jingdezhen (photo provided by Matéo Clausse)

4. Two different views regarding the issue of inequality in the collaboration

a) The dominance of artists over artisans

Some informants from Supporters and Researchers groups expressed the problem of

inequality caused by artists' dominance in the collaborative production of objets d'art.

> *A vase painted by a master artist is sold at a high price, but he only needs to pay far less money to the artisans compared to the price of the vase. To some extent, I have to say, traditional artisans who are highly skilled but normally do repetitive work have just become tools. Normally artisans are considered not to "have a brain" because they work with their hands instead of their brain while artists are the exact opposite. Working with hands is never valued as much as working with the brain in Chinese philosophy.* (R29)

> *Artists or designers put their name on it without any mention of the names of those who make it. They are paid once for the work with a small amount of money…just a very small amount of compared to the whole profit. Many artists call artisan "workers". This form of address reveals a relationship that is meant to be unequal.* (S20)

The outsourcing of producing artwork has been very controversial and is also criticized by some scholars.[4] Authorship is a problem that has been largely debated in the craft field. However, craftspeople and artists in the YRD have a different view which is presented below.

b) A reciprocal relationship between them

Artists told the researcher that the work wouldn't be possible if they couldn't find skilled artisans to collaborate with them to make these masterpieces. Meanwhile, artisans also didn't think it was an exploitative relationship. Instead, they felt it was a reciprocal process in which they developed their skills and aesthetics inspired by the artists:

> *"I tried to carry it out myself many times. I've learnt it before, but it's hard to carry out my idea… I came here (Jingdezhen) and was told that the artisans here can do everything. When I really started to get along with them, I found they were really amazing- they can make the shapes, the patterns and large*

4 Among the criticisms, typical is craft theorist, Glenn Adamson's, on skills and material outsourcing (see Adamson and Bryan-Wilson, 2016)

> *pieces and whatever you want. I collaborate with several regular artisans. At the beginning, it took a bit of time to get things through – you need to get them to really understand what effect you want. The communication between us is very important and I am always beside them to watch and comment. They also give me suggestions and show new patterns which I didn't know before. This often informs me a lot."* (A Ceramic Artist)
>
> *Before these artists from other places came, we only produced the traditional version of dragon gallbladder-shaped vases… she [a contemporary artist] came and asked me to make greenware and special effects for her. After that we applied the expression to our products. It looked really good and turned out to be very popular at the fair. I benefitted a lot.* (M4 Ceramic Decorator)

A researcher also acknowledged the mutual benefits:

> *They set an example and actually advertised the textile crafts, so the general market price and popularity increased… And they brought local artisans more orders and more opportunities for collaboration.* (R29)

5.3 Discussion and Findings

According to the results presented in this chapter, craft products in the YRD fall into four main categories:

- Traditional crafts
- Modified crafts
- Innovative crafts
- Objets d'art.

According to Section 5.2.3, the craft products have different manifestations, which are discussed and form individual findings on the four categories of crafts respectively.

Finding 1: Traditional crafts, which manifest exquisite craftsmanship and Intangible Cultural Heritage of the region/nation, tend to be outdated in terms of design, product exploitation and contemporary sensibilities. They are facing

unsustainability in both economic viability and cultural vitality. This is supported by the subthemes in Section 5.2.3.1:

1. A limited number of crafts are protected through the State's ICH programme
2. ICH craft courses at schools lack attraction to young generations
3. High spiritual value but few people keen to pursue as a career
4. Copy and repetition with intricate and sophisticated techniques
5. "Outdated" design and "insensitivity" to modern needs
6. Main outlets: government commission, museums and collectors
7. Few made for daily use market and the economic dilemma

While traditional crafts are in a dilemma of innovation and economic decline, the second generation of these heritage crafts are starting to change the particular scenery of those crafts and innovate them. Most of these people are the next generation of ICH inheritors and have graduated from art and design schools. They are more likely to return to their families to continue their parents' crafts. In Jingdezhen, this group are called "the second generation of ceramics" (*ci er dai*). As one supporter responded:

> *"The second generation of traditional crafts and the new knowledge they bring are the main force driving the inheritance and innovation in the future. They have different knowledge and perspective from their parents. Some of them studied art and design, some management, some business, and some studied relevant material and engineering subjects."* (S16)

This "second generation" have been starting to innovate the heritage crafts and make them more viable and more vibrant. Most of products they develop and make can be regarded as *modified, innovative crafts* and/or *objets d'art*.

Finding 2: Modified crafts, which are produced in small-batch and customizable modes, are more innovative with a modern design sensibility, and have a higher perceived value for consumers. Therefore, they tend to be more viable. This is supported by the subthemes in Section 5.2.3.2:

1. Simplification and introduction to contemporary use
2. Improvement of making technique and processes

3. Small-batch, customizable production for target markets
4. Customizable production building maker-customer relationship
5. Packaging and branding play an important role
6. Marketing through social media and its difficulties
7. Difficulties in the balance between modern adaptation and protection of tradition

Traditional crafts are modified and/or redesigned to suit the contemporary use and aesthetics based on the traditional versions. Their making processes and techniques may also be adapted with improvements to meet the changing needs and circumstances. Although, the “core” techniques and processes of manual making are significantly retained, as the improvement of the making process of blue calico demonstrates. The essence of the diverse local cultures which represent their past and their people can be perceptibly identified. Modification, traditional processes, small-batch and contemporary use are typical markers of this category. There are also challenges identified in these crafts: 1) lack of service support of building maker-customer relationships, and 2) difficulties in the balance between adaptation and protection of tradition.

Finding 3: Innovative crafts, which are significantly innovated with modern design and technologies, have the advantage of cost-effectiveness and adaptation of eco-friendly design and materials. However, they tend to be mass-produced and raise concerns regarding the loss of craft knowledge and craftsmanship. This is supported by the subthemes in Section 5.2.3.3:

1. Rapidly innovated and/or repurposed with modern use
2. Environmentally friendly materials while being mass-made
3. Technology intervention
4. Mechanized for cost-effect purpose
5. Concern raised regarding authenticity and the loss of craftsmanship

Innovative crafts have some commonality with modified crafts: both are revitalizing traditional crafts into present-day life and the contemporary market in order to ensuring their economic viability. However, they also have significant differences: innovative

crafts prioritize cost-effectiveness and thus tend to mass-production, which is totally different from how traditional crafts were made; whereas modified crafts adhere to traditional processes (though with improvement of techniques within the processes) and create added value through raising awareness and branding rather than through mass-production of crafts themselves.

Meanwhile, some innovative products adhere to manual making and traditional materials but completely break from the original versions and are redesigned into products in a completely modern Western style, e.g. the “paper chair” originated from the oiled-paper umbrella craft. Craft in this case merely means materials and techniques while their cultural context and meaning are eliminated from it.

Finding 4: Objets d’art are objects aimed at the gift market or to be exhibited in galleries, often conceived by artists/designers and made by artisans. They raise the perceived value of traditional crafts and bring both opportunities and inequality to traditional artisans. This is supported by the subthemes in Section 5.2.3.4:

1. Art objects primarily for the gift market and/or gallery display
2. “Positional” goods that show social standing and “high” taste
3. Often conceived by artists and made by craftspeople/artisans
4. Two different views regarding the issue of inequality: 1) the dominance of artists over artisans; and 2) a reciprocal relationship between artists and artisans.

Traditional elements and meanings are largely deconstructed and reconstructed in the objets d’art. Some even abandon traditional elements and only represent the ideas. These crafts represent complete freedom for the artists.

Since these Objets d’art mainly produced for the gift market and gallery display and exhibitions, they satisfy, in some sense, consumers’ increasing need for enlightenment through art/beauty.

However, among these crafts, many are expensive prestige items – positional goods that demonstrate one’s social standing and class taste. Many are very expensive and

ordinary consumers cannot afford them. In addition, the way of producing these crafts often involves artists outsourcing technical work from craft artisans and this outsourcing collaboration is controversial in terms of inequality.

5.4 Chapter Summary

Chapter 5, which has dealt with the manifestations of current resurgence in craft practices of the YRD, contributes to our understandings by filling a gap in the knowledge of the-state-of-the-art of craft development in this region.

This chapter results in a principal finding:

Crafts in the YRD fall into 4 main categories of traditional; modified; innovative and objets d'art

Findings 1-4 shows that these four categories of crafts have different manifestations in terms of features, current situation, production and problems. These are summarized and presented in Table 5.12.

(See next page)

Table 5.12. The four categories of crafts in the YRD and their manifestations

Categories	Characteristic manifestations	
		Concerns
Traditional crafts	• High tradition, exquisite skills • Examples of ICH • Entirely traditional processes and techniques • High spiritual value	• Limited number of ICH recognition and limited support • Out of step with the time • Difficulty in passing on the skills • ICH craft courses lacking attraction to younger generations • Economically unviable
Modified crafts	• Modification/improvement of forms, patterns, designs and processes • Traditional methods/processes • Small-batch, customizable	• Difficulty in the balance of innovation and tradition • Lack of service support in the building of customer-maker relationship
Innovative crafts	• Rapidly innovated/repurposed • Environmental materials • Technology intervention • Non/less-traditional methods and/or processes	• Tend to be mass produced • Concern raised regarding the loss of authenticity and craftsmanship
Objets d’art	• Art objects for the gift market • Gallery objects • High perceived value • Opportunity for craftspeople	• Unaffordability of some “positional” goods • Potential inequality between artists and artisans

DISCUSSION AND DEVELOPMENT – PHASE I

Chapter 6. Synthesis of Findings and the Development of a Typology of Craft Values

Chapter 2 presented a literature review and the resulting findings. Chapters 4 and 5 presented the analysis of data collected from the Field Research Phase I and its resulting findings. This chapter presents a synthesized analysis from these three chapters and a discussion of the findings. Through synthesis, discussion and development, an initial typology of craft values as a tool of understanding craft practices is developed and will be used and tested in the Field Research Phase II. This chapter consists of analysis of findings (6.1); results of analysis (6.2); discussion and development (6.3); and chapter summary and the next step (6.4).

Aim and objectives

The specific aim and objectives for this chapter to achieve were:

3) To analyse and compare findings from the field with findings from literature;
4) To identify similarities and disparities between literature and field studies, and identify any new findings not found in literature;
5) To develop concepts and tools for understanding and appraising crafts in the region.

6.1 Analysis of Findings

Chapter 2 identified three key findings in terms of craft-sustainability accordances, craft-sustainability tensions, and the opportunities and challenges of crafts in the YRD of China. From field data analysis, Chapter 4 yields five individual findings (coded F1-F5) which were summarized in a key finding in terms of 5 characteristics of craft(s) of the YRD. Chapter 5 yields four individual findings (coded F6-F9), which were summarized in a key finding in terms of 4 main categories of crafts in the YRD. The findings from the literature and the findings from the field are summarized in Tables 6.1 and 6.2 respectively.

Table 6.1. Findings from literature (Chapter 2)

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Findings from Literature (Chapter 2)</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Key finding 1: Craft-sustainability accordances</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Localized, communal living
Local resources, knowledge, local human needs, community-based living systems, diverse cultural identities</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Generally perceived eco-effectiveness
Natural materials, renewable resources, closed loop ecosystem</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Resilient production systems
Small-scale, diverse, distributed, resilient to risks and crises</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Sense of being
Authentic, relevant, responsive, contextualized</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Key finding 2: Craft-sustainability tensions within modern socioeconomic conditions</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Irrelevance to cosmopolitan life
Closed, isolated from technology and economy, lack of global view, being out of step with modern aesthetics</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Low efficiency and high cost
Pre-industrial technique, uncompetitive, while modern production generally ignores social and environmental costs.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Economic unviability
Low-paid, low price, value diminished, cost-income gap</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Key finding 3: Craft, History and Development in the YRD</th></tr>
<tr><th>Opportunities</th><th>Challenges</th></tr>
<tr><td>Long-standing craft history
Rich craft resources, among which are recognized as ICH; Porcelain and textile are major crafts with over 1700 years of history.</td><td>Lack of innovation
Outdated designs; Changelessness of forms, material, functions, techniques and processes.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Dynamic and interdisciplinary development
Time-honored Brand enterprises; Place-based craft industries and communities; Collaborations between artists, artisans, crafts sectors, e-</td><td>Irrelevance to everyday life
Mainly two directions:
as gifts for export
well-established crafts for collection
Few crafts made for everyday use market; An industrial model of production renders</td></tr>
</table>

commerce and design departments in universities. A distinction between the craft sector and the “makers” community	the loss of sense of being and meaning
Top-down governmental supports Financial and policy supports; ICH Inheritor programme; Training courses for ICH inheritors; etc.	**Low social status of craftspeople** The personal aspect and social role of craftspeople are neglected; Lack of research on individual craftspeople
	Difficulty in the passing down of crafts Lack of motivations and incentives for the younger generation to learn craft skill and choose it as a career option.

Table 6.2. Findings from the field (Chapters 4 and 5)

Findings from Field (Chapter 4): the 5 characteristics of craft (s) in the YRD		
*[1]	**Positive**	**Negative**
F1	**Environmental benefits and ethics** • eco-friendly due to the use of nature materials (systematic inquiry needed) • rich eco-ethics/wisdom	**High environmental impact** • due to unclean materials, energies and processes (e.g. porcelain) • excessive production
F2	**Rich communal engagement/cohesion** • collective endeavour • sense of belonging • sense of unity and cohesion • occupational ethics and behavioural norms • recognition and sense of pride	**Socio-division/inequality** • recognized craftspeople tend to be highly respected (higher level ICH inheritors, etc) • “regular” ones tend to be regarded as labours (lower-level ICH inheritors, unrecognized ones)

1 F1-9 are nine individual findings from the field.

F3	**Consistent, distinctive and living culture** • identity and distinctiveness • traditional normal practice and customs • vitality of the culture	
F4	**Personal fulfilment and well-being** • individual fulfilment and sense of pride coming from recognition • mental well-being of freedom and creativity of practices	
F5	**High economic potential** • regarded as cultural capital/assets • potential for commercialization	**Economic polarization** • those contemporary relevant vs. those more traditional/time-consuming • high-profile craftspeople vs. low-profile artisans

Findings from Field (Chapter 5): Crafts in the YRD fall into 4 main categories

	Categories	Manifestations
F6	Traditional crafts	• A limited number of crafts are protected through the State's ICH programme • ICH craft courses lack attraction to young generations • High spiritual value but few people keen to pursue as a career • Copy and repetition with intricate and sophisticated techniques • "Outdated" design and "insensitivity" to modern needs • Main outlets: government commission, museums and collectors • Few made for daily use market and the economic dilemma
F7	Modified crafts	• Simplification and introduction to contemporary use • Improvement of making technique and processes • Small-batch, customizable production for target markets • Customizable production building maker-customer relationship

		• Packaging and branding play an important role • Marketing through social media and its difficulties • Difficulties in the balance between modern adaptation and protection of tradition
F8	Innovative crafts	• Rapidly innovated and/or repurposed with modern use • Environmentally friendly materials while being mass-made • Technology intervention • Mechanized for cost-effect purpose • Concern raised regarding authenticity and the loss of craftsmanship
F9	Objets d'art	• Art objects primarily for the gift market and/or gallery display • "Positional" goods that show social standing and high tastes • Often conceived by artists and made by craftspeople/artisans • Bring both opportunities and inequality to traditional artisans

6.1.1 Analysis of the Findings from the Field

Findings in Chapter 4 provide a conceptual understanding of YRD crafts in terms of 5 characteristics. Chapter 5 identifies 4 craft categories, which span the diverse landscape of current craft products and practices in the region.

According to Table 6.2, Findings 1, 2 and 5 deal with environmental, communal and economic aspects of crafts in the YRD and have both positive and negative characteristics. The positive characteristics of these three aspects are generally reflected in the four categories of crafts in the region (Findings 6-9). In addition, some traditional crafts are not economically viable in the current condition and not culturally vibrant due to their irrelevance to the present life, e.g. the *traditional crafts* (Section 5.2.3.1). Also, some crafts across these four categories have the tendency to cause environmental problems through over-production and consumption, though some are made using environmentally friendly materials, e.g. the *innovative crafts* (Sections 4.2.1, 5.2.3.3); some *objets d'art* are produced via an unequal collaboration between

artists and craftspeople in which artists dominate in the making, and the value of the work offers little contribution to communal cohesion and equality (Sections 4.2.2. 5.2.3.4).

However, Findings 3 and 4, which refer to cultural and mental characteristics, are not fully consistent with the general manifestations of *innovative crafts* and *objets d'art* (Findings 8 and 9). *Innovative crafts* are losing their original identity and cultural diversity through radical intervention of modern design and technologies (Section 5.2.3.3); authenticity and craftsmanship crafts have been largely eliminated from the innovation processes. Art intervention in crafts, as represented by *objets d'art*, are distancing crafts from their cultural contexts and local traditions; in addition, many *objets d'art* are purposed as "positional" goods that show consumers' social standing and "particular" tastes (Section 5.2.3.4), which contribute little to communal cohesion and equality (Section 4.2.2).

Some of these conflicts indicate that, on the one hand, some positive characteristics of crafts are recognized and appreciated by people. On the other, the realities of craft revitalization practices are not always consistent with people's long-standing perceptions. A supporter commented on the issue:

> *Crafts definitely have great values – culture, tradition, diversity, but many of today's revitalization seem to have gone a bit far; and most importantly, modern design makes things look the same, which is glossing over multiculturalism*. (S24)

This also implies that many crafts in the YRD are not being fully sustained and revitalized in the way some informants think they should be, and a clear and sound appraisal is needed to help identify specific pros and cons so as to inform any intervention for moving them towards a more sustainable transformation.

6.1.2 Findings from the Field in Relationship to Findings from Literature

The findings from the field illustrate the current situation regarding crafts in the YRD, a

highly-developed region of China. These findings will be analysed and compared in relationship to the findings from literature according to similarities, disparities and new findings.

6.1.2.1 Similarities between findings from the field and findings from literature

Many of the characteristics of craft identified from the field research are supported by the findings from literature: According to Findings 2 and 3 from the field, craft in the YRD represents a rich communal engagement of local people, and the distinctive and living culture of a place through the use of local resources and methods, meeting local needs and reflecting local identities (Sections 4.2.2 and 4.2.3). Many of those resources and methods are generally perceived as environmentally friendly by local people. Though craft's environmental impacts remain uncertain (see *Disparities* in the next paragraph), such long-established small-scale, diverse, and distributed ways of production tend to be more resilient than modern, intensified production systems (Section 4.2.1). This is because most of those craft practices, such as porcelain production, oiled-paper umbrella making, and silk-embroidering, are based in well-established local knowledge and traditions that have, over generations, been adapted to the local environment and communal lifestyles. Collectively, these valorize the nature of craft in terms of localized, communal living and resilient production systems, identified from literature, which accords with the broad principles of sustainability.

In addition, Finding 4 from the field research (personal fulfilment and well-being) indicates that craft in the YRD supports self-fulfilment and is conducive to people's mental well-being through free control of, and commitment to, the making processes (Section 4.2.4.2). This, together with Findings 2 and 3, is fully consistent with the responsive and contextualized production and authentic sense of being (lifestyle) that are integral parts of holistic sustainability, as identified in Key Finding 1 from literature (craft-sustainability accordances).

Therefore, these three positive characteristics of craft in the YRD suggest that craft is consistent with the ethos of sustainability in terms of localized communal living, resilient

production system and an individually authentic sense of being.

According to Finding 6, though *traditional crafts* may represent significant traditions and sophisticated techniques, and they may be consistent with individual fulfilment and mental well-being, they are often out of step with the current time in terms of their outdated designs and lack of relevance to modern needs. Many of them are the result of intricate work produced through copying and repetition, with little change and innovation (Section 5.2.3.1). Therefore, these crafts face economic problems and difficulties in being passed down, even though they are frequently provided with government support in terms of training, subsidies and other favourable policies. The outdatedness of *traditional crafts* identified from the field research is consistent with the challenges identified in Key Finding 3 from literature in terms of lack of innovation and detachment from everyday life. This also consistent with the craft-sustainability contradiction identified in Key finding 2 from literature.

The manifestations of crafts investigated in the field reflect the opportunities identified in the literature: the 4 categories of YRD craft demonstrate that crafts in this region have many different features and forms of development (Findings 6-9 from the field). Most *traditional crafts*, though having outdated and changeless styles, are supported through the state's ICH initiatives in terms of training courses, designation of ICH inheritors, funding support, and favourable policies, such as, embroidery, woodcarving, oiled-paper umbrellas, traditional porcelain. In addition, many *modified crafts*, *innovative crafts* and *objets d'art* are produced through the collaboration between craft, design and art in various forms. Many of these three types of crafts are the continuation of, or innovation based on, long- and well-established crafts, such as, creative bronzewares, innovated bamboo umbrellas and contemporary porcelain, all of which were investigated in the field. These are generally consistent with the opportunities identified in Key Finding 3 from literature in terms of long-standing craft history, dynamic and interdisciplinary development, and top-down governmental support.

Difficulties in the passing down of craft knowledge and skills remain in

***traditional crafts* identified from the field:** as identified from literature, younger generations lack motivation and incentives to learn traditional crafts and choose it as a career option (see Challenges of Key Finding 3 from literature). This is still the case in the current craft sector of the YRD, especially in *traditional crafts*. Though traditional practices have a high spiritual value and the government has made great effort to support them through a series of ICH initiatives, few people are keen to pursue them as a career (Finding 6 from the field). In addition, widespread practice of offering ICH courses at schools demonstrates that introducing crafts to young generations is an important aspect of transmission (sec. 2.2.2.2). However, most of these courses at schools in fact become a formality in response to government request and inspection, because children are not that much interested and there lacks a systemic design of the curriculum for children to know about the crafts and arouse their interests (Finding 6 from the field).

A clear distinction between the craft sector and the makers community in the YRD: throughout the field research, none of the crafts investigated had relationship or collaborated with the makers community in the region. Meanwhile, the researcher has not collected any evidence showing that organizations of craft sector and of makers community had any collaborative project, conference or event. Although technology interventions have been used in some *innovative crafts* (Section 5.2.3.3-3), the people who made them were normally craftspeople themselves and sometimes with the help from, instead of makers community, the people in particular technology fields. In addition, when asking the craftspeople if they thought they were in any sense the same as the makers in the makers community, the researcher got all negative answers, as a Master responded to the question:

> *Makers (chuangke* in Chinese) *are very different from craftspeople. Makers mainly focus on science and technologies related industries like electronic, robots etc. Sometime, their work more related to DIY culture whereas we think we are doing some staff a bit more serious. We are quite different communities – they are very much forward-looking and don't do anything to do with traditional crafts and ICH; Most of makers are not interested in what we are doing. We do adopt new*

technologies in our crafts but seldom collaborate with them. (M5)

This confirms the finding from literature that there is a clear distinction between the craft sector who see craft more as Intangible Cultural Heritage and take a heritage conservation approach, and the makers community in the YRD who see craft merely as a spirit and a way of thinking for inspiring creativity in technology industries, free of any traditional context (Section 2.2.2.4). This clear distinction doesn't exist in the western countries, instead, the collaboration of these two communities is enhancing (e.g., a series of collaboration projects and events by UK Craft Council, Section 2.1.2.2). The distinction between these two parties is a special phenomenon of the YRD's craft landscape.

6.1.2.2 Disparities between findings from the field and from literature

Environmental uncertainty vs. originally perceived eco-friendly nature of traditional crafts: According to the positive and negative aspects of Finding 1, craft's environmental impact is uncertain. This is not fully consistent with findings from literature. Although crafts are generally perceived by people as being eco-friendly, Finding 1 from the field also shows that some crafts have a high environmental impact. For example, porcelain production has a high energy consumption and produces large amounts of emissions if the kilns are fueled by unclean and unrenewable energies such as wood or electricity generated from coal-powered stations. In addition, recent research on the red ceramics industry in north-eastern Brazil confirms this finding. It reports that porcelain production is of significant environmental concern to the local area (Abrahao and Carvalho, 2017). The results show that electricity and gas fuels produce a higher carbon footprint than wood fuel (ibid., p.315). However, this is different from opinions the researcher gained from the field. Many informants in the YRD of China hold the view that wood fuel would cause more environmental pollution than gas and electricity, though some were also aware of the emissions caused by processes fueled by gas and electricity. Therefore, it largely depends on the crafts, materials and processes being used. The contrasting views from the field analysis suggests that the environmental impact varies from one craft to another; a systematic inquiry is needed to secure a better understanding of the environmental impacts of

particular craft by scientifically and quantitatively reviewing its material and energy use, processes, product cycle and carbon footprints etc.; in addition, the understanding should be viewed rationally with a holistic consideration that also takes into account the influences of production volume, and the crafts' ethical and educational meanings. Nevertheless, compared to mass-produced industrial goods, craft industry keeps small batch production which has, generally speaking, a lower environmental impact.

Current manifestations of craft practices in the YRD vs. the lack of innovation and detachment from everyday life: first, crafts in the YRD of China are not necessarily lacking in innovation, cost-inefficient or economically unviable, as findings from literature suggest. As manifestations of *modified crafts*, *innovative crafts* and *objets d'art* show, many traditional crafts are modified and innovated so as to adapt to contemporary preferences; modern design helps raise perceived value of these crafts; digital technology is even applied to enhancing traditional weaving techniques and create platforms for marketing and promotion; art also play a role in revitalizing traditional crafts as some crafts are repurposed as gallery objects to satisfy high-end consumers' artistic interests. However, many of these innovations are strongly influenced by consumerism which seems problematic in terms of sustainability.

Second, literature analysis identifies that the innovation of product design and added-value creation through developing high-quality items and brands are especially lacking in the YRD, which was identified as one of the field research opportunities (Section 2.5.2). However, the reality in the YRD is that, except for some crafts (as in the category of *traditional crafts*), many crafts are undergoing significant innovation to serve the consumer market and culture with design. This includes new product development, packaging, branding, design information, the creation of points of sale, and art intervention such as developing art objects through artists working with craftspeople.

Low social status of craftspeople vs. social division among craftspeople: craftspeople in the YRD are no longer necessarily regarded as having a low social position. According to Finding 3 from the field data, the perceived social position of a

craftsperson is related to their profile and their wider recognition, especially official government recognition. For example, if they are recognized by the government as an "inheritor" of the ICH, or a Master of Chinese Arts and Crafts, they are highly regarded and receive social respect. However, unrecognized "regular" craftspeople are often regarded as "workers" who are employed by those who are recognized. This is especially prominent in the porcelain community of Jingdezhen. In addition, economic division due to this social division is also evidenced: high profile craftspeople have the advantage of promoting themselves in the market (Sections 4.2.2.5, 4.2.5.4).

6.1.2.3 Findings from the field in relationship to the four potential directions identified from literature

Four potential directions for moving crafts towards sustainability were identified from the discussion of findings from literature as opportunities for field research (Section 2.5.2):

1. Preserving traditional crafts through continuation of well-established practices
2. Revitalizing traditional crafts into everyday life
3. Addressing the problem of cost-efficiency through innovation and technologies
4. Raising perceived value of crafts and developing entrepreneurial skills

Findings from the field research are generally consistent with these directions. In the YRD, a number of *traditional crafts* that are deemed to have great cultural significance have been protected through the State's ICH programme (Sections 5.2.3.1). Meanwhile, crafts in the region are undergoing revitalization into everyday life and are used in contemporary culture, as represented by *modified, innovative* and *objets d'art* (Sections 5.2.3.2-5.2.3.4,). Crafts' perceived value in society and among the consumers has been significantly raised through official recognition of ICH (Sections 4.2.3.5, 4.2.4.1) and recognition in craft circles and wider social media (Sections 4.2.4.1,4.2.5.4), as well as through packaging, branding and marketing *of modified* and *innovative crafts* (Sections 5.2.3.2, 5.2.3.3), and through being raised up as *objets d'art* serving art purposes and the high-end gift market (Sections 5.2.3.4).

Direction 3 involves more complex issues. Some *modified crafts* in the field reduced

their costs through simplifying the processes or reducing the intricacy and labour through design (Section 5.2.3.2); many *innovative crafts* achieved cost-efficiency by designing new products, replacing with more economical materials, mechanization, and employing new technologies (Section 5.2.3.3). However, *innovative crafts* were criticized by some informants because the authenticity and craftsmanship were under question due to large-scale production and unthinking use of technologies. Furthermore, the balance between modern adaptation and tradition was identified as a tricky point that is hard to achieve in craft modification and innovation (5.2.3.2). All these suggest that improving cost-efficiency of crafts through innovation and technologies might reduce crafts' intrinsic values and authenticity. Though cost-efficiency is one of the problems to be dealt with if crafts are to be introduced into commercial field and everyday life, no strong evidence indicates that innovation and the use of technologies are a promising or the only approach to fulfilling this aim.

To seek appropriate and effective approaches of ensuring the sustainability of crafts in the region, these directions, especially 1, 3 and 4, will be explored in-depth in the next research phase.

6.1.3 New Findings

The comparison of the findings from the field and from literature in the preceding sections yielded three new findings which are named after Key Findings 1-3.

Key Finding 1 – While some crafts in the YRD have negative characteristics in terms of high environmental impact and socioeconomic polarization, there are five positive characteristics that offer an understanding of the nature of craft in the YRD:

- Environmental benefits and ethics
- Rich communal engagement/cohesion
- Consistent, distinctive and living culture
- Personal fulfilment and mental well-being
- High economic potential

The literature doesn't include a systemic understanding of the nature of craft in the YRD. The five positive characteristics represent five qualities people perceived in their crafts, which expands the understanding of craft to a specific context.

Key Finding 2 – The four categories of crafts characterize the range of crafts and contemporary craft practices in the YRD. *Traditional crafts*, *modified crafts*, *innovative crafts* and *objets d'art* all have different characteristics in terms of their processes and their resultant products, and they embody a variety of features and traits. Collectively, these four categories cover the general landscape of current craft practices in the YRD. While some traditional crafts are still in decline, many crafts in the region are undergoing significant revitalization into everyday life and transformation into commodities and arts. Within the three categories of *modified, innovative* and *objets d'art*, crafts in the YRD are to a varying degree commodified through modern and/or industrial design, branding, commercial promotions and art intervention. However, the fourth category, *traditional craft* practices, which represent long-established traditions and contain rich cultural meaning, generally cannot sustain themselves by merely relying on government support. Even though some traditional craftspeople gained entitlement and support through the state's ICH initiatives and local governmental subsidence, many traditional crafts still remain economically unviable, given that they are changeless in terms of design, modern sensibilities and contemporary needs.

There are different opinions in China's craft circle regarding the revitalization practice. Some informants held that to move crafts into everyday life through industrialization is inevitable otherwise they would die out sooner or later. In contrast, a highly accomplished ICH inheritor and master in the blue calico craft said the industrialization of blue calico craft through using screen printing had damaged the reputation of this craft which he had made great efforts to safeguard for decades. By referencing the positive characteristics (New Finding 1), it is not difficult to figure out why some traditional crafts remain unchanged and lack innovation: craftspeople who make these crafts regard the traditional way of doing things as essential, and care about what they mean and what they represent in terms of their history, identity and culture.

Given the different opinions on the crafts development and the revitalization practices of *modified, innovative* and *objets d'art crafts*, what are the appropriate approaches for ensuring the sustainability of traditional crafts in the region? To answer this research question, it requires a holistic and systematic appraisal of the current craft practices, especially the value and approaches of the four categories of crafts.

Key Finding 3 – Socio-economic inequality and polarization among craftspeople are evidenced in the YRD. Literature shows that craftspeople generally have a low social status, especially in China. However, Finding 3 from the field shows that the profile of craftspeople in the YRD has begun to rise in the last decade, but another issue has been raised concerning the division and polarization in the economic and social status among craftspeople. This is in part because government recognizes and supports some craftspeople while others are neglected, and those recognized craftspeople promote themselves by taking advantage of their titles, leaving their peers in a disadvantaged situation.

The craftspeople who were fully supported and economically better off normally were high- profile ICH inheritors. A large number of traditional craftspeople interviewed in the field research are still struggling with economic viability (.4.2.2.5, 4.2.5.4).

This finding of inequality among craftspeople is generally supported by the critiques in ICH heritage studies. UNESCO's convention of safeguarding ICH aims to protect cultural diversity and ensure equality and human rights (2003). Although China's ICH inheritor programme significantly contributes to the protection of ICH in China, the consequence of recognizing certain crafts and craftspeople contributes to inequality and elitism, which is contradictory to the original purposes of the ICH initiative. Some scholars in China also criticize this limitation and promote the idea of self-identification that has emerged in recent critical heritage studies (Liu, 2021). Therefore, this requires certain strategies or policies to ameliorate the problem.

6.2 Results of Analysis: Consistence, Disparities and New Findings

The analysis of the findings above shows that findings from the field are in part consistent with findings from literature, but there are similarities and disparities between them. Field research also produced some new findings which are not included in the findings from literature. These are summarized and presented in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3. Results of analysis of findings from field and literature

Findings from field consistent with findings from literature	
Findings from field	**Findings from literature**
1. Many of the characteristics of craft identified from field research are supported by the findings from literature in terms of:	
The characteristics of crafts in the YRD in Key finding 1 in terms of: • rich communal engagement • consistent, distinctive and living culture • personal fulfilment and well-being	**Craft-sustainability accordances in Key Finding 1:** • localized culture • communal living • authentic sense of being
2. Challenging aspects of crafts development till exist in some of the crafts of the YRD manifested as t*raditional crafts*:	
The manifestations of traditional crafts in Key Finding 2: • out of step with the times in design, use and taste, economically unviable, time-consuming	**Craft-sustainability contradictions in Key Finding 2:** • cost-inefficiency • economic unviability **The challenges identified in Key Finding 3:** • lack of innovation • detachment from everyday life
3. The manifestations of crafts investigated in the field echo the opportunities identified from the literature in terms of:	

The manifestations of crafts • *Modified crafts, innovative crafts* and *objets d'art* are produced through the collaboration between craft, design and art in various forms • Some of these crafts are the continuation of, or innovation based on, long- and well-established crafts • Many traditional ICH crafts are supported by government funds and policies	**Key Finding 3 from literature in terms of** • long-standing craft history, • dynamic and interdisciplinary development, • top-down governmental support
Findings from field contradict with findings from literature	
Findings from field	**Findings from literature**
1. Crafts are not necessarily as environmentally friendly as originally perceived	
The characteristics of crafts in the YRD in in terms of: • uncertainty of environmental impact	**Craft-sustainability accordance in Key Finding 1 in terms of:** • craft often perceptually described as eco-friendly (eco-effectiveness)
2. Except for t*raditional crafts*, current craft practices in the YRD are undergoing vibrant revitalization into everyday life, which is not consistent with the notions of lacking innovation and detachment from everyday life identified from literature	
Manifestations of *modified crafts, innovative crafts* and *objets d'art*: • innovative designs, transformation into commodities and arts, raising profile of craftspeople, raising perceived value through branding and commercial promotion, increasing cost-effectiveness through industrialization	**Craft-sustainability accordance in Key Finding 1 in terms of:** • irrelevance to modern life • low efficiency and high cost • economic unviability **The challenges identified in Key Finding 3 in terms of:** • lack of innovation • detachment from everyday life
3. Disparity in craftspeople's social status: highly regarded inheritors and masters vs. generally low social status of "regular" craftspeople	

The negative characteristics in terms of:	The challenges identified in Key Finding 3 in terms of:
• high social status of higher-level ICH inheritors (e.g. national, provincial and municipal levels) and recognized Masters of Crafts and Arts • low social standing of “regular” craftspeople (e.g. county level ICH inheritors and non-recognized ones)	• Generally low social status of craftspeople

New findings (Key Finding 1-3)	
1	While the crafts in the YRD have negative characteristics in terms of high environmental impact of some crafts and socioeconomic disparity, their five positive characteristics in terms of: environmental benefits and ethics; rich communal engagement/cohesion; continuation of distinctive and living culture; personal fulfilment and mental well-being; and high economic potential all provide a context-specific understanding of craft in the region.
2	The four categories of crafts characterize the range of crafts and contemporary craft practices in the YRD: while some traditional crafts in the YRD are still in decline, many crafts in the region are undergoing significant revitalization into everyday life and transformation into commodities and arts. In order to identify appropriate and effective approaches forward, it requires a holistic appraisal of the current craft practices, namely, the value and approaches of the four categories of crafts.
3	Socio-economic inequality and polarization among craftspeople are evidenced in the YRD, which requires certain strategies or policies to ameliorate the problem.

6.3 Discussion and Development

This section presents a discussion of the positive characteristics of crafts in the YRD in

relationship to literature and results in an initial outcome: a typology of craft values.

6.3.1 An Appraisal is Needed

Through the analysis of the findings in the foregoing sections, it is clear that many crafts in the YRD are no longer as out of step with present-day life and lacking in innovation as recorded in the literature. As *modified crafts, innovative crafts* and *objets d'art* demonstrate, some crafts are undergoing significant revitalization and commercial and artistic transformation. This tends to be fueled by consumer culture through modern and/or industrial design and art interventions. In addition, as more crafts are being revived and craftspeople have their status elevated, socio-economic inequality among crafts and craftspeople is evident and widening. This craft revival and its concomitant problems, to some extent, contradict the positive characteristics of the crafts of the region and indicate that some form of intervention is needed to ameliorate this growing area of concern.

On the one hand, as analysed in the previous section, the positive characteristics of crafts in the region display distinctive qualities that are generally consistent with the accordances of craft and sustainability. This suggests that the five positive characteristics can provide valuable references for developing context-based principles for evaluating and guiding crafts' development.

On the other hand, according to the negative aspects of characteristics of crafts, the tendency towards excessive production and consumption, as represented by some *innovative crafts*, will offset the benefit craft brings, and result in a high environmental impact. The socio-economic division and polarization among crafts and craftspeople, typically represented by *objets d'art*, will impede social equity and, hence, undermine their perceived rich communal benefits. Innovation without considering local context and culture would also potentially conflict with the two positive characteristics of craft – cultural consistency and distinctiveness, and mental well-being. These will eventually hinder crafts' sustainable development as a whole.

Therefore, the three negative aspects of crafts in the YRD require particular mediation

and intervention, and the four categories of crafts need to be appraised respectively to identify their specific pros and cons. However, prior to this, an exploration is necessary into what can be used to appraise the crafts and craft practices in the region.

"*Value*" and "*values*" are words frequently mentioned by informants. Mason states that values are "the qualities and characteristics seen in things, in particular the positive characteristics" (2002, p.7). The research findings of the five positive characteristics of crafts in the YRD show five qualities that people perceive in craft. This suggests a contextualized perspective for viewing values in craft and also offers an informative approach for assessing and directing crafts and craft practices in the region. Therefore, a systematic consideration of these positive characteristics within the context of value and sustainability is needed.

6.3.2 Values, Sustainability and the Positive Characteristics of Craft

The word "values" occurred frequently in the interviews and conversations during the field data collection, and is also discussed in literature on heritage to assess and direct the planning of heritage site protection, e.g. Marta de la Torre's (2002) work and the report of The Australian National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites on assessing value in cultural heritage (Australia ICOMOS, 2013). Informed by this, the researcher recognizes that the definition of values in craft that aligns with principles of sustainability is critical to our understanding of craft practices and their sustainable potential; this is because it affects whether the values inherent in crafts are enhanced or diminished, and whether design intervention can be steered by context-related values. In order to do this, it is necessary to identify what particular values a craft contains.

Findings from literature (Section 2.3.4) show that sustainability is reflected in four key concepts:

1. Eco-effectiveness (environmental benefits and ethics, Section 4.2.1),

2. Cosmopolitan localization (distinct local origin, place-specific, keeping up with the times, Section 4.2.3),
3. Resilience of self-production systems (place-based local production, Section 4.2.2)
4. Authentic lifestyle/being (personal fulfilment and mental well-being, Section 4.2.4).

These four concepts are, to certain degree, consistent with some attributes of the characteristics of craft in the YRD (see Section 4.3, Table 4.7), as annotated in the brackets above. In addition, crafts contain high communal values such as “collective endeavour”, “sense of belonging”, “sense of unity and cohesion”, “occupational ethics and behavioural norms” (Section 4.2.2); crafts in the YRD also have high economic potential as a type of cultural asset and capital enabled by the state’s powerful ICH initiatives and creative industries (Section 4.2.5.2). This proves that some characteristics of craft in the YRD conform to principles of sustainability, which define the values a craft contains that lead to sustainable transformation. However, initially, it is necessary to clarify what the term “values” means.

Values are multiple and diverse, and “produced out of the interaction of an artefact and its contexts; they don’t emanate from the artefact itself” (Mason, 2002, pp.8,10). The notion of values is widely discussed in relation to the conservation of heritage sites, and this literature provides a useful reference. Aesthetic, historical, evidential, and communal values are categories used by English Heritage (2008). While terms such as historical, aesthetic, scientific, social, spiritual and communal values are most often used in heritage conservation (Mason, 2002 p.285). UNESCO (2009b) categorizes the value of ICH into social, economic and commercial dimensions, in which the economic value is divided into direct and indirect. Direct economic value includes: for own consumption, for consumption by others, and for commercial use, e g., traditional medicines, tourists attending an event, and trade of crafts. In contrast, indirect economic value includes skill and knowledge.

Bowman and Ambrosini (2003) propose three levels of recognized meanings of values:

financial, utility and symbolic. These can be attributed to both tangible and intangible assets, (Ernst and Young LLP, 2013). Values are measured not only quantitatively (financial and tangible), but also qualitatively (utility and intangible), which includes four overlapping areas: functional utility (what the product does); economic utility (how much it costs); social effectiveness (how much contribution it makes to social equality and stability); and emotional implication (how it makes people feel and think) (Bowman and Ambrosini, 2003, p.6).

In addition, the concept of value in many cases, especially in sustainable ecosystem services, as Silvertown argues (2015, p.645), has its roots in economic thought which emphasizes “quantifying the ‘value’”, i.e. the classification of value in some frameworks is for effectively assessing the economic influence. Lenzerini (2011) also argues that the main significance of ICH rests “not on its qualities, but rather on the degree of significance it has for its creators and bearers” (p.110). Informed by this, the researcher tends to identify the value dimensions of craft by its significance instead of by quantifying it.

6.3.3 An Initial Typology of Craft Values

All the elements of value and sustainability discussed above reflect to a varying degree the positive characteristics of craft:

- Environmental benefits and ethics (related to tangible and utility, either quantitative and qualitative values)
- Communal engagement and cohesion (related to intangible and qualitative values)
- Cultural consistency, distinctiveness, and vitality (related to intangible, qualitative values)
- Personal fulfilment and mental well-being (related to intangible, highly qualitative values)
- Economic potential (related to tangible and utility, quantitative values)

According to a constrasting dimension in terms of *intrinsic* vs*. extrinsic,* the values of

craft in terms of cultural, communal and personal spiritual that are related to tradition, customs, community, beliefs, identity, etc are *intrinsic* values. These intrinsic values also emphasize order, self-restriction, preservation of the past, and resistance to change, which is more conservational. The *extrinsic* values in terms of economic and environmental values can be largely affected by external forces of stimulation, technologies, material science, trends, business models etc, which are more open to change. Finally, the values pertaining to craft are classified into five categories within contrasting dimensions of extrinsic and intrinsic in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4. The values of craft

Values pertaining to craft		
Extrinsic	**Environmental value**	Practical eco-benefits: renewable and recyclable resources, eco-processes and production Eco-ethics/wisdom: high-quality, slow-consumption, reverence to nature and materials
	Economic value	Make a living, commercial use, heritage assets/capital
Intrinsic	**Communal value**	Sharing, responsibility to pass on skills, social equality, community building and cohesion, social norms and customs
	Local-cultural value	Distinctiveness, sense of identity, local know-how and tradition, cultural continuity, slowly changing instead of static
	Personal-spiritual value	Personal fulfilment: external affirmation, sense of pride Mental well-being: creativity, freedom, curiosity, sense of being

The intrinsic values

As the characteristics show, the two major values of the intrinsic dimension are: communal quality in terms of collectiveness, equality and cohesion; and cultural quality in terms of distinct tradition, local know-how, continuity and vitality. As the characteristic of personal fulfilment and mental well-being shows, craft represents an engaged mode of working that can bring the maker mental satisfaction as well as a sense of pride and responsibility to pass on one's practice. This is consistent with the findings from

literature that craft has existential meaning for makers in terms of an authentic sense of being through engaged making and creative freedom (Section 2.1.3). This is an intrinsic value of craft, a value that is universal in craft practices worldwide. Unlike craft's extrinsic values, some scholars argue (e.g. Mason, 2002) that craft's intrinsic values are hard to measure, but can be defined and evaluated.

The extrinsic values

The two extrinsic characteristics of craft in the YRD – practical environmental benefits, and economic potential – represent the domains of environmental and economic values, which are more physical and practical and can be measured. The finding reveals that crafts are generally perceived as having a low environmental impact, but this is not necessarily the case, which suggests a need for a close examination of particular crafts when assessing a craft's environmental value.

In addition, environmental value also contains a relatively intangible aspect that is beyond its measurable practical benefits; some ecological tradition and wisdom in Chinese craft practices promotes durability of and people's emotional attachment to the objects and materials (Section 4.2.1.5). Likewise, the finding also indicates that the intangible dimensions in terms of culture and tradition could affect people's behaviour and support environmentalist thinking, as a supporter stated:

> *Though crafts are not necessarily eco-friendly, since some crafts are made out of non-renewable materials and their processes are energy-consuming. The major value of traditional crafts, I think, lies in the intangible aspects of culture, tradition and eco-wisdom (human-environment harmony) they convey. Those cultures and beliefs will in turn influence our attitude towards our planet* (S18).

This further implies that the five values of craft cannot be assessed in isolation. To evaluate the environmental benefit of a craft, it needs to be considered in a system involving its cultural, communal and personal-spiritual values, which can trigger sustainable behavioural change.

The diagram of the initial typology of craft values

Considering their interdependent and interrelated relationship of these five values, the structure of their relationships is presented in Figure 6.1.

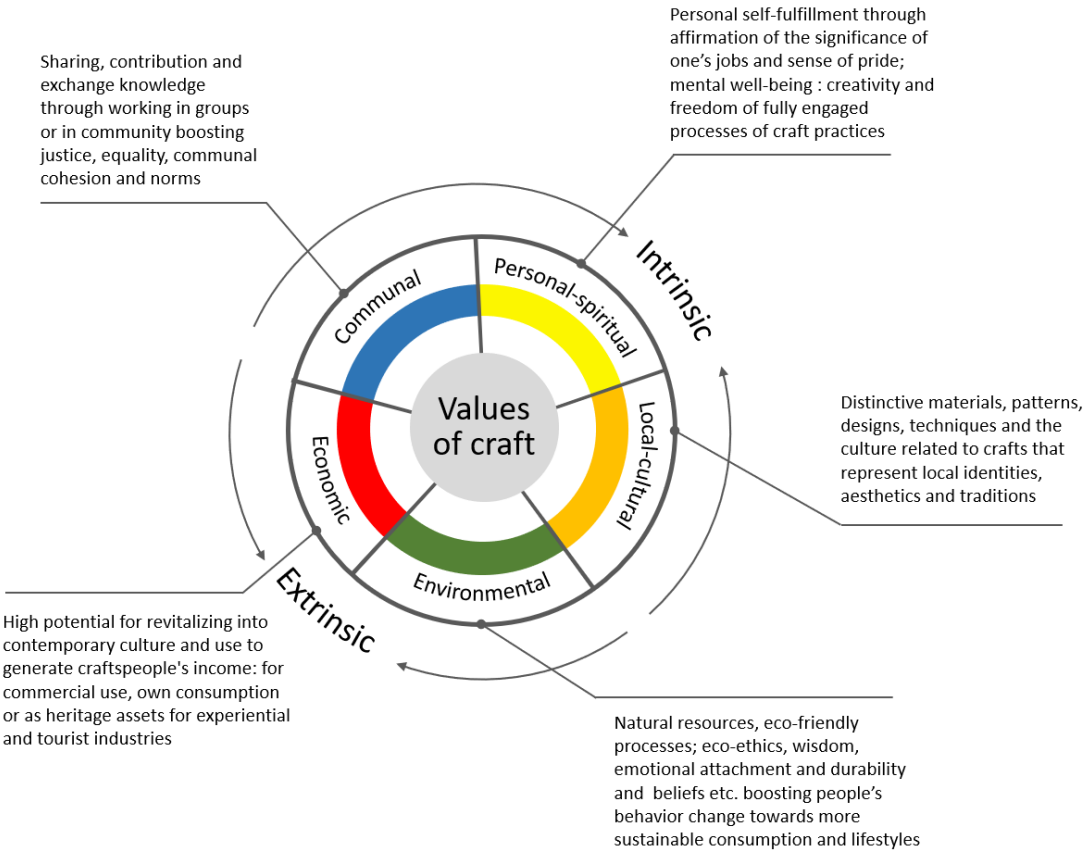

Figure 6.1. The initial typology of craft values presented in a circle

As indicated in Figure 6.1, these five values are not fixed and do not necessarily conflict with each other. They represent the core qualities that craft can contribute to contemporary sustainability. They are also critical to the contemporary understanding of sustainability that recognizes the importance of the natural environment, community, localization, individual well-being and spiritual flourishing, and economic viability (e.g. the QBL by Walker, 2014; and Flourishing by Ehrenfeld and Hoffman, 2013).

6.4 Chapter Summary and the Next Step

This chapter presents an analysis of findings from the field in relationship to findings from literature and identifies three new findings which expand the findings from

literature to the Chinese context and adds to existing knowledge. Through discussing the positive characterises of craft identified from the YRD in relationship with the notion of "values" in literature, an initial typology of craft values as an understanding and appraisal tool is developed. The following paragraphs summarize the new findings, the outcome, and recommendations for the next step.

6.4.1 New Findings (Key Findings 1-3) Adding to Knowledge

Three Key Findings identified in this chapter.

1. **Five positive characteristics of crafts** in terms of environmental benefits and ethics, rich communal engagement/cohesion, continuation of distinctive and living culture, personal fulfilment and mental well-being, and high economic potential provide a context-specific understanding of craft in the YRD
2. **Four craft categories** are identified as the embodiment of crafts in the YRD: *traditional, modified, innovative,* and *objets d'art*: while some *traditional crafts* are still in decline, many crafts in the YRD are undergoing significant revitalization into everyday life and transformation into commodities and arts through developments in product lines, designs, processes, packaging and branding.
3. **Socio-economic inequality and polarization** among crafts and craftspeople are evident in the YRD: high social status of higher-level ICH inheritors (e.g. national and/or provincial level) and renowned MCA masters; low social standing of "regular" craftspeople (e.g. municipal, county level ICH inheritors and/or non-recognized ones).

6.4.2 The Outcome (named after Outcome 1)

An initial typology of craft values – derived from the synthesis of the positive characteristics of craft and related literature on value and sustainability, can provide criteria to examine craft practices, and serve as principles for guiding their sustainable development and design interventions. A provisional version of the typology of craft values is summarized in Table 6.4 and presented in Figure 6.1.

New findings in terms of Key Findings 1-3 and the outcome identified in this chapter

show that people in the YRD perceive significant qualities in their crafts in terms of environmental, communal, local-cultural, personal-spiritual and economic values. Meanwhile, some crafts in the YRD have been undergoing a significant revitalization into everyday life dominated by creative industries and consumerism, such as the categories of *objets d'art, innovative crafts* and *modified crafts*. However, some *traditional crafts* are declining. Though many crafts in the region show great economic potential, the socio-economic polarization and inequality among crafts and craftspeople are widening. This chapter identifies new findings from the field that contribute to knowledge and develops an initial typology of craft values that can be used as framework for understanding and appraise crafts in the region.

6.4.3 The Next Step

New findings and the outcome identified in this chapter initially highlight a values-based approach to informing sustainable craft practices in the YRD. In order to further this understanding and explore effective interventions, further study through participatory research on a particular case is needed to understand particular value contexts, test the typology of craft values, and develop context-based strategies.

The initial typology of craft values identified in this chapter will be explored further in the following in-depth case study on the porcelain production in Jingdezhen. The typology will be used to develop protocols for the case study and will at the same time be tested in the process.

FIELD DATA ACQUISITION AND ANALYSIS – PHASE II

Chapter 7. An In-depth Case Study on Porcelain Making in Jingdezhen

Chapter 6 contributes to the development of *an initial typology of craft values* which can serve as framework for understanding the values of the makers and the relevance of these values to the kinds of work they do. The typology includes environmental, local-cultural, communal, personal-spiritual, and economic values. To test and further the understanding of these craft values and develop context-based proposals for ensuring the sustainability of crafts, an in-depth case study of porcelain crafts in Jingdezhen was conducted. This chapter presents the field research from this study. It consists of the case study's site, methods and data collection (7.1); data analysis and results (7.2); discussion and findings (7.3); and chapter summary (7.4).

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this case study is to understand craft practices and review the initial *typology of craft values* in a real craft community, identifying particular issues and developing situated proposals for ensuring the sustainability of craft practices.

The objectives of this study were:

1) To conduct a scoping activity using methods drawn from ethnography in order to understand the current practice of porcelain production in the community;

2) To contextualize a meaningful values-based approach among participants through sense-making;

3) Based on the findings from 1) and 2) above, to facilitate a co-creation workshop in order to co-develop context-based propositions for ensuring the sustainability of the values in crafts and craft practices;

4) To test the proposition gained from the co-creation workshop and further generate insights including design's contribution in practice.

7.1 The Case Study Site, Methods and Data Collection

This section presents the case study site, research design and methods, and the details of research implementation and data collection.

7.1.1 The Study Site: Jingdezhen

Like Delft in The Netherlands and Stoke-on-Trent in England, Jingdezhen is China's centre of ceramic production and is widely known as the "capital of Chinese porcelain". High-quality ceramics have been made here since the 10th century and the distinctive blue and white "Willow Pattern" was produced here and exported to Europe in large quantities during the 17th and 18th centuries (Gillette, 2016).

Jingdezhen is situated at the lower end of the Yangtze River where the inland Changjiang river runs through the city and has been sustaining the porcelain industry for over 2,000 years (Dillon, 1992). The central area of Jingdezhen comprises two districts: Zhushan district where the old heritage sites, workshops and traditional market are located, and Changjiang district with most of the newly built museums, creative parks, markets and avenues where expos are held. The central area covers 422 km^2 with a population of approximately 473,560[1] (Figure 7.1).

(See next page)

1 Data available at: http://www.jdztjj.gov.cn/, date to 2016.

Figure 7.1. Location of Jingdezhen

7.1.2 The Case Study's 4-Stage Research Activity

Based on the initial findings and outcome from the previous phase of research in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, the in-depth case study on porcelain production in Jingdezhen is centred on craft's values. The case study was carried out using a participatory action research approach (Simonsen and Robertson, 2013) as identified in the Methodology chapter (Section 3.3.3).

To realize the objectives, the research was designed in four stages: ethnography, sense-making, co-creation workshop, and practice-based experimental project. In the ethnography stage, conducted in September and December 2017, unstructured interviews and observations were used to understand the background and context of porcelain production and the issues facing the porcelain community (Stage 1 in Table 7.1). Participatory action research methods were employed in the latter three stages conducted in November-December 2018 (Stages 2-4 in Table 7.1).

Table 7.1. Four stages of the field research

Stages	Objectives	Results
1 Ethnography unstructured interviews, participant observations	To understand the current context of porcelain production in the community in order to identify its scope and develop protocols for the following stages.	• The resurgence of traditional porcelain making • Initial concept of key producers
2 Sense-making interviews contextualized interviews with 11 participants aided by the tools based on the typology of craft values	To make sense of values in relationship to sustainability with participants, and gain their perceptions and values priorities	• Initial findings on makers' values perceptions and priorities
3 Co-creation workshop conducted with 16 participants supported by predesigned templates	Building on the preceding stages, to co-develop a situated proposition for ensuring the sustainability of the values in porcelain crafts	• Four groups of key producers • Makers' values perceptions and priorities • Problems and challenges • An "immersive making" proposition
4 Practice-based experimental project conducted with an invited group of six creatives and local artisans.	To test the proposition gained from the workshop and further develop insights and strategies.	• Building relationships through engaging in immersive practices as strategy to create shared notion of craft values • Design's role in facilitating immersive practices and relationship building

7.1.3 Participants

In line with this type of qualitative research aimed at gathering socially and culturally rich data, a small-medium sample size was sought to have in-depth engagement (Cohen et al., 2013). A mixture of purposive and opportunity sampling informed the recruitment of participants. The researcher conducted desk research, personal visits to Jingdezhen, and informal interviews with the aim of identifying a suitable sample of participants motivated to be involved in the study. The participants chosen were professionals who are directly involved in porcelain industry for an average of fifteen years. There are twenty-one participants in total including eleven informants who also

took part in the semi-structured interviews. These twenty-one participants fall into five groups, namely, Artisans/masters, Artists, Designers, Researchers and Supporters (see Appendix C2).

The ethnography stage involved eighteen interviewees (six Artisans/masters, four Artists, two Designers, two Researchers and four Supporters from research and development organizations). The sense-making stage was focused on nine producers and two supporters, including four Artisans/masters, Three artists, two Designers and four Supporters. Nine out of the eleven participants in the sense-making stage also took part in the co-creation workshop, together with another seven participants. The workshop involved sixteen stakeholders (three Artisans/masters, four Artists, two Designers, four Supporters from development and research organizations and three Researchers). Finally, the practice-based experimental project was attended by two teams of six participants (each group comprised one Artisan/master and two Designers and/or Artists). Both teams made the major parts of the work with some occasional assistance from other specialist artisans when particular skills were needed (e.g. mould making, trimming, etc.). Details of the sampling used for the in-depth case study are provided in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2. Participants of the in-depth case study

Stages	Participants
Ethnography	Multidisciplinary stakeholders working in porcelain industry of Jingdezhen (18): 6 Artisans/master (M1-M6), 4 Artists (Aa-Ad), 2 Designers (Da-Db), 2 Researchers (R29, Ra) and 4 Supporters (S15, S20-S22)
Sense-making interviews	Porcelain producers (9): 4 Artisans/masters (M1, M2, M4, M6), 3 Artists (Aa, Ab, Ad) and 2 Designers (Da, Db); Supporters (2) from regional research and development organizations (S15, Sa)
Co-creation workshop	Sixteen stakeholders (18): 3 Artisans/masters (M2, M4, M6) 4 Artists (Aa, Ab, Ad, Ae), 2 Designers (Da Db), 4 Supporters (S15, S20, S22, Sa) and 3 Researchers (R29, Ra, Rb)
Practice-based experimental project	Two teams of participants (6): Team 1: 1 Artisan/master (M2), 1 artist and 1 designer (Ad and Da) Team 2: 1 Artisan/master (M4), 2 ceramic artists (Ae and Af)

7.1.4 The Case Study's Research Stages

The aim of the initial ethnography stage is to understand the current context of porcelain production in the community in order to identify its scope and develop protocols for the following stages. Anthropological methods (Salvador et al., 1999), in the form of unstructured interviews and observations, were used with eighteen interviewees. These methods were also accompanied by field notes and comments (Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2. Unstructured interviews in the ethnography stage

Sense-making (Klein et al., 2006) was used to get to know how different producers and stakeholders (i.e. Artisan/masters, Artists, Designers and Supporters) understand the values of craft and their relationship with sustainability. This was conducted through contextual interviews supported with a few prompt cards when necessary (see Appendix E1) in the workspaces of two supporters and nine porcelain producers, where materials, tools and environmental settings were also used as prompts to trigger a comprehensive dialogue around the values of their work (Figure 7.3). The five values of the typology of craft were used to design the prompt cards to trigger responses and inform a generation of concepts.

Figure 7.3. Sense-making interviews

A co-creation workshop (Stickdorn and Schneider, 2011) was conducted with sixteen participants as an act of collective creativity (Sanders and Stappers, 2008), which was held at Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute on 2nd December 2018 (Figure 7.4), following the schedule outlined in Appendix E2. The goal of the workshop was to co-develop a situated proposition for achieving the sustainability of values in craft collaboration and practices that include five consecutive activities. The workshop also includes an independent activity following the co-creation session with the aim of validating and evaluating the four categories of crafts developed in Chapter 5.

The researcher, acting as facilitator, guided the discussion and gained the participants' inputs with tools in the form of six progressive templates. The tools used in the workshop were adopted and adapted from various resources for the purposes of this research (Table 7.3). A copy of the templates is presented in Figure 7.5.

The workshop started with a fifteen-minute presentation given by the researcher, providing some background information and initial findings in terms of a values-based typology and four categories of crafts. Meanwhile, the outcomes of the former research stages (i.e. ethnography and sense-making) were summarized to build on the participants' preceding contributions to the study. The participants were divided into four independent groups ranging from three-five people. They were invited to briefly introduce themselves and their expertise, establishing a basis for discussion and collaboration. The data from the workshop were then developed into an initial

proposition in terms of "*creating a shared value through "immersive" making*" which emphasizes an optimized model of collaboration.

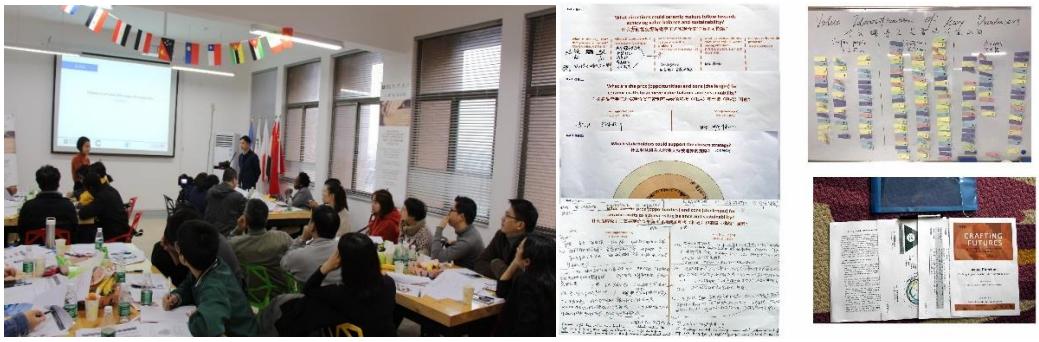

Figure 7.4. The co-creation workshop and sample of raw data collected

Table 7.3. Tools used for the co-creation workshop

Tools	Adapted from	Purposes
Introductory presentation	N.A.[2]	To communicate a shared understanding of the initial findings
Producers' map	Cicero, 2016	To identify the types of key porcelain makers
Values identification	N.A.	To identify the values priorities of different producers
Challenges and opportunities	N.A.	To identify key issues and translate them into opportunity areas for intervention
Collaboration direction	IDEO, 2015	To reframe the problem into a direction to follow
Collaboration strategy	Mazzarella, 2018	To outline a strategy for enhancing a shared understanding of values among different makers
Values-based appraisal tool (independent session)	Chapter 6	To appraise the values engaged in the four categories of crafts

[2] N.A.: not available.

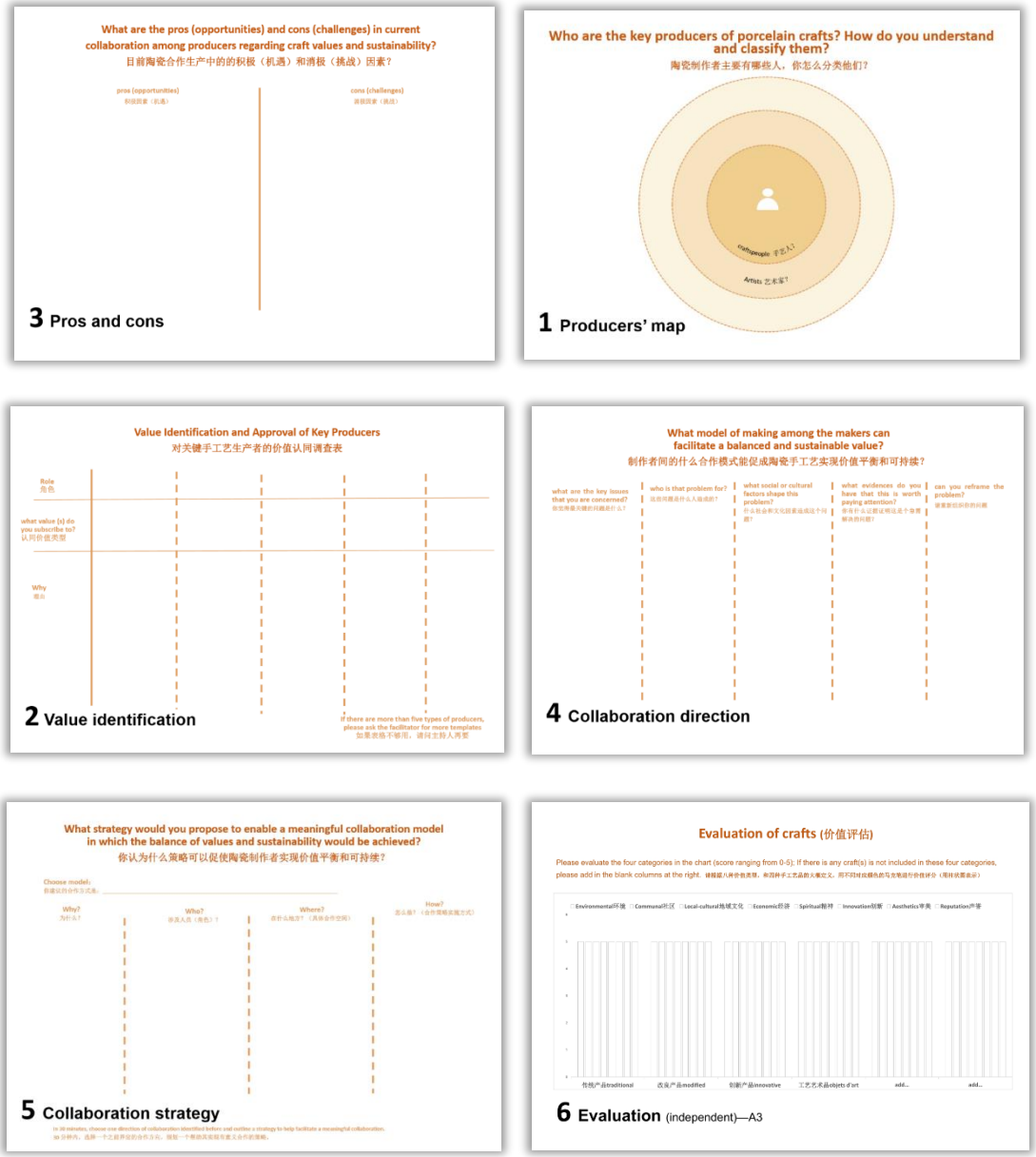

Figure 7.5. A copy of the templates used for the co-creation workshop (printed on A3 sheets)

As an act of both validation and generation, a practice-based project was employed to test the proposition gained from the preceding stages, and to develop further strategies and insights. The project was conducted with an invited group of artists, designers and local artisans, majority of whom had attended the sense-making activity and the co-creation workshop. The group was subdivided into two teams according to participants' interests. Each team was made up of two designers/artists and one local artisan. Team 1 (Figure 7.6 *left*) developed their making project through a strong-tie collaboration with the local master in their team, whereas Team 2 (Figure 7.6 *right*) developed their

project through a weak-tie collaboration with their artisan teammate and also ordered services from other specialist artisans when necessary. Team 1 made a series of ceramic vases and Team 2 made ceramic lighting. The goals, contents and form of the collaborative project for both teams originated from the participants' current working schedules and plans, and were based on their collective agreement. The project was conducted mainly at the large studio of Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute (JCI), and Master Zhan's (M2) ceramic center when necessary (Figures 7.6-7.7). The detail regarding the profiles and motivations of the participants and the outputs of the projects are presented in Table 7.4 and the following paragraph.

Figure 7.6. *(left*) Practice-based project Team 1; (*right*) practice-based project Team 2

Figure 7.7. (*left*) Practice-based project – draft discussion; (*right*) clay kneading and preparation

Table 7.4. Detail of the teams and participants in the practice-based project

Participant	**Profile**	**Motivation for participation**
Team 1 includes M2 Ad and Da. all the three participants attended the previous activities of sense-making and co-creation workshop, who agreed to take part in the project.		
Master (M2)	M2 is a locally based technique master who has over 20 years' experience in traditional ceramic throwing and decoration. He is also the owner of a ceramic training centre.	Participants of Team 1 had collaborated with each other before and had built a relatively close relationship, since Ad and Da used to ask the master for help in throwing and decoration. At the time of being, the artist (Ad) and the designer planned to make a series of work for the 2019 International Ceramic Exhibition in Liling, Hunan province. They had already negotiated and planned to make a series of vases together for the exhibition. They invited the master to form the team and make joint-authored work.
Artist (Ad)	Ad is a ceramic artist from Kenya who has been living in Jingdezhen and doing her PhD at Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute (JCI) for nearly 2 years. Ad has also previously worked with local artisans.	
Designer (Da)	Da is a ceramic designer from northern China who has a background of design and have been living in Jingdezhen for over 7 years. She is also doing a PhD in design at the JCI.	
Team 2 includes M4, Ae and Af. M4 has participated in the previous activities of sense-making and co-creation workshop; Ae has participated in the co-creation workshop; Af has participated in none of the previous activities. Ae and Af was recruited later since the two participants who previously agreed to take part in the project withdrew. Team 2 also sought help from a modeling artisan and a firing artisan.		
Artisan (M4)	M4 is a local ceramic artisan specialized in throwing and carving who has worked in the field for over 15 years.	Participants of Team 2 had not known each other previously. Before the researcher reached out for him, the artist (Ae) already had an intention to make ceramic lighting for the institute's creation show and planned to hire local artisans to do modelling and decoration work. Artist Af was invited by Ae because Ae could contribute to the decoration of the work with her expertise in illustration art. The artisan (M4) was asked by the
Artist (Ae)	Ae is a recognized ceramic artist from Uganda who has been living in Jingdezhen as a PhD student for nearly 2 years. Ae has a good knowledge of local craft and culture and have experience of working with local artisans. He is also a member of International Academy of Ceramics.	

Artist (Af)	Af is an artist from Russia who specializes in illustration and has been living in Jingdezhen for ca. 1 year as a visiting student of JCI.	researcher to take part in the project and agreed to be paid at daily basis. In addition, Team 2 also ordered small part of modelling and trimming service from other local artisans.

The project was conducted in December when it is not a good time for porcelain making. Due to the limitation of time and weather, the teams had not completed their works within the week. Both teams continued working on their projects but with different results: Team 1 finished a series of vases one week after the planned project closed, and Team 2 also continued but failed to produce expected output due to the failure of firing process. The researcher, who has a background in design, played the role of observer at this stage but deliberately withheld her role as researcher from the participants. Observation, conversation and field notes were used to collect data during the one-week project. This practice-based project was meant to further investigate the ways of collaboration, and discover in-depth the approaches to overcome tensions. Therefore, it is important to highlight that this project is not meant to focus on porcelain products themselves, but on capturing insights on the collaboration activities between the creatives and craftspeople.

7.1.5 Data Collection and Thematic Coding

Throughout the four stages of research activities described above, data were collected through multiple methods involving unstructured interviews, contextualized interviews and participant observations with multiple tools including audio recordings, field notes and notes on the given templates as well as photos. After a synthesized processing, the data were thematically analysed.

Most of the themes emerged through a data-driven inductive process, drawing on the researcher's experience to develop codes (Robson, 2002), except for the data collected from sense-making interviews. The five values of the *typology* of craft values (i.e. the local-cultural, communal, environmental, economic, and personal-spiritual values) were used as *a priori* themes to analyse the data collected from the sense-making interviews on the

makers' perceptions of values. Some data that cannot fit into these values categories was coded into "other values". The "other values" consist of three subthemes in terms of "openness/innovation", "aesthetics/artistry" and "reputation/aspiration". These terms adapted from the values tool developed in the Live Design project (Walker et al., 2019). For the co-creation workshop, each template was also used to guide the data analysis. The coding systems for the four research stages are presented in Tables 7.5-7.8. The results of the analysis are organized into seven major themes and presented in Section 7.3.

Table 7.5. Coding system for data collected through ethnography

Themes	Subthemes/descriptions
The resurgence of traditional porcelain making	• Production in the era of state-owned factories • Small private specialist workshops rebuilt • Creatives attracted to Jingdezhen • A deconstructed industrial model of making • The landscape of the deconstructed industry
Four types of porcelain makers	• Artisans/masters • Traditional artists • Contemporary artists • Ceramic designers

Table 7.6. *A priori* coding system used for the thematic analysis of the data collected through sense-making

Themes	**Subthemes**	
Local-cultural value	• Place and identity • Tradition/ lifestyle • Distinctiveness • Consistency	
Personal-spiritual value	• Inner fulfilment • Self-expression • Affirmation	
Economic value	• Livelihood • Economic prosperity • Cultural capital	
Communal value	• Responsibility • Collaboration/cohesion • Creating employment • Sharing/contribution	
Environmental value	• Eco-materiality • Environmental ethics	
Other values	• Innovation/openness	Improvement, novelty and changes; new possibilities; openness to new technologies
	• Aesthetics/artistry	Traditional aesthetics; contemporary aesthetics
	• Reputation/aspiration	Raising profile; branding, enhancing popularity, promoting craft as intelligent work
Data on the five themes above were modelled into a diagram based on frequency and their nature		
• Value perceptions and priorities of porcelain makers		

Table 7.7. Coding system for data collected from the co-creation workshop

Themes	Descriptions
Challenges and opportunities	• Six subthemes on the challenges emerged according to frequency • Six subthemes on the opportunities emerged according to frequency
Collaboration direction	Genuine collaboration • creating a genuine collaboration • reactivating traditions and skills, • building an equal community • nurturing mutual respects
Collaboration strategy	“Immersive making” proposition • engaging in immersive practices • creating empathetic space • facilitating meaningful on-site making • boosting collective creativity
The appraisal of crafts (independent session)	An evaluation made by the workshop participants

Table 7.8. Coding system for data collected through the practice-based project

Themes	Descriptions
Building relationships as a strategy to create shared values	Building a relationship • between people and place through immersion in the locale • between local craftspeople and contemporary creatives through a dialogical negotiation • between tradition and modernity through facilitating meaningful co-design/making Blurring space between life and work • through residence projects

7.2 Data Analysis and Results

Data were thematically analysed using mapping and visualization. The section consists of seven themes and their corresponding subthemes.

7.2.1 The Resurgence of Traditional Porcelain Making

The thousand-year-long traditional skills and processes of ceramic making in Jingdezhen have been revived and reactivated during the past ca. twenty-five years

since the state-owned factories were shut down in the 1990s (not long after the economic reform and opening-up of China in 1978).

> *This resurgent trend was further bolstered recently by the government's promotion policies and the nation's enthusiasm for Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) since 2003. However, before the inception and vigorous promotion of the ICH initiative, Jingdezhen had an autonomous revival of traditional skills* (An expert in ceramic culture).

The following paragraphs present the five subthemes relating to this resurgence.

7.2.1.1 Production in the era of state-owned factories (1950s-1990s)

An expert on ceramic culture informed the researcher that porcelain production in Jingdezhen had been developed into a sophisticated division of skills long before the Ming Dynasty (1573-1620).[3] However, the complex making processes became industrialized during the era of state-owned factories from the 1950s to the 1990s (Fang, 2015), when there were more than ten major state-owned factories in Jingdezhen. Each factory specialized in particular products or artworks, e.g. the Sculpture Porcelain Factory produced artworks ranging from religious statues to modern decorations; the Guangming Porcelain Factory specialized in blue and white porcelain and everyday products decorated with the rice-pattern (Wang, 2014).

Each factory had a full complement of different specialist artisans and masters. Traditional techniques and processes had been standardized and centralized. In many cases, state-sanctioned experts or artists designed the drafts and gave specifications before the designs were put into production. The making was basically a linear process of modern industrial production. Traditional artisans were employed as ceramic workers

3 According to the Chinese classic "*The Works of Heaven and the Inception of Things"* by Song Yingxing (1587-1666), a piece of porcelain was made through "72 processes of sophisticated division". The expert said that before Song, there was no clear and systematic record in literature on the skill division of porcelain making, and Song wrote the book during the reign of Emperor Wanli in the Ming Dynasty (1573-1620). Therefore, he believed that a mature division of skills in porcelain production took place before that period.

who remained at individual benches doing their specialized jobs (Figure 7.8).

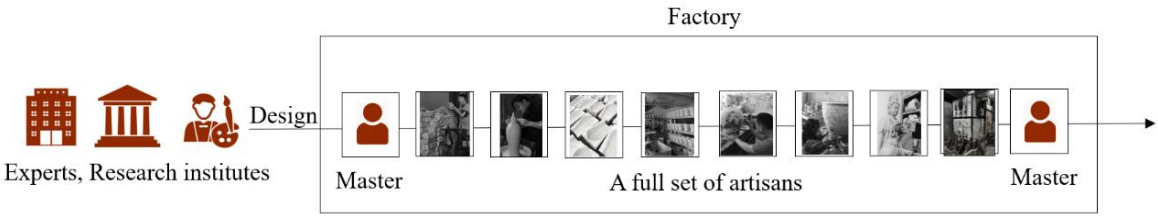

Figure 7.8. A state-owned factory production model

7.2.1.2 Small private workshops rebuilt after the closure of state-owned factories

Since the middle of the 1990s when the state-owned factories were shut down, centralized mass production in large state-owned factories has been deconstructed and autonomously rebuilt into numerous small, private, specialist workshops by the artisan workers scattered around the old-factory sites and villages. According to synthesized data and observation, the porcelain workshops in contemporary Jingdezhen fall into eight main categories according to their major processes: 1) clay production, 2) throwing, 3) slip casting, 4) mould making, 5) sculpture, 6) carving, 7) painting, and 8) kilns. Artists and designers choose different workshops to collaborate with according to their needs. These workshops focused on one or more process and didn't require a large amount of capital to start up. Over ten thousand independent private workshops and enterprises had been established in the town by 2014 (Wang, 2014). Figure 7.9 shows examples of the small private workshops.

> *Due to the flexibility and compatibility of the model of small batch production, and its low demand of investment, the traditional skills have been retrieved and revived in these workshops through reiterative experiments* (S15).

Figure 7.9. A carving workshop (*left*); A throwing/trimming workshop *(right)*

7.2.1.3 Creatives attracted to Jingdezhen

There are both historical and modern buildings and infrastructures in Jingdezhen, but the city is not as accessible as other developed cities in China. Until the modernization of China's transport system, the only way to travel there was by boat or road; and there were no high-speed trains from Shanghai or Hangzhou until December 2017.[4] A ceramic master commented that, as a consequence, this made Jingdezhen,

> *…Relatively closed and kept its original production of porcelain industry, uninfluenced by the outside rapidly changing world*. (M5)

Despite this geographical inconvenience, the highly skilled artisans and their workshops have attracted many creatives, including artists and designers, from other places. Nearly three thousand people have moved to Jingdezhen from larger Chinese cities and other countries (Wei and Zhu, 2019). They are called "*jingpiao*", literally "Jingdezhen drifters", who have migrated to Jingdezhen from the place they originally came from; most are artists, young ceramists and designers, including some foreign

4 There was no high-speed train to Jingdezhen during the period when the researcher did two rounds of field work there (May – September 2017), but she took the high-speed train for the last two research visits since December 2017.

artists (Kuang, 2016)[5]. These all played an indispensable role in the resurgence of traditional porcelain crafts in Jingdezhen.

> *"Jingpiao" is a significant phenomenon. They brought new demands, new ideas and creativities to the city's porcelain industry. If there were no jingpiao, there wouldn't be a real resurgence* (S20).

7.2.1.4 A deconstructed industrial model of craft production (1990s-now)

The migrant creatives, together with the local artisans/masters and local artists, have formed a new collaborative community of porcelain production, which is different from the previous cooperation that existed only among local artisans/masters and local artists. A master stated:

> *Before recent decades, there were mainly artisans and local traditional artists doing the jobs. Different specialist artisans made different parts…artists painted on the porcelain…There wasn't so much creativity and innovation. Many designs and styles were traditional and fixed, and were long-established by previous generations or state experts. But today, anybody can design the work they want and collaborate with workshops according to their needs*. (M2)

Those rebuilt private workshops have become dispersed in different parts of the town according to artisans' individual needs and convenience; many were originally built in their houses. Artists and designers who used to design in the early part of the process (see Figure 7.8) are now involved in any stage of the process and can choose particular workshops to collaborate with according to the needs of their specific work. The centralized factory model has been completely deconstructed, and linear production has now been reconstructed into a network production (Figure 7.10). Several workshop clusters have formed throughout the town. Most have a full set of different specialist workshops as shown by the signpost in Figure 7.11 *left*. Human-

5 *"Jingpiao"* is a name adapted from "*beipiao*", literally Beijing drifters, who are migrant people moving into Beijing to pursue a new career and life. The implication of using "*jingpiao"* is to highlight Jingdezhen's opportunities for porcelain arts.

powered carts were in frequent use to transport semi-finished works within the cluster (Figure 7.11 *right*).

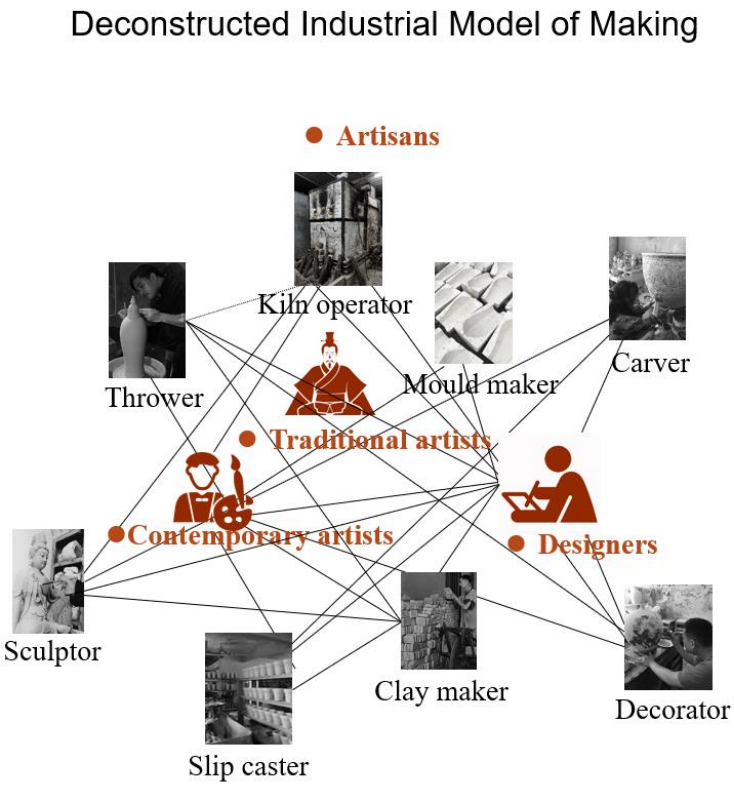

Figure 7.10. A deconstructed industrial model forming a production network

Figure 7.11. (*left*) Signpost pointing to different specialist workshops in the Sculpture Porcelain Factory; *(right*) Handcarts are effective for transporting semi-finished work among different specialist workshops within a cluster

7.2.1.5 The landscape of the deconstructed craft industry

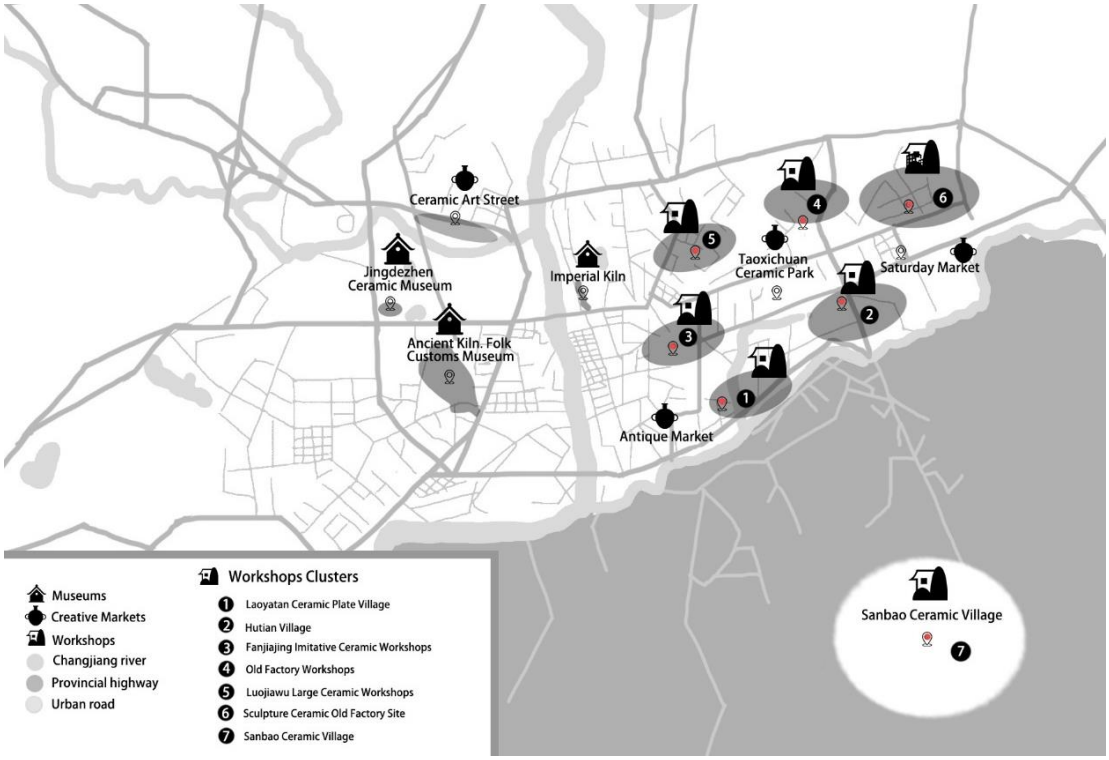

Figure 7.12. Community map of Jingdezhen (illustrated by Xin Liang)

As the town's structural texture shows (Figure 7.12), the rational geometric lines intertwine with the organic networks formed by the natural land-water borders, and various clusters of workshops, markets and museums are scattered across the landscape, seemingly without any pre-planning. As observed in the field, most of workshops were built beside the rivers or streams. Jingdezhen's town layout offers various scales of cooperation for a variety of makers in the town's industrial spectrum - either within the workshop clusters or across many different clusters. A piece of porcelain often needs to pass through five to six different specialist workshops for it to be finished. Within the cluster, many workshops are in residential houses; the most common transportation tools are human-powered carts and pickup vans. These clusters are dispersed in villages and old factory sites; there are different kinds of markets, museums and creative zones/streets nearby, all of which are centred on porcelain.

The re-configurated industrial settings have provided artists, designers and local artisans with a flexible and dynamic space where daily life blends with various work routines, and where tradition meets modernity. This map signifies that the town now stands at the intersection of cosmopolitan and local, modern and traditional, and is facing paradoxical challenges.

7.2.2 Key Producers: Four Groups of Porcelain Makers

Given the complexity of multiple porcelain producers in the community, this study tries to classify them into different groups according to their backgrounds and expertise. Fang (2015, p.80) has classified four types of porcelain makers in Jingdezhen from an anthropological perspective: 1) local craftspeople (including both masters and artisans); 2) craftspeople from the rural areas (primarily artisans); 3) young ceramics graduates; and 4) foreign artists. In an interview in the field, a Supporter commented that this classification could be improved to make them more inclusive for generalized use:

> *The people in the porcelain industry are diverse. Many of them actually have multiple roles. Many of the local craftspeople and the craftspeople from the rural villages actually are doing similar things though they have a slightly different background of education and economic condition – they are doing more technique work than artistic and creative works*. (S21)

Combined this understanding, field observation and data collected from the co-creation workshop themed around key porcelain producers, four groups of makers are identified: 1) artisans/masters, 2) traditional artists, 3) contemporary artists, and 4) ceramic designers, as summarized in Figure 7.13.

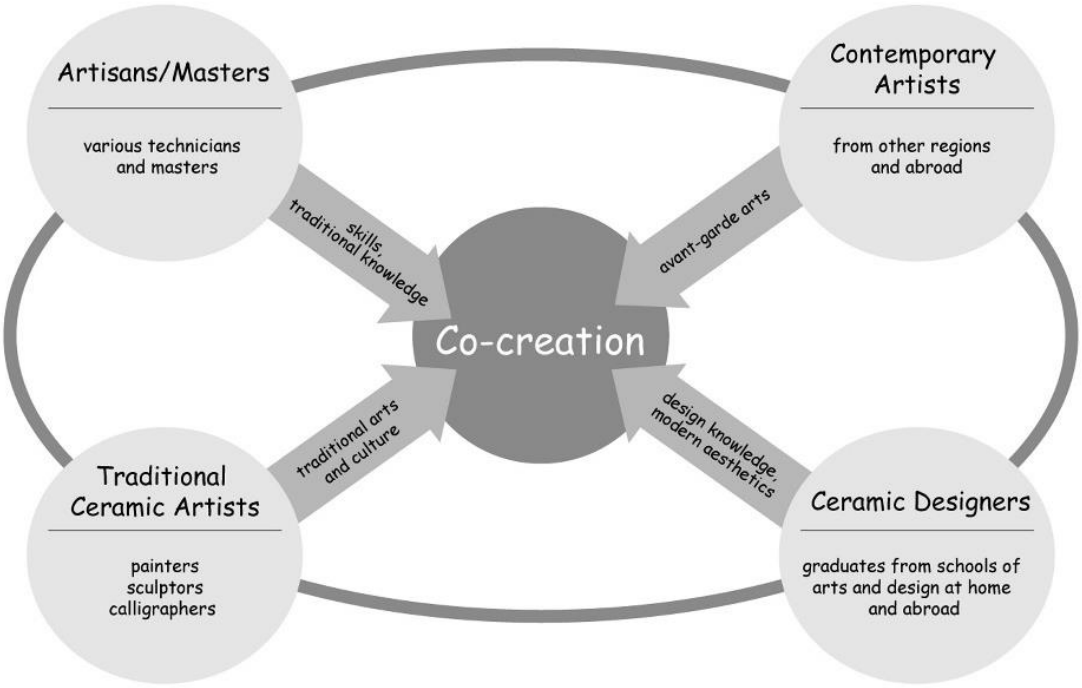

Figure 7.13. Mapping the four groups of porcelain makers derived from data collected from the co-creation workshop

Combining the mapping of the key producers from the co-creation workshop, interviews and the researcher's field observation, these four groups of makers are identified for this research in Table 7.9.

(See next page)

Table 7.9. Grouping of porcelain makers

Key porcelain makers	
Groups	**Descriptions**
Artisans/masters (locals)	Artisans/masters refer to the people who are equipped with skills and mainly deal with technical parts of the ceramics; masters are highly skilled with a higher achievement in craftsmanship. They fall into three main categories according to the part of the work they undertake: form makers (throwers, slip casters and mould-makers), decorators (painters, carvers and sculptors), and kiln operators. Most of them are locals or from neighbouring counties.
Traditional artists (locals + *jingpiao*)	Traditional artists come from a variety of Chinese traditional arts – mainly Chinese painting, sculpture, and calligraphy. They create artwork with porcelain. Apart from the local traditional artists, many come to Jingdezhen from other cities and regions to pursue new possibilities in their arts.
Contemporary artists (including a large number of *jingpiao*)	Artists working in contemporary arts whose works may or may not be mainly in porcelain. Most do not focus on skills and craftsmanship. They use porcelain as a medium to convey their ideas and creativity.
Ceramic designers (including a large number of *jingpiao*)	They are mostly students and graduates from design schools or ceramics colleges, who are heavily influenced by contemporary design and aesthetics. Some have been educated in western universities. They produce a different type of work from contemporary artists – i.e. work that has a utilitarian purpose rather than just being about artistic expression.

Each group represents a certain type of people who come from a specific background and have particular expertise, and each plays an indispensable role in Jingdezhen's porcelain production. However, in some cases, the roles of these four groups overlap. For example, a traditional artist (M3), who was trained in traditional ceramics schools not only makes traditional buddha statues but also creative work on contemporary themes such as the statue of a woman in army uniform taking a selfie.

Among these makers, artisans/masters and traditional artists are local people who originally worked with porcelain. The local traditional artists and some highly skilled masters who have normally been called *dashi* in Chinese are mainly painters/sculptors. Meanwhile, the nearly thirty thousand *jing piao* who have moved into Jingdezhen in recent years form a significant share of the contemporary artists and designers as well as a smaller share of the traditional artists.

Compared to the four grouping of informants in the semi-structured interviews, the case study includes additional groups of Artist and Designer participants. Six informants from the Makers group in semi-structure interviews also participated in this case study, of whom some have double roles of master maker and traditional artist. Due to this complexity, and in order to keep consistency of coding system for informants and participants in the research, this case study used the same codes of the previous six makers (M1-M6) as used in the semi-structured interviews and did not distinguish between traditional and contemporary artists. Thus, another six artists participated in the case study were later coded as Artists (Aa-Af), including both contemporary and traditional artists (Appendix C2). Nevertheless, data analysis of the stakeholders' value perceptions and priorities differentiates them and is in line with the four groups in Table 7.9.

7.2.3 Stakeholders' Value Perceptions and Priorities

Throughout the sense-making interviews, nine participants from the four groups of key porcelain makers identified in 7.2.2 and two support organization representatives unpacked their understanding of values and sustainability within their context aided by the prompt tools. Data from the contextualized interviews were analysed using the five values developed from Chapter 6 (i.e. local-cultural, communal, personal-spiritual, environmental, and economic values) and an additional theme of "other values" which includes the data that does not fit into any of the five values. This led to the identification of subthemes, which were then prioritized according to the frequency of data.

Combining the data from the sense-making interviews and the data on the templates regarding values identification from the co-creation workshop, the values perceptions and priorities of the five groups of stakeholders (*Artisans/masters, Traditional artists, Contemporary artists, Ceramic Designers,* and *Supporters*) were finally identified and were organized in Tables 7.10-7.14 respectively.

(See next page)

Table 7.10. Data representing the value perceptions and priorities of *Artisans/masters* (M2, M4, M6) collected from sense-making interviews

Themes/values	Subthemes	Markers/description
Local-cultural value	Place and identity	Origin, provenance, customs and habits of local people (M2, M4, M6)
	Tradition/ lifestyle	Significant past, age-old ways of making (M2, M4, M6)
	Distinctiveness	Uniqueness, local characters, materials and aesthetics (M2, M6)
	Consistency	Slowly developing craft history, slow change (M2, M4)
Communal value	Responsibility	Responsibility to pass on the crafts
	Employment	Sense of belonging, creating jobs, employment (M2, M6)
	Cohesion	Craftspeople are equally respected (M2, M4)
	Sharing/contribution	Joy of working with others, sense of mutual support and community (M4, M6)
Economic value	Livelihood	Enough money to live on, for enterprises to sustain themselves (M4, M6, M2)
	Cultural capital	Assets that can be passed on and inherited in the future (M2)
Personal-spiritual value	Inner fulfilment	Intimacy with materials, tools and environment (M6)
	Affirmation	Sense of pride and recognition from peers and organizations, i.e. as ICH inheritor, awards, selected to exhibition etc. (M2, M6)
Aesthetic/artistry value	Traditional aesthetics	M2, M4, M6 all mentioned the beauty of tradition
Reputation/aspiration value	Enhancing popularity	Making one and one's work known and recognized in the art circle and beyond (M2)
Innovation/openness value	Improvement	Improvement based on the original versions mentioned by M2, M6
Environmental value	Environmental ethics	Feeling of doing the right thing (M2)

Table 7.11. Data representing the value perceptions and priorities of *Traditional artists* collected from sense-making interviews (M1, Ab)

Themes/values	Subthemes	Markers/description
Local-cultural value	Place and identity	Origin, provenance, customs and habits of local people (M1, Ab)
	Tradition/ lifestyle	Significant past, age-old ways of making (M1, Ab)
	Distinctiveness	Uniqueness, local characters, materials and aesthetics (Ab).
	Consistency	Slowly developing craft history, slow change (M1, Ab)
Personal-spiritual value	Inner fulfilment	Intimacy with materials, tools and environment (M1, Ab) Integrative process of making things, rewarding work (M1)
	Affirmation	Sense of pride and recognition from peers and organizations, i.e. as ICH inheritor, awards, selected to exhibition etc. (M1, Ab)
Aesthetics/artistry value	Traditional aesthetics	Beauty of tradition, collective tastes, the prime of traditional elements and classic styles, enduring fashion (M1, Ab)
Economic value	Livelihood	Enough money to live on, for enterprises to sustain themselves (M1, Ab)
Reputation/aspiration value	Promotion	Raising profile of one and one's work (Ab)
Communal value	Responsibility	Responsibility to pass on the crafts (M1)
Innovation/openness value	Improvement	Improvement based on the original forms (M1, Ab)
Environmental value	Environmental ethics	Ideas of environment-human integrity (M1)

Table 7.12. Data representing the value perceptions and priorities of *Contemporary artists* collected from sense-making interviews (Aa, Ad)

Themes/values	Subthemes	Markers/description
Aesthetics/artistry value	Contemporary aesthetics	Contemporary styles and tastes, works reflecting the time, modern sensibility (Aa, Ad) Individual characters, experience-based aesthetics, beauty of process and materials (Aa)
Innovation/openness value	New possibilities	New ideas, concepts, purposes (Aa, Ad)
	Novelty and change	New design, serving new purposes (Aa, Ad)
	Improvement	Improvement based on the original forms (Aa)
Personal-spiritual value	Inner fulfilment	Intimacy with materials, tools and environment Integrative process of making things, rewarding works (Aa, Ad).
	Self-expression	Pleasure gained from creative, autonomous making processes, freedom, without limits (Aa, Ad).
Reputation/aspiration value	Enhancing popularity	Making one and one's work known and recognized in the art circle and beyond (Aa)
	Raising profile	Craft as an intelligent work (Ad)
Economic value	Livelihood	Enough money to live on, for enterprises to sustain themselves (Aa, Ad)
	Cultural capital	Assets can be passed on and inherited (Aa)
Environmental value	Environmental ethics	Age-old eco-wisdom, practice supporting the idea of environment-human integrity (Aa)
Local-cultural value	Place and identity	Origin, provenance, local characters, materials and aesthetics (Ad)
Communal value	Sharing/contribution	Joy of working with others, sense of mutual support and community (Ad)

Table 7.13. Data representing the value perceptions and priorities of *Ceramic designers* collected from sense-making interviews (Da, Db)

Themes/values	Subthemes	Markers/description
Innovation/openness value	Novelty and changes	New design, new purposes and use (Da, Db)
	New possibilities	Completely new forms and/or new purposes, rapid innovation (Da, Db)
	Improvement	Improvement based on the original forms and methods (Da)
	Openness to technologies	3D printing, semi-mechanization (Db)
Economic value	Livelihood	Enough money to live on, for enterprises to sustain themselves (Da, Db)
	Economic prosperity	Generating significant income (Db)
	Cultural capital	Assets that can be passed on and inherited in the future (Da, Db)
Reputation/aspiration value	Branding	Branding or partnerships with renowned brands (Db)
	Enhancing popularity	Making one and one's work known and recognized in the field and beyond (Da)
	Promotion	Raising profile of crafts and makers; promoting craft as an intelligent work (Da, Db)
Aesthetics/artistry value	Contemporary	Contemporary styles and tastes, works reflecting the time, modern sensibility, individual characters (Db)
	Traditional	The prime of traditional elements and classic styles, enduring fashion (Da, Db)
Environmental value	Practical eco-benefit	Clean materials, clean processes and techniques, part of natural ecology, replacement of unrenewable materials, reduction of environmentally harmful resources and processes (Da, Db)
Communal value	Employment	Creating job vacancies for local people, equality (Db)
Local-cultural value	Place and identity	Origin, provenance, uniqueness, local characteristics (Da)
Personal-spiritual value	Inner fulfilment	Rewarding works (Da)

Table 7.14. Data representing the value perceptions and priorities of *Supporters* collected from sense-making interviews (S15, Sa)

Themes/values	Subthemes	Markers/description
Economic value	Livelihood	Enough money to live on, for enterprises to sustain themselves (S15, Sa)
	Economic prosperity	Generating significant income (S15, Sa)
	Cultural capital	Assets that can be passed on and inherited in the future (S15, Sa)
Local-cultural value	Place and identity	Origin, provenance, customs and habits of local people (S15, Sa)
	Tradition/ lifestyle	Significant past, age-old ways of making (S15, Sa).
	Distinctiveness	Uniqueness, local characters, materials and aesthetics (S15, Sa)
	Consistency	Slowly developing craft history, slow change (S15, Sa)
Reputation/aspiration value	Branding	Branding or partnerships with renowned brands (Sa)
	Enhancing popularity	Making one and one's work known and recognized in the field and beyond (Sa)
Communal value	Responsibility	Responsibility to pass on the crafts (S15, Sa)
	Employment	Creating jobs, employment (S15).
Innovation/openness value	Novelty and changes	New design, new purposes and use (Sa)
	Improvement	Improvement based on the original forms and methods (S15)
Aesthetics/artistry value	Contemporary	Contemporary styles and tastes (S15)
	Traditional	The prime of traditional elements (Sa)
Environmental value	Practical eco-benefit	Clean materials, clean processes (Sa)
Personal-spiritual value		Not mentioned.

In order to make a clear comparison, the data presented in Tables 7.10-7.14 on the five groups of stakeholders were visualized in Figure 7.14. A numerical equivalent (low-high=1-8) was used to estimate the priorities of the values according to the frequency and substantiality of the data. It shows the values that affect the actions and working practices of the five groups of stakeholders.

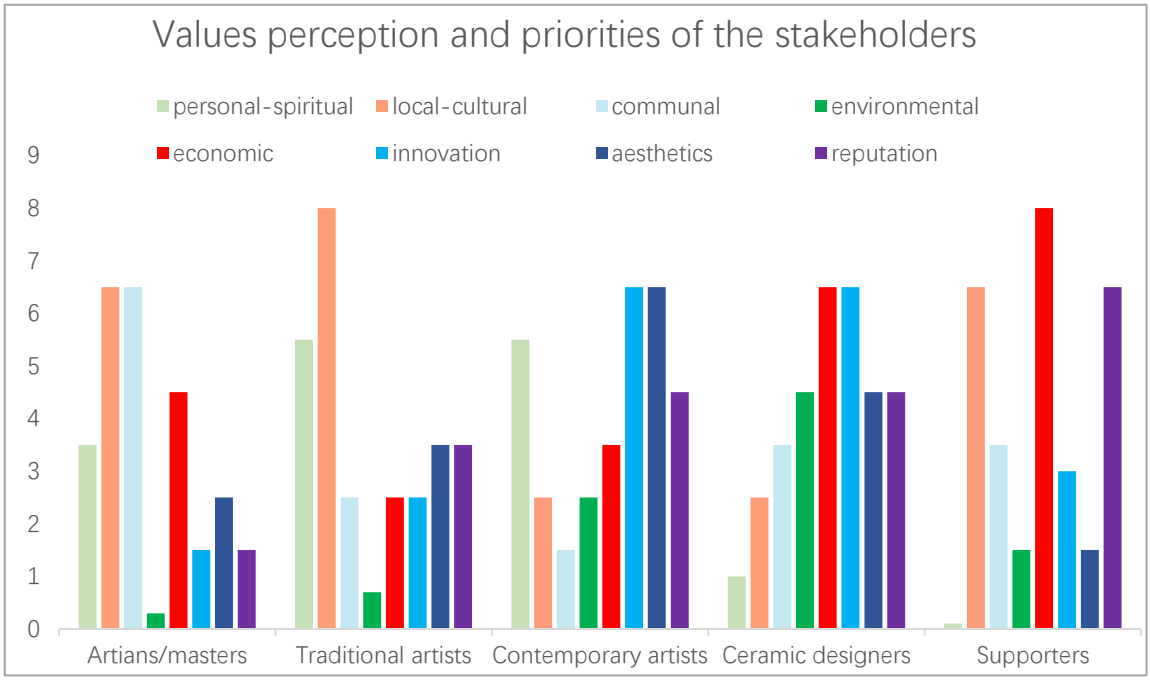

Figure 7.14. Visualization of data collected on the values perception and priorities of the five groups of stakeholders

Artisans/masters think that the cultural, communal and personal-spiritual values are major priorities while economic consideration (enough money to live on) is also important, and the environmental value is almost excluded from their minds. Innovation and aesthetics are also acknowledged but less important.

Likewise, **Traditional artists** also prioritize the cultural and personal-spiritual values but give more space than artisans to other values of reputation and aesthetics. Unlike artisans/masters, they have the environmental value in mind, but it is the least important.

Contemporary artists prioritize the aesthetic and innovation values and put the reputation and personal-spiritual third, the communal last.

Ceramic Designers equally prioritize economic and innovation as the first and the spiritual as the last. They are also highly aware of environmental issues.

Supporters think that the economic, local cultural and reputation values are the first priorities and almost neglect the personal-spiritual value of craft practice.

Figure 7.15 indicates that each of these groups of makers has a blind spot: contemporary artists are blind to communal value; designers and supporters are blind

to personal-spiritual value; artisans/masters and traditional artists are blind to environmental value. It also indicates that though each group places importance on different values, generally speaking, artisans/masters and traditional artists have similar value priorities in the intrinsic aspects whereas designers, contemporary artists and supporters place more focus on the values that are related to materialistic outcomes, i.e. economic, innovation and reputation values.

7.2.4 The Appraisal of the Four Categories of Crafts

This section presents the results of the analysis of the data collected from an independent activity of the co-creation workshop around the theme of the appraisal of crafts. Participants discussed and agreed the four categories of traditional, modified, innovative and objets d'art.

Following the validation of the categorization, an appraisal of the four categories of crafts was made by participants in four independent groups. In the appraisal, personal-spiritual, local-cultural, communal, environmental and economic are the five values identified from Chapter 6. The newly identified three "other values" from sense-making interviews (Section 7.2.3) are:

- Innovation/openness: improvement, novelty and changes; new possibilities (concepts, ideas, purposes); openness to technologies
- Aesthetics/artistry: traditional aesthetics; contemporary aesthetics
- Reputation/aspiration: raising profile of craftspeople; enhancing popularity, branding or partnerships with reputed brands; promoting craft-making as an intelligent work

These eight values were used to appraise the four categories of crafts by workshop participants. In order to make them more applicable and easier to understand, each individual value was adapted with a set of prompt questions (see Appendix E3). The appraisal is attained by using a numerical equivalent to rate the value. Low=1, low-

medium=2, medium=3, medium-high=4, high=5. If necessary. Numbers1.5, 2.5, 3.5, and 4.5 can also be used for showing relative difference.

Combining the appraisals of the four groups, an average result of the appraisal was drawn by the researcher in Figure 7.15.

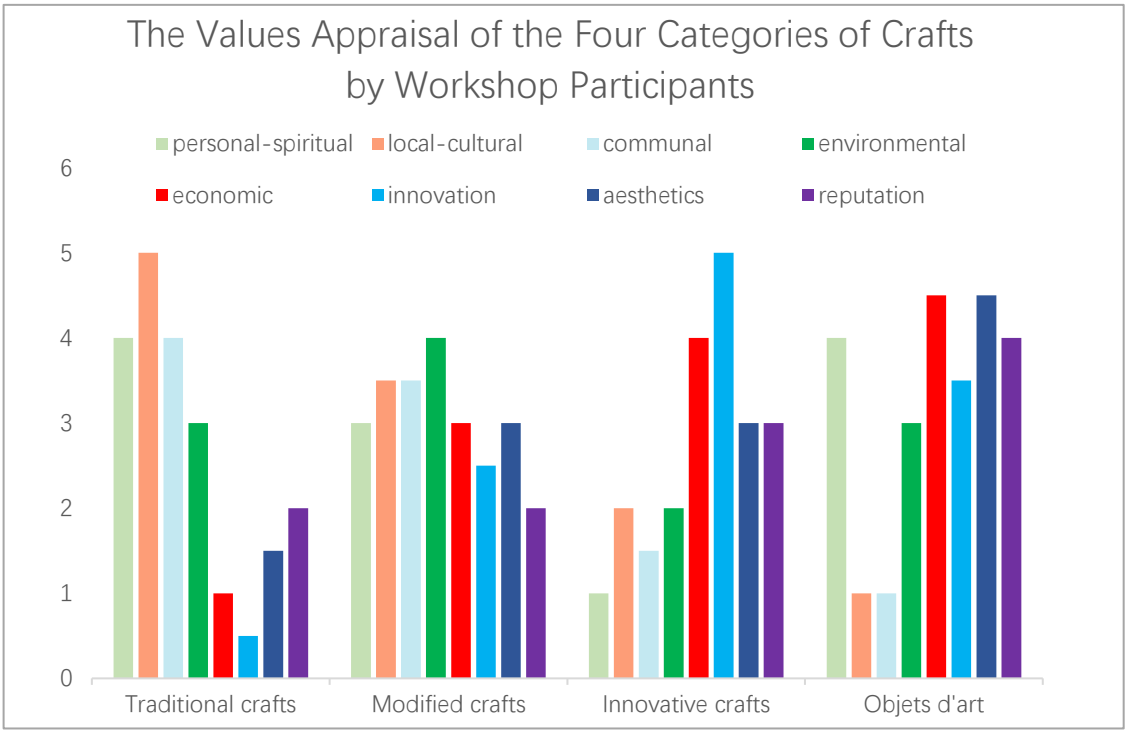

Figure 7.15. Scores of the four categories of porcelain crafts given by workshop participants

As shown in Figure 7.16, *traditional crafts* have the highest intangible values in terms of spiritual, cultural and communal but offer the lowest economic benefits and score very low on innovation, aesthetics and reputation. In contrast, *innovative crafts* and c*ontemporary objets d'art* score lowest on the less tangible values, but highest on economic and other more extrinsic values such as innovation, aesthetics and reputation. *Modified crafts* fall in between these two extremes. *Modified crafts* have the most even and most balanced spread of these eight values. In terms of the "other values" identified in the sense-making interviews (innovation, aesthetics and reputation), *innovative crafts* and *objets d'art* score much higher than *traditional crafts*. On the whole, it also shows that m*odified crafts* have a more evenly distributed values profile than other categories.

The scores are based on participants' discussions from each independent group, which represent a general perception and evaluation of these four categories of crafts in the YRD. In the meantime, participants also acknowledged that there were some exceptions for each category that might score higher or lower than their general scores in particular value types.

> *There are always exceptions, some innovative crafts really not only brought economic profits but also retained their cultural meaning very well…some traditional crafts not only have very high value in spirituality and culture but also can sustain them very well, e.g. the wooden comb crafts in Jiangsu province…but of course they get multiple supports from central and local governments* (Sa).

7.2.5 Challenges and Opportunities of the Collaboration

Section 7.2.3 analyses stakeholders' values perception and priorities. The result shows that participants in the co-creation workshop agreed with this finding and thought these different values positions and interests were barriers to an effective and sustainable collaboration and caused disparities among the community. They admitted that the deconstructed industrial model of production had not only driven the resurgence of Jingdezhen's crafts but also had caused tensions in the values of different makers. The original objective of the workshop was to co-create proposals for ensuring the sustainability in porcelain crafts. However, participants maintained that achieving a balance of values held by different porcelain producers is key to realizing the sustainability of Jingdezhen's porcelain production.

Therefore, in order to achieve a balance of values and the sustainability of porcelain crafts, participants in the co-creation workshop discussed the challenges and opportunities in the current co-production. As a result of the analysis, themes on the challenges and the opportunities were identified.

7.2.5.1 Challenges

The themes of the data on the challenges were identified and prioritized according to frequency. They are analysed in the following paragraphs and summarized in Figure 7.16.

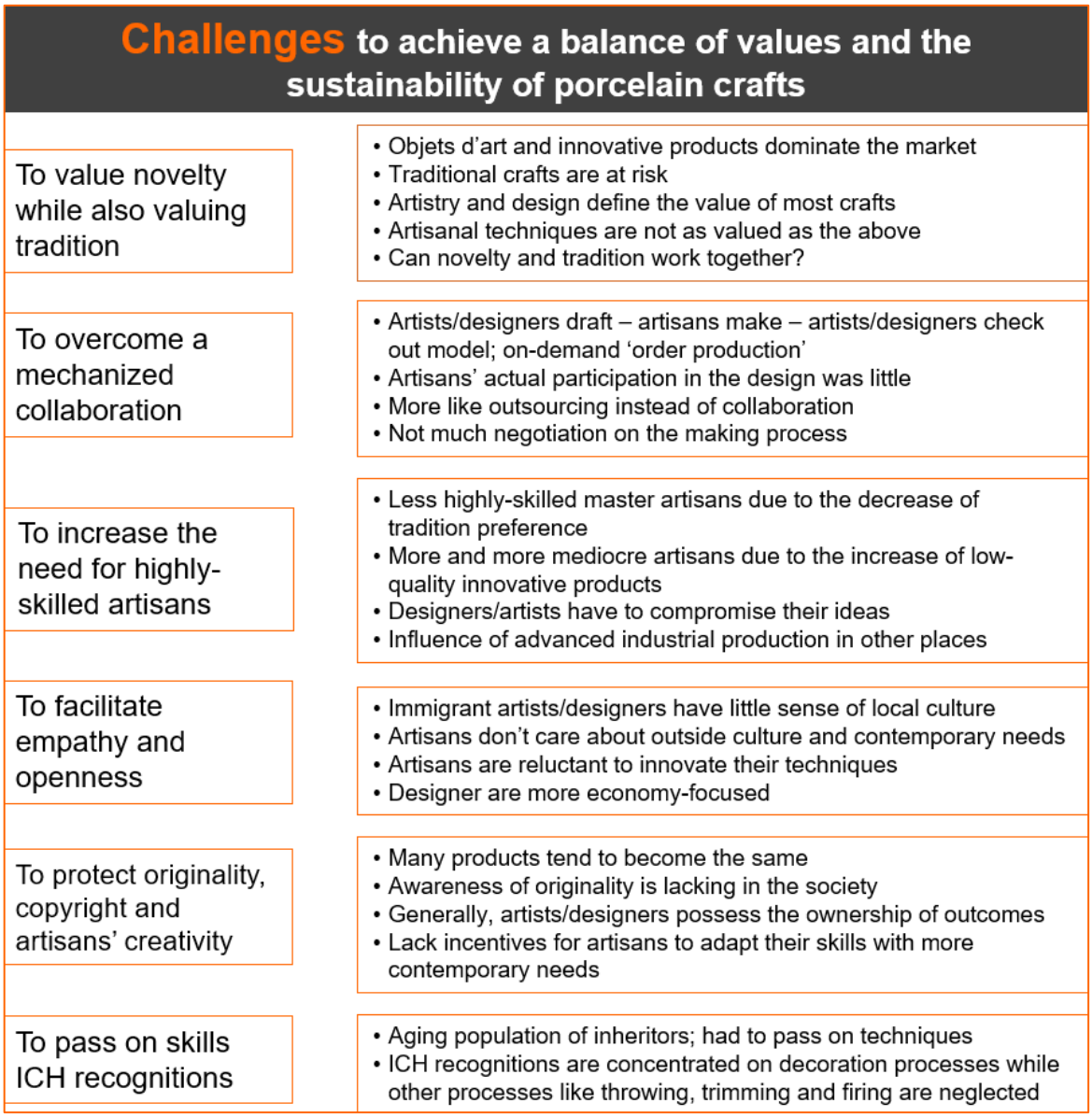

Figure 7.16. Challenges for collaboration and sustainability

The participants discussed the challenges of achieving sustainability of the values in porcelain crafts posed by a strong influence of commercial promotion and a distorted collaboration among designers, artists and artisans. Since the rapid growth of the creative market and the dominance of objets d'art, traditional skills in Jingdezhen have faced a gradual decline.

This has led to some negative consequences. One of the major effects was that it resulted in a mechanized “on-demand” “order production” in which designers or artists order greenware or a series of services from artisans on demand.

> *Some designers or artists might just do the painting or sculpture parts. Some even didn’t need to do anything…they just needed to order a series of making services throughout the whole process and then checked out the orders at the end* (Ra).

On the one hand, this outsourcing model of production resulted in a reduction of empathy among the makers, especially between the artists (traditional and contemporary), designers and local artisans. Migrant artists and designers had little sense of local context in which the crafts had been created, and therefore had little empathy with the work of artisans.

On the other hand, the majority of artisans and some masters were not open to change. Designers and artists needed to sacrifice their ideas and designs because the artisans were not capable of realizing those ideas nor were they willing to change, as a ceramic designer-maker stated:

> *Artisans can only do their work with the methods they have learned. Many times, designers came up with some new ideas and patterns, but artisans couldn’t actualize them, and had little interest in trying new ways. And designers couldn’t make them due to the limitation of their skills. Therefore, designers had to give up or compromise their ideas to fit with the artisans’ ways of making*. (M6)

Ownership is also identified as a factor influencing the interests and incentives for artisans to improve and adapt their skills for more contemporary needs, because artists/designers normally possess the ownership of outcomes while artisans are often paid on a daily-work basis.

The decline in skills was caused by the diminishing interest in artisanal heritage, which was driven by the increasing emphasis on artistry, novelty and economics over recent years.

> *There are fewer and fewer highly skilled artisans. The value of creativity and artistry now dominate the development of the majority of products. The heritage of craftmanship is being lost, I am afraid, in the booming creative industries and economy* (Rb).

In addition, originality and copyright protection was put forward as an issue that hinders a healthy and fair collaboration. Difficulty in passing on skills due to the aging population of highly skilled inheritors and unequal ICH recognition of porcelain techniques were also mentioned as inevitable factors that challenge the sustainability of porcelain crafts.

7.2.5.2 Opportunities

The themes of the data on the opportunities were identified and prioritized according to strength level. They are analysed in the following paragraphs and summarized in Figure 7.17.

(See next page)

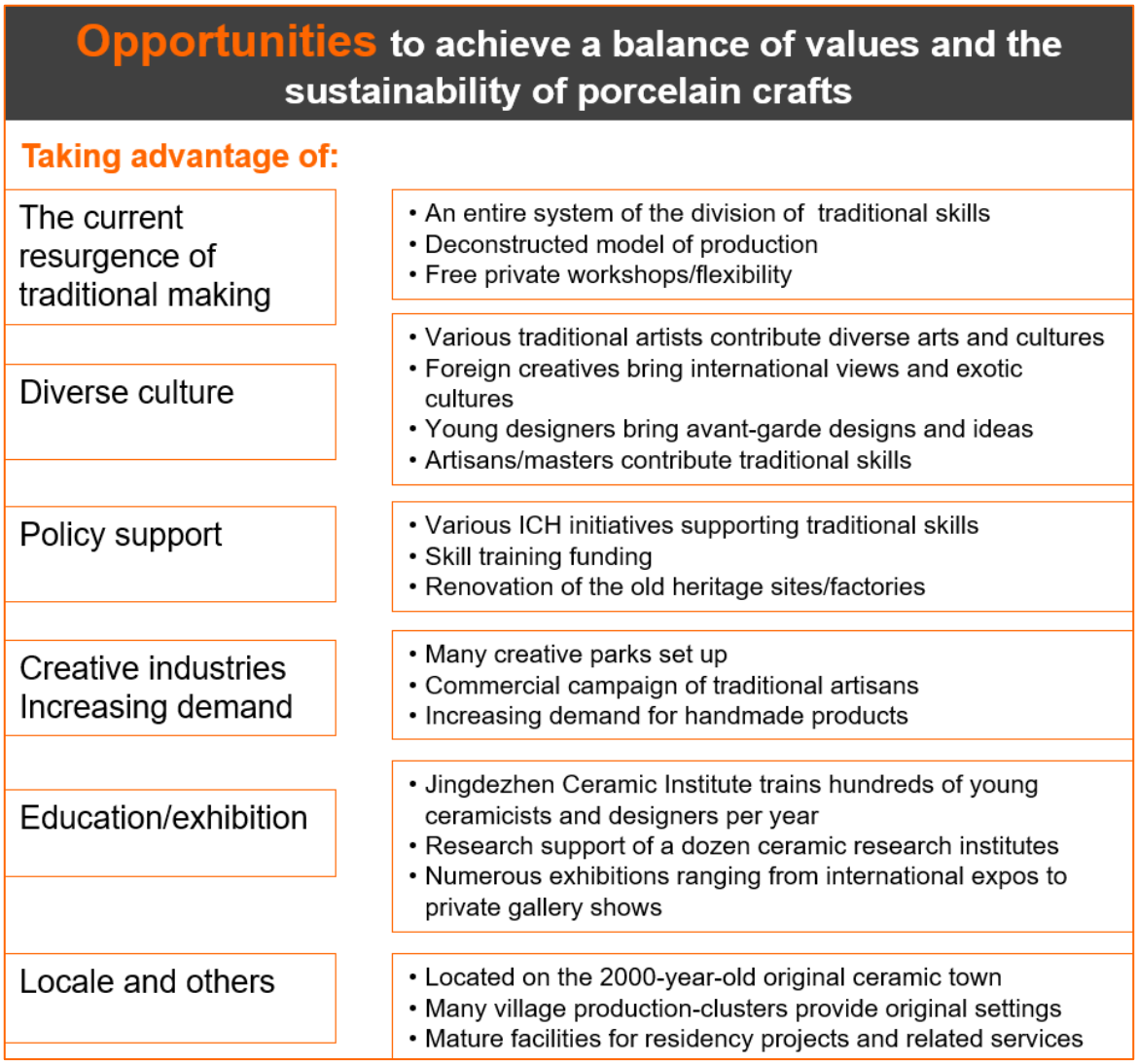

Figure 7.17. Opportunities for collaboration and sustainability

Participants discussed the opportunities for achieving a balance of values and the sustainability of porcelain crafts. All participants agreed that the resurgence of a traditional system of porcelain making in Jingdezhen and the multicultural aspects brought by (*jing piao*) migrant creatives were two key factors for a sustainable future of porcelain crafts. The top-down governmental policies of a series of Intangible Cultural Heritage initiatives provide significant financial support and a favourable political environment. Participants also acknowledged that the driving force of creative industry is, on the one hand, an inevitable factor to bring traditional crafts into everyday life, while, on the other hand, a double-edged sword that has devalued traditional skills by its “ever-new” demand (see Challenges analysed in Section 7.3.5.1).

Participants also agreed that there are a number of local educational and ceramic research institutes in China which can contribute strong research support. Numerous exhibitions and events ranging from international expos to private gallery shows provide multiple possibilities for rich and open engagement.

In addition, the workshops built on the original sites as well as mature residency services were mentioned as ideal for sustaining the originality of the making.

7.2.6 An "Immersive Making" Proposition to Create a Shared Notion of Values

The results of the analysis of challenges and opportunities discussed from the foregoing activity highlighted a strong tension between local artisans and migrant creatives, between traditional skills and contemporary creative industries. Participants agreed that to create a shared value of making among the different makers is key to solving the tension and balancing the different values.

Building on the challenges and opportunities, participants proposed activating a genuine collaboration for creating a shared value through "immersive making" in craft practices. Data collected on the theme of collaboration direction and collaboration strategy were analysed in the following paragraphs.

7.2.6.1 Co-create a shared notion of values through "genuine collaboration"

After a discussion of the problems and related factors, participants worked in groups on a collaboration direction. The researcher brought all the proposed directions from the four independent groups together into a collective discussion. A vision of "genuine collaboration" among the makers was identified from the discussion. Data in relation to collaboration direction were analysed and drawn by the researcher in Figure 7.18.

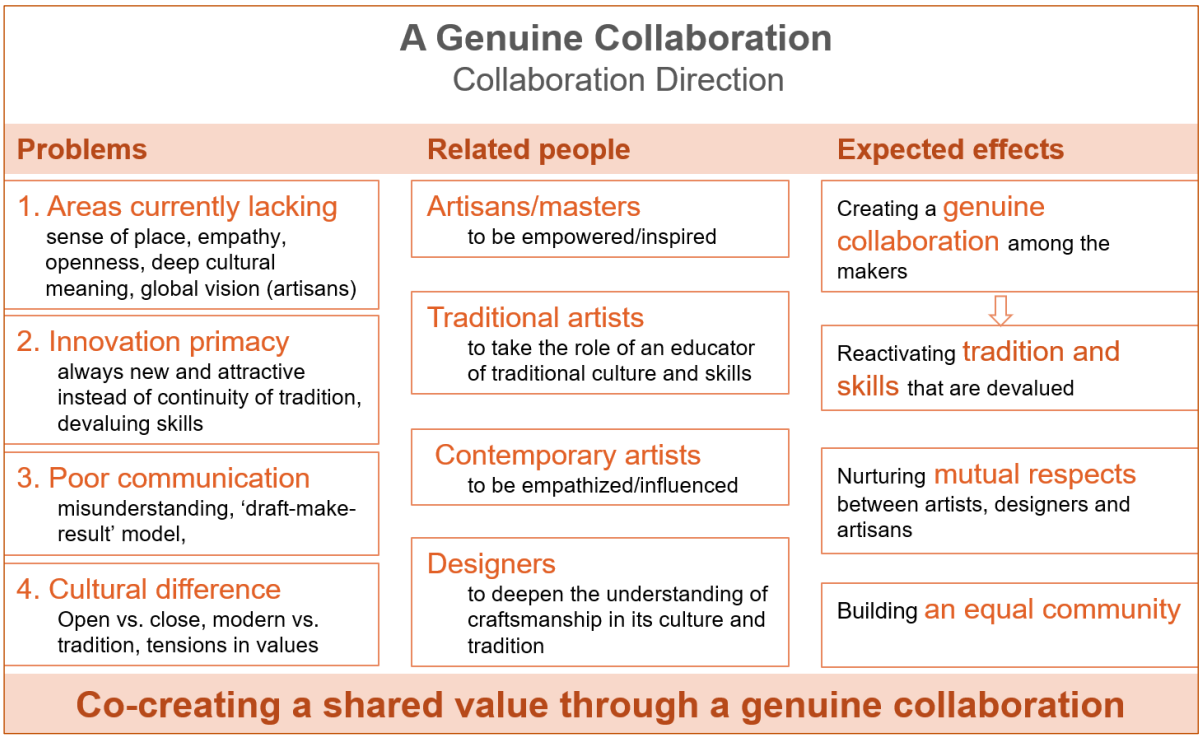

Figure 7.18. Findings in relation to the collaboration direction outlined by the workshop participants

All the participants agreed with the vision of creating a genuine collaboration, reactivating traditions and skills that are devalued, building an equal community, and nurturing mutual respects between artists, designers and artisans.

7.2.6.2 To enable a "genuine collaboration" through "immersive making"

Building on the vision of "genuine collaboration", participants discussed strategies for enabling this collaboration.

Drawing on their past experiences and collective creativity, participants proposed an optimized model of collaboration which is tentatively called "immersive making". Data in relation to collaboration strategy were analysed and drawn by the researcher in Figure 7.19.

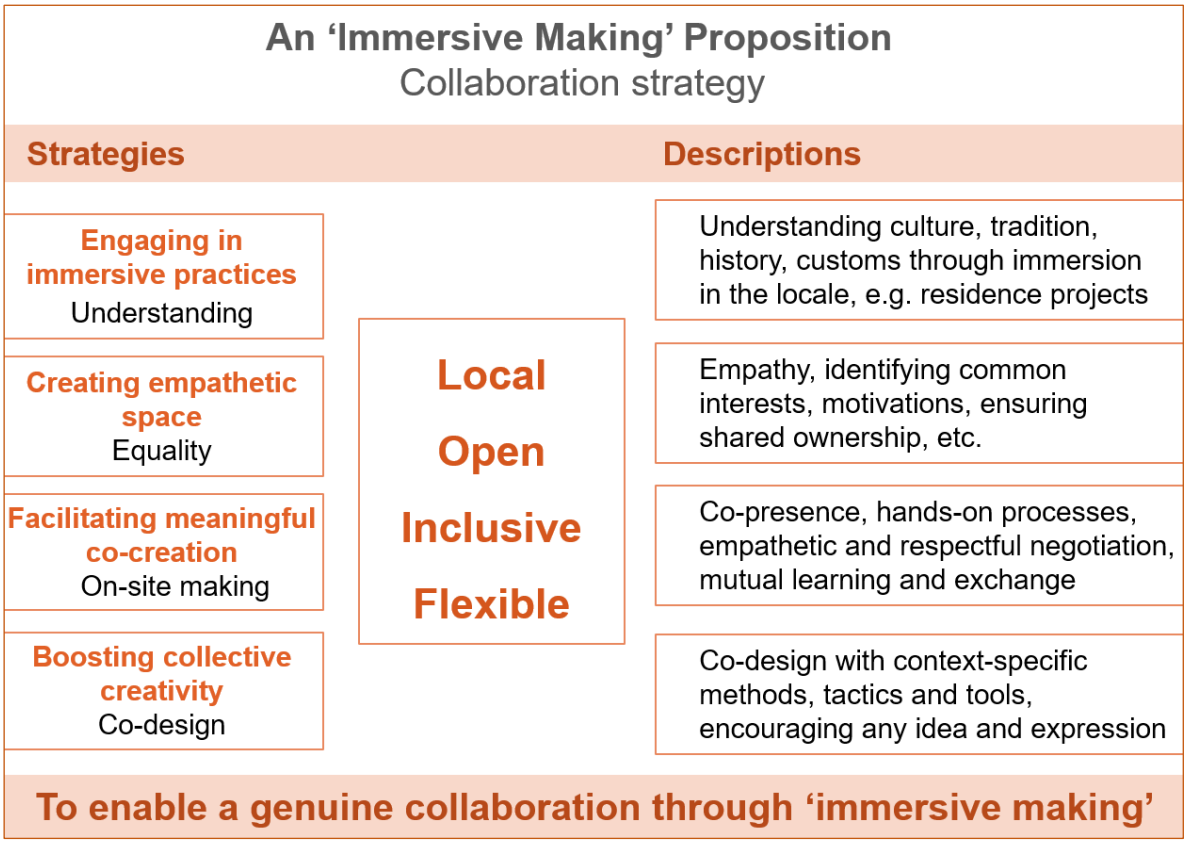

Figure 7.19. Findings in relation to the collaboration strategy outlined by the workshop participants

"Immersive making" suggests artists, designers and local artisans work together in an open, local, flexible and inclusive space to co-create a shared notion of values through engaging in immersive practices, creating empathetic space, facilitating meaningful *on-site* making, and boosting collective creativity. According to this proposal, artisans who used to work in "order production" or an "on-demand" model with artists and designers now engage equally in the whole process, while artists and designers also take part in most steps of the making processes alongside the artisans/masters.

Participants felt that a lack of understanding of the context and place was one of the key factors that hindered the empathy of migrant designers and artists. Engaging them in the local settings, including living in the location and with artisans would make them experience how the skills relate to artisans' daily life, traditions and values. Working together in terms of *on-site* making was regarded as the most important because it could allow the makers to develop empathy, respect and inclusion. A hands-on process

in terms of co-design that is supported with context-specific methods and tools ensures an in-depth collaboration of design and making. An empathetic and respectful space between artisans/masters, artists and designers is key to creating an open and inclusive atmosphere.

7.2.7 Building Relationships to Create a Shared Notion of Values

In order to test and further understand the proposed model developed from the co-creation workshop, the researcher conducted a practice-based project with an invited group of artists, designers and local artisans/masters. These people were divided into two teams to conduct two separate projects: vases and ceramic lighting, both of which were originated from participants' own schedules. As stated in Table 7.4 (Section 7.1.4), Team 1 knew each other well and already had a close relationship while the Team 2 was formed later after the withdrawal of two previously agreed participants. Therefore, participants in Team 2 were not familiar with each other and had not yet worked together before. During the week, each team conducted their work in group at the studio of JCI and Master Zhan's ceramic centre, and between the two there are ca. two miles distance.

As the proposed 'immersive making' model suggests, participants were encouraged to equally engage in their projects and to have as much discussion and reviews as they wanted, together or separately according to their needs. The teams worked in a project-led fashion in which the whole process was not scheduled day by day; when and how they discussed largely depended on the needs of their teams. In their work, Team 1 retained the model of intimacy throughout the project, but Team 2 started with a relatively looser relationship and subsequently failed to build the expected model of collaboration with the artisan. This difference between the two teams greatly influenced their working processes respectively and resulted in different styles of collaboration. In comparison, the local master (M2) in Team 1 participated in the work as much as the artist and designer did but the artisan (M4) in Team 2 was relatively quiet and inactive

and only gave comments when asked and pushed by his teammates. Though the atmosphere in both teams is friendly and collaborative, Team 1 was more open, effective and productive. Team 1 successfully produced their finished work while Team 2 failed to make their final outputs.

In addition, even though the researcher tried her best to erase her influence in the project, Artist Af and the Artisan M4 in Team 2 seemed to keep their roles as staff hired for the project instead of “collaborators”. The participants, especially the artisan in Team 2, often asked the researcher or their teammates with the questions such as “what do I do for the next”. Although the master in Team 1 also asked the same kind of questions at the beginning, communication and discussion in Team 1 were much smoother and more in-depth than in Team 2. These different styles of collaboration between the two teams together with the observation of the working process informed the researcher that a truly close “relationship” built between artisan, design and artist is the foundation for co-creation. Furthermore, strategies and methods are important factors to build a close relationship so as to trigger meaningful collaboration between these ideologically and professionally different makers.

As stated in Section 3.3.3, the experimental project is only a controlled case of practice and collaboration which might not be able to fully represent what can be found from the field. Therefore, this experimental project also acted as a guiding frame to inform relevant observations on other real-life cases in the community. Through the practice project and related field observations of other making practices beyond, important factors for addressing tensions and creating a shared notion of value in the collaboration such as immersion in the locale, blurring space between life and work, dialogical negotiation, and facilitation of meaningful co-creation through situated design are discussed under four themes of relationship building in the following sections (7.2.7.1-7.2.7.4).

7.2.7.1 Building a relationship between people and place through immersion in the locale to raise cultural and environmental awareness

Through involvement of the six participants in every process of making in the practice project, a deep perception and awareness of the local culture and place was fostered, although Team 2 worked in a “weak-tie” collaboration. Working in the original environment generated a deep sense of authenticity and locality. This is key to stimulating a “slow” mindset. All the participants expressed that engaging in every step of the processes allowed them to look closely at the history and culture of the ceramic industry, and starting with the raw materials gave them a better understanding of the artisans’ work. This in turn nurtured a strong sense of environmental stewardship:

> *We were surrounded by clay, porcelain and tools every day, working beside the river and hearing water gurgling and birds twittering. We had never processed clay by ourselves. Engaging in all the processes helps us understand how and where the clay is sourced. This brought us close to the site where this material originated, from which we had a stronger sense of the environment, being part of a place and being part of its history* (Designer, Team 2).

> *I think artisans have a natural relation to the environment and place in which they work. We learned a lot from them in terms of environmental awareness. They are not unaware of environmental issues. They actually understand it better and deeper than us, because this is just there in their unconscious daily life* (Artist, Team 1).

7.2.7.2 Blurring space between life and work to strengthen personal well-being in making practice

The increasing separation of life and work among the makers driven by efficiency-oriented production greatly impacted their quality of life and well-being. For artisans, this is especially detrimental. Throughout the time before the state-owned factory was established in the 1950s, artisans in Jingdezhen shared the roles of half-farmer and half-ceramic maker. During slack farming seasons, villagers embarked on their porcelain work. This working style still has some clues left in today’s Jingdezhen. An artisan from Team 1 commented:

> *I used to work in my workshop which was also part of my house. It didn't distance me from my life and made me comfortable. I discussed details with artists who lived in my house. It is interesting that what attracted them most is things from my living room and dining with our family. We enjoyed conversations over a cup of tea in my house. Now I find the same feeling. I think the way we work together in the project is relaxing and helpful for us to enjoy both life and work*.

As this shows, there are some workshops/studios functioning not only as workplaces and stores, but also as homes and living spaces in the villages of Jingdezhen. Through these multi-functional spaces, connections grow between everyday life, work routine and business livelihood. Makers move across different spaces swiftly and flexibly in a site-specific physical space, along with tourists and customers. Examples include *Sanbao Ceramic Village* in which old kilns, farmers' houses, abandoned water-powered trip hammers, traditional local foods and lifestyles, and other porcelain-associated elements were revitalized and, together with the various contemporary workshops, kilns and galleries, were formed into an ecology of life, work and business. A designer in Team 1 stated:

> *Customers come and what they see is not only the beautifully packaged ceramic piece in stores, but also how these products are made, what processes it involves, who made them, what the environment and makers' lives are like… These indeed give people a sense of authenticity by which a deep spiritual value of a piece of porcelain is added and internalized.*

7.2.7.3 Building relationships between local craftspeople and contemporary creatives through a dialogical negotiation to create communal cohesion

How to blend the different types of knowledge and mindsets of designers, artists and artisans in a collaborative design/making process is challenging. While the proposed way of negotiation by engaging the designer, artist and artisan in the same workshop worked throughout the project in Team 1, it didn't work in Team 2. The most important reason for the difference, according to observations, is that Team 2 failed to build a

space for deeply engaged dialogue among themselves.

Negotiation with situated dialogues

Dialogue played an important role in integrating these different types of knowledge into a shared outcome by asking what is technically workable, economically viable and what satisfies a particular “aesthetic need”. A master artisan in Team 1 explains:

> *We discussed while we were making. I think this is the best way. We often came up later with new ideas that actually changed the initial draft they’d designed, because the draft was very limited. We got lots of inspirations when we started to get our hands on the clay, and what we actually wanted just popped up in the dialogue during the process. I don’t think it can be fully designed beforehand in the draft and actualized as such. I enjoyed the dialogue and we will continue working together in the future.*

In Team 1’s collaboration, the designer got to know the improvisational nature of the artisan better; the artist discovered the artisan’s hidden intuition of beauty; and the artisan accepted more up-to-date ideas and aesthetics from the designer and artist. However, Team 2 failed to develop a shared understanding of each other’s knowledge. They worked more in the way of a business consultation by asking each other a series of prepared and anticipatory questions, which lacks the quality of a situated negotiation.

By developing a shared understanding through situated dialogues, close social relationships are bolstered among these different makers, rather than through business relations. The accumulation of these close social relationships among makers in turn builds up a greater cohesion in the community.

7.2.7.4 Building relations between tradition and modernity through facilitating meaningful co-design/making between local craftspeople and contemporary creatives

Artisans in Jingdezhen are more rooted in local tradition whereas artists and designers come more from a modern context. They differ in their thinking, knowledge and

methodology.

Situated design with site-specific tools

Team 1 developed site-specific tools to communicate and design together by presenting together in the workshop. As the last quote above states, designers' and artists' conventional design and drawing techniques didn't work when these different people communicated. The designer in Team 1 gave up his drafts halfway and adapted to a way of dialogue aided by non-detailed drawings and onsite materials and examples. The designer and artist in Team 1 reported that the artisans understood their ideas very well and offered many suggestions that inspired the ultimate outcome. However, Team 2 stuck to meticulous and detailed drafts and became "frustrated", as the designer reported, when they found the drafts hadn't been precisely realized by the artisans. Here is a representative quote from the designer in Team 1:

> *When we found our accurate drawings didn't work and make sense for the artisan, we turned to using some common words and descriptions we'd learned from artisans before, then some drawings - which didn't need to be very precise. The artisan then instantly got what we wanted….*

Respect and empathy

In this dialogically situated co-design process, respect is vital to gaining empathy and mutual understanding, as the artist in Team 1 reflects:

> *I think the most important is empathy and respect. Before, when I found artisans could not understand my drafts and concepts, I usually thought it might be the artisans' inability to accept modern thinking and ideas, so we needed to help them to change their thinking. Now I realize I am wrong, artisans think with materials and their body, which is more authentic and creative. What we need to do is to learn their language and try to chat with them, and tell them what we think is beautiful... Then, you will find that they understand you and accept your ideas instinctively*.

7.3 Discussion, Findings and Feedback

This section presents a synthesis and discussion of the overall themes from the data analysis and results, from which some findings emerge. It also includes a discussion of the *initial typology* of craft values in relation to the findings.

7.3.1 Findings

Finding 1. There is a deconstructed industrial model of craft production in Jingdezhen

Section 7.2.1 presents five themes around the background of porcelain crafts in modern Jingdezhen which illustrate the context of craft's resurgence. Section 7.2.2 presents an identification of four groups of producers including artisans/masters, traditional artists, contemporary artists and designers. These four groups include a significant number of migrant creatives, called *jing piao*, who moved into Jingdezhen from other cities and countries. These results suggest that the porcelain production has transformed from a linear factory-model to a deconstructed industrial model in which migrant creatives collaborate with local artisans and masters within workshop networks (see Figure 7.10).

Finding 2. The results of the values-based appraisal of porcelain crafts in Jingdezhen by participants

According to Section 7.2.4, the appraisal of the four categories of porcelain crafts (traditional modified, innovative and objets d'art) by the participants of the co-creation workshop indicates that: a) *traditional crafts* have the greatest intrinsic values but the least economic and innovation values; b) *objets d'art* have the highest extrinsic values in terms of high tastes, good reputation and high economic benefit but the least cultural and communal relevance; c) *innovative crafts* have the highest innovation value but the lowest personal-spiritual value; d) *modified crafts* have a more even distribution of those values and seems to offer cultural, communal, environmental benefits and economic viable through innovation, and improvement in aesthetics and reputation (see Figure 7.15).

Finding 3. Different stakeholders have different value perceptions and priorities, and there are tensions among their values, especially between the groups of artisans/masters and traditional artists, and the groups of contemporary artists and designers

Section 7.2.2 identifies four groups of key porcelain makers (producers): artisans/masters, traditional artists, contemporary artists and ceramic designers. Section 7.2.3 presents analysis of the values held by these four groups of makers and one group of supporters. The result in Figure 7.14 illustrates a divergence of values among the four groups of stakeholders. Artisans/masters and traditional artists prioritize local-cultural, communal and spiritual values but neglect environmental values. Contemporary artists underscore aesthetics and innovation values but have little acknowledgement of the cultural and communal aspects. Supporters put economic and cultural values as the first priority but are unconscious of the personal-spiritual aspect.

The results of the analysis of the data on "challenges of the collaboration" discussed in the co-creation workshop also consolidate the divergence of makers' value priorities (Section 7.2.5.1). The results of the challenges also highlight that there is a tension of values between the groups of artisans/masters and traditional artists whose values incline to tradition, and the groups of contemporary artists and designers whose values incline to novelty and innovation. It was interesting that artisans' values were often supposed by the other makers (i.e. contemporary artists, designers) to be economically prioritized, while the result of the makers' value priorities show that artisans put economic value at a less important position than the cultural and communal.

> *For artisans, I used to think that finance was the thing that most mattered…in terms of personal, spiritual and cultural meaning, they might not be aware of them; I knew I was wrong when I did several residencies with them and got to know them more. Values cannot be told but perceived and experienced*. (Artist-Ad)

Therefore, it is also necessary for the other makers to perceive how artisans actually value their culture and gain inner fulfilment from their work, which is embedded in the simplicity of routine life and work.

Finding 4. Tensions exist in current porcelain production which reflect Finding 3 (different values and priorities held by different stakeholders)

The results themed around “challenges and opportunities of collaboration” discussed in the co-creation workshop reveal a series of significant tensions (Sections 7.2.5). These tensions lie:

- between local artisans/masters and migrant creatives;
- between traditional craftsmanship and contemporary artistry/novelty driven by the promotion of objets d’art and creative crafts;
- between the advantages offered by the deconstructed industrial model and the reality of mechanized collaboration caused by “on-demand” “order production”;
- between multicultural co-existence and cultural exclusion due to lack of empathy and openness;
- between makers’ aspiration to artisanal heritage conservation and people’s increasing desire for novelty and artistry

Referencing Finding 3, these tensions reflect in many ways the different values and priorities of the makers. The tensions in values mainly exist between the intrinsic values typically held by local artisans/masters and the extrinsic values characteristically held by designers and contemporary artists. These tensions in porcelain production also imply an anticipated detriment to the value of craftmanship and its sustainability. Promoting crafts in creative industries and the art field is a double-edged sword which not only brings opportunities for traditional crafts but also causes decline in craftsmanship.

Finding 5. Aiming to overcome the tensions, "immersive making" is proposed as a strategical model to create a shared notion of values for leading sustainable transformation

As analysed in Section 7.2.6, in order to overcome the tensions and the imbalance of the values, taking into consideration of the challenges and opportunities, participants proposed an optimized model of collaboration in terms of "immersive making" to create a shared notion of values in craft practice. The model is to nurture and activate spontaneous formation of a mutually creative and shared making-process between artisans and artists/designers through working together and hands-on processes. An open, local, inclusive and flexible environment is regarded as conducive to ensuring the success of this collaboration. There are four elements in the "immersive making" model:

- engaging in immersive practices,
- creating empathetic space,
- facilitating meaningful on-site co-creation,
- boosting collective creativity.

Finding 6. Building relationships through empathetic, dialogical, situated on-site collaboration is key to creating a shared and holistic notion of values and sustainability

In Section 7.2.7, the results of the analysis of the data collected from the practice project identifies four relationships that contribute to the creation of a shared notion of values and sustainability. These four relationships are:

- between people (makers) and place (environment),
- between life and work,
- between local craftspeople and contemporary creatives,
- between tradition and modernity.

Building effective working relations among craft makers, contemporary creatives place/context, tradition and modernity will be critical in overcoming current tensions in porcelain production and in creating shared value. Sennett (2008) criticizes the fact that

innovation in capitalist production acts as a form of individuation and separation, while craft production is closely built on past knowledge and experience within interdependent networks. These networks, as Ingold (2013) argues, are woven through a process of bringing together multiple fields in terms of makers, materials and other non-human elements (including environment). In the process, each field reciprocally communicates and responds to the others. Observations from the final experimental stage shows the intimacy generated from respectful dialogues and conversations, which arose from an immersive experience in the community environment and its everyday life and culture.

These ideas are also consistent with the key concepts of design for sustainability (Section 2.3.4). Both emphasize an interdependence and connectedness among people, environment, society and culture. The new is built upon the old, and innovation upon tradition. Craftspeople who are rooted in tradition and creatives who represent modernity can work together harmoniously in an open and inclusive space that combines daily life and work routines. This is not a utopian escape from the current (post-) industrial system, it has been an everyday experience in Jingdezhen over the last decade, as evidenced in the experimental project. Unfortunately, today, these productive relations are under stress because artistic innovation and economic priorities are beginning to eclipse traditional artisanal craft processes. This is especially ironic because the craft knowledge and culture embedded in place are the foundations for the new artistic and designer innovations that are capable of generating new and added value to traditional craft.

Finding 7. Design can help enhance the collaborative "immersive making" through facilitating situated, empathetic dialogues and developing site-specific tools

During the experimental stage of the project, design was found to be helpful in facilitating this "immersive making" collaboration, especially in the facilitation of an effective and fruitful co-creation process. According to observation, participants tended to use multiple tools that emerged from the making site – clay, readymade objects,

sketches and anything they considered feasible combined with verbal and non-verbal communications – to aid negotiation of emergent dynamics. This was also observed in a number of other cases across the community. As analysed in Sections 7.2.1.3-7.2.1.4, three factors in the co-making process were reported as useful for enhancing the collaboration:

- negotiation with situated dialogues,
- situated design supported by site-specific tools,
- respect and empathy.

This situated design with the site-specific tools emerged from a specific context and respectful, empathetic negotiations. More creative vocabularies, ideas and expressions are created in the emergent process of co-design/making.

7.3.2 Feedback on the Typology of Craft Values

The *typology* of craft values developed in Chapter 6 was employed as a central approach to guide the case study in Jingdezhen. The typology defines five values – environmental, economic, communal, local-cultural and personal-spiritual – pertaining to craft. These five values were employed as initial guidelines for designing questions, templates, and the supporting tools used at the four stages of the research activities. Throughout the case study, the typology was tested, and feedback was gained.

7.3.2.1 Ambiguity in the notion of "personal-spiritual value"

The terms and notions of the five values have been proven understandable and communicable by the majority of the participants. However, a few participants struggled with or misunderstood peronal-spiritual value; they often equated it to some kind of intellectual quality such as an artist's idea/aesthetics in a piece of work, as opposed to the technical quality such as an artisan's precision drawing of changeless motifs. Therefore, a few participants didn't think traditional crafts that were covered with intricate patterns, but perhaps had special meaning or contained the maker's special emotion, have high spiritual value. Likewise, those primarily utilitarian crafts that have

little decorative use were deemed by some participants to have little personal-spiritual value:

> *Spiritual value is about ideas, aesthetics or symbolism. Art objects[objets d'art] generally have higher spirtual value than those crafts for everyday use.* (Master-M1)

As defined in Section 6.3.2, as well as belief, spiritual value also includes the autonomy generated through the fully engaged process of making, self-fulfilment beyond tangible rewards, sense of being etc. Though this definition was explained to participants, some of them still unconsiously referred spiritual value to aesthetics, ideas and symbolism.

7.3.2.2 "Personal-spiritual value" needs reclassification

In addition, the three aspects of "personal-spiritual value" are different by nature which cause difficulty and problems in evaluating the personal-spiritual value of a craft. This is evidenced in the evaluation session in the workshop. Participants found difficulty in evaluating a type of crafts due to their different focuses on personal-spiritual aspect. Some participants attached high spiritual value to a craft whereas some participants scored very low in terms of its spiritual value, because the former focused on the inner fulfilment the craft can offer while the latter emphasized the external affirmation this craft demonstrates. This divergence is caused by different focuses, and thus it cannot correctly reflect the personal-spiritual value of a craft, as a participant stated:

> *The natures of this three aspects of the personal-spiritual value are very different. External affirmation are actually external values and opposite to inner fulfilment, satisfication, and inner well-being which are more intrinsic. Though they are all personal,spiritual values, they are totally different in this sense. So, I don't know how to score them, because in the former aspects it is high, but it is very low in the latter aspect*.(Reserecher-Rb)

This ambiguity and misunderstanding suggests that "personal-spiritual value" needs further consideration and scrutiny.

7.3.2.3 The categories of values need revision as “other values” emerged

As shown in Figure 7.9, “other values” that also influence and prioritize makers’ and stakeholders’ work and directions emerged from the data analysis of sense-making, and were strongly reflected in porcelain products such as *modified, innovative* crafts and *objets d’art*. These values are:

- **Innovation/openness**: improvement, novelty and changes, new possibilities, openness to technologies
- **Aesthetics/artistry**: traditional aesthetics; contemporary aesthetics
- **Reputation/aspiration**: raising profile and crafts and craftspeople; enhancing popularity; branding or partnerships with reputed brands; promoting craft making as an intelligent work

Innovation, which values change, novelty, and openness, don’t fit into any of the five categories. Aesthetics, which refers to beauty, taste and discriminating judgements of particular groups and individuals, can be both communal, cultural, and personal. Furthermore, aesthetics also relates to goodness and virtue, which can be included in the category of personal-spiritual value. Since reputation and aspirations relate to income generation and socioeconomic ambitions, they can be partly included into economic value category. However, they also refer to personal values such as raising the profile and social status of craft and craftspeople, part of which belongs to the personal-spiritual value gained from external affirmations.

These newly emerged “other values” are difficult to include in any single category of value in the typology. Therefore, the typology needs further consideration and revision to include a broader understanding of the values held by the stakeholders in contemporary craft practices of the YRD.

7.4 Chapter Summary

Chapter 7, dealing with an in-depth case study on porcelain crafts in Jingdezhen, has applied the *initial typology of craft values* in real craft practice and has developed proposals for achieving the sustainability of crafts in the collaboration practices. This

case study results in seven findings regarding porcelain making in Jingdezhen and a reflection on the *initial typology* which was tested throughout the study. Combining the seven findings, this chapter results in three principal findings and a reflection on the initial typology of craft values.

In order to keep continuity with the Key Findings 1-3 in Chapter 6 and make consistency in the thesis, these principal findings are named after Key Findings 4-6.

Combining Findings 1, 3 and 4, Key Finding 4 emerges.

Key Finding 4: Deconstructed Industrial Model of Making

> Craft production in Jingdezhen can be characterized as a deconstructed industrial model that entails collaboration among local craftspeople, traditional Chinese artists and contemporary creatives. However, within these collaborations tensions and contradictions exist with respect to the various values, priorities and motivations.

Finding 2 on the values-based appraisal of the porcelain crafts contributes to Key Finding 5.

Key Finding 5: The Result of the Appraisal of the Four Categories of Porcelain Crafts

> In Jingdezhen, *objets d'art* are perceived to have the highest values in term of high aesthetics/tastes, good reputation and high economic benefit but have the least communal and cultural relevance; *traditional crafts* are regarded as the most culturally rich and personally-spiritually meaningful but the least economically viable and limited to tradition; *innovative crafts* are the most forward-looking but the least relevant to personal aspect of craftsmanship, with promising economic benefit; among the four, *modified crafts* have the most even distribution of those values, which protect crafts' cultural, communal and personal-spiritual values to a considerable degree in an economical viable fashion through moderate innovation,

aesthetic improvement and raising reputation.

Combining Findings 5, 6, and 7, Key Finding 6 emerges.

Key Finding 6: "Immersive Making" to Achieve a Shared Notion of Values in Community

An "immersive making" collaboration model was found to exist in Jingdezhen: this enables the spontaneous formation of a mutually creative, shared making-process among craftspeople, artists and designers. This model was reported to be meaningful in building relationships between craftspeople, creatives and places, boosting collective creativity through situated design and empathetic, dialogical negotiation, and creating a holistic notion of values in craft practices.

Feedback: The Initial Typology of Craft Values Needs Revision

The typology of craft values has been tested throughout the case study. Some feedback has been gained: the term "personal-spiritual value" needs further consideration; new economic values in terms of economic prosperity and growth is newly identified; "other values" in terms of innovation, aesthetics and reputation emerged (Section 7.3.1). This feedback indicates that the typology of craft values needs revision to make it complete and communicable. This will be discussed and revised in Chapter 8.

This in-depth case study was conducted in combination with the researcher's residency research in Jingdezhen funded by the British Council's Crafting Futures Grant 2018. A short film documenting the research has been made and posted on the British Council website, available at: https://design.britishcouncil.org/blog/2019/sep/02/xiaofang-zhan-crafting-futures/

DISCUSSION AND DEVELOPMENT – PHASE II

Chapter 8. Development of a Comprehensive Understanding of Craft Values and the Values Embedded in the Four Craft Categories

This chapter aims to refine the typology of values with feedback from the in-depth case study, and develop a comprehensive understanding of craft values, in order to appraise the four craft categories and inform appropriate approaches.

The chapter synthesizes and discusses the values of craft identified from the field in relation to Schwartz's values theory and Walker's QBL, which results in a comprehensive understanding – *a Combined Values Model* (8.1). With this model, the values embedded in the four craft categories (*traditional, modified, innovative* and *objets d'art*) are appraised, and the results of the appraisal are plotted (8.2). Through discussing the appraisal results of the four categories with respect to their values emphases and priorities, four different approaches are identified (8.3). The chapter then results in an outcome and a key finding as presented in the chapter summary (8.4).

8.1 Developing A Comprehensive Understanding of Craft Values

Based on the data collected from the fieldwork's Phase I, Chapter 5 developed a typology of craft values in terms of:

- **Personal-spiritual value**: freedom/self-expression (autonomy, creativity, curiosity), inner fulfilment (from rewarding works, and well-being), external affirmation/sense of pride (ICH recognition, etc.)
- **Local-cultural value**: identity, distinctiveness, continuity and consistency in pattern, design, materials, techniques etc.

- **Communal value**: responsibility to pass on skills, community cohesion, sharing/contribution, ensuring collective interests (employability) and equality
- **Environmental value**: practical eco-benefits, environmental ethics
- **Economic value**: moderate livelihood, economic prosperity/wealth creation

This typology was used and tested in the in-depth case study. Feedback from the case study suggests that further consideration and revision are needed to make the typology complete and communicable, (Section 7.3.2) specifically in the areas of:

- Ambiguity in the notion of "personal-spiritual value"
- Categories of values needing revision as "other values" emerged:

  Innovation/openness: improvement, novelty and changes; new ideas and concepts; openness to new technologies

  Aesthetics/artistry: traditional aesthetics; contemporary aesthetics;

  Reputation/aspiration: brand building; raising profile; promoting craft as an intelligent work.

These "other values" are difficult to be included in any single category of the previous five values. The feedback from the case study indicates that more dimensions and categories are needed to understand values involved in crafts, and what the term "personal-spiritual value" refers to requires clarification and/or relocation.

Building on the understanding of the literature on craft, sustainability and values in Chapters 2 and 6 (Sections 2.1.2, 2.3.1.2, 6.3.2), the researcher focuses on the predominant model of human values – the quasi-circumplex model proposed by Schwartz (1992, 2012a), and Walker's Quadruple Bottom Line of *Design for Sustainability* (2014a). For their comprehensive nature and cross-cultural validation, these two theories are chosen as principal references to understand the values of crafts gained from fieldwork in the YRD. In order to make sense of the findings identified from the fieldwork, Schwartz's values model was employed to understand crafts' values. These values are then discussed in relationship with Walker's Quadruple

Bottom Line. Through these two steps, a more comprehensive understanding of values embedded in crafts and craft practices was mapped. First, a clarification of "personal-spiritual value" was conducted.

8.1.1 Clarification of the "Personal-spiritual Value"

Some people in the case study found the term "personal-spiritual value" to be ambiguous. The term was used by the researcher to refer to the individual fulfilment and inner growth gained through making process and practice. The term "personal-spiritual value" is understood here to include three key aspects:

- Self-expression of creativity, curiosity and autonomy;
- Inner fulfilment and sense of purpose, supported through rewarding works; and
- External affirmation and sense of pride (Section 4.2.4).

However, two issues arose with regard to the term "personal-spiritual value" in relation to craft:

- Without a detailed explanation, "personal-spiritual value" was equated by some participants with the intangible, intellectual ideas/aesthetics of a craft (especially in an art object), as opposed to the intangible aspects such as skills and creativity and technical qualities of materials, forms, repeated motifs/patterns etc. (Section 7.3.2.1).
- The three aspects of "personal-spiritual value" given above are quite different in nature. Self-expression, inner fulfilment and well-being focus on personal inner growth whereas affirmation and sense of pride focus on external recognition from others. However, there are also slight differences between the former two aspects: creativity, curiosity and autonomy refer to making craft for its own sake and are more related to self-expression as an individual; while well-being of rewarding works refers to makers' pleasure and healthy connections to their work, which they find fulfilling, creative, and conducive to their values and beliefs (Section 7.3.2.2).

Therefore, it is better to separate the three aspects of the "personal-spiritual value" into different values types. These will be separated and relocated with a synthesized

consideration according to Schwartz's Values Theory in the following sections.

8.1.2 Schwartz's Values Circumplex

Schwartz (1992) identifies ten motivational basic human values that influence people's decisions and behaviours across cultures and societies. These values work together in a quasi-circumplex structure and fall into two contrasting categories. *Conservation values* contrast with *Openness to Change* values, and *Self-transcendence* values contrast with *Self-enhancement* values. In 2012, based on the ten original values, Schwartz and his colleagues proposed a refined set of 19 individual values in order to explain more accurately the central idea of his values theory: "values form a circular motivational continuum" (2012b, p. 663). However, the authors also postulated that these 19 values could be collapsed into the 10 values in the orginal theory, because they lie on the same motivational continuum. Therefore, the researcher focuses primarily on the original ten basic values with the 19 individual values as their subtypes. Schwartz's value circumplex model is reproduced in Figure 8.1.

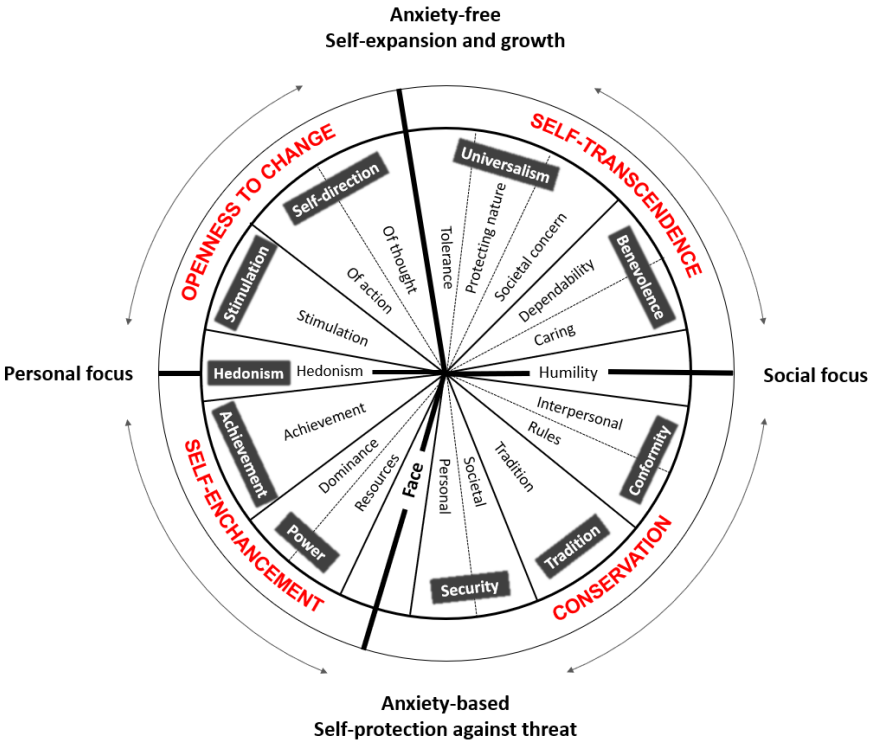

Figure 8.1. Reproduction of Schwartz's quasi-circumplex model of values by the researcher, based on the original ten values and the refined 19 values of the theory (Schwartz, 1992, 2012b)

As shown in Figure 8.1, the 19 individual values are arranged in a circle according to their comparabilities and form a coherent continuum. These 19 values can be collapsed into the orignial ten basic values shown in the black boxes. Schwartz organized these values according to a dynamic principle of congruence and conflict, This means, the closer any two values in either direction around the circle, the more similar their underlying motivations, thus the more congruent; the more distant, the more antagonistic their motivations, thus the more contradictory. For example, behaviour that is pro-universalism is driven by close underlying motivations with behaviour of benevolence – “enhancement of others and transcendence of selfish interests”; whereas pursuing achievement values typically conflicts with pursuing benevolence values (Schwartz, 2012a, p. 9). This also indicates that actions in pursuit of any value have consequences that conflict with the values on the opposite side but are congruent with values adjacent to it.

According to Schwartz, the structure also reveals other dynamic relations with interests and with anxiety. First, values in the complexes of self-enhancement and openness to change are primarily related to how one expresses self interests and ego; values in the complexes of conservation and self-transcendence tend to motivate people to transcend ego and consider others, and affect their interests. Second, the immanent causes underlying the values reflect their relations to anxiety. Pursuit of self-enhancement and conservaton values serves to cope with anxiety due to physical and social uncertainty, because these are self-protective values against threats; Self-transcendence and openness to change values express anxiety-free motivations because these are self-expansion values and focus on inner growth.

8.1.3 The Values of Craft in Relationship to Schwartz’s Values Circumplex

Comparing findings from the fieldwork with the values circumplex, Schwartz’s values model was found to be highly applicable to an understanding of values engaged in crafts. As stated in the beginning of Table 8.1, the field research identified a typology of five craft values and three additional new values. In order to make them compatible

with Schwartz's values theory, these values were synthesized and subdivided into 13 individual craft values (Table 8.1). The relationships between these values and Schwartz's values circumplex are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Table 8.1. The overall values embedded in crafts identified from the field research

The values identified from field research phase I (Chapter 6)	
The five values	**Subdivisions**
Personal-spiritual value	**Craft values 1**: inner fulfilment and well-being from rewarding works, sense of purpose **Craft values 10**: external affirmation and sense of pride **Craft values 13**: self-expression, creativity, autonomy, curiosity
Lcoal-cultural value	**Craft values 4**: cultural consistency, identity, distinctiveness of lifestyles, customs, folklores
Communal value	**Craft values 3**: responsibility, collaboraion/cohesion, sharing/constribution, ethical norms and equality
Environmental value	**Craft values 2**: eco-ethics, focusing on caring for nature, eco-wisdom and beliefs **Craft values 6**: practical eco-benefits, focusing on materials, resources, energy use
Economic value	**Craft values 7**: moderate livelihood, making a living **Craft values 8**: economic prosperity, immoderate growth
The values identified from field research phase II (Chapter 7)	
Three other values	**Subdivisions**
Innovation/openness	**Craft values 11:** novelty and change, contemporary aesthetics **Craft values 12:** openness to new technologies/ techniques
Aesthetics/artistry	**Craft values 6:** traditional aesthetics – classics of patterns, designs, materials and techniques **Craft values 11**: contemporary aesthetics – fashion, novelty and changes
Aspiration/reputation	**Craft values 8**: economic prosperity, immoderate growth **Craft values 9:** personal aspiration, raising profile/reputation, brand building

8.1.3.1 Self-transcendence and its related craft values

Benevolence and *universalism* are self-transcending values in Schwartz which advocate preserving and enhancing the welfare of people in local communities and globally. *Benevolence* includes caring and dependability, with caring referring to devotion to the welfare of group members, and dependability implying being a reliable and trustworthy member of the group (Schwartz, 2012, p. 7). *Universalism* refers to expanding benevolence to larger societies of all people and to nature (ibid). It includes societal concern, protection of nature and tolerance of differences.

In craft practice, the values that are consistent with self-transcendence values are:

Table 8.2. Self-transcendence: Craft values 1-3

Schwartz's self-transcendence values	**Craft values**
Benevolence	**Craft values 3:** communality – responsibility, collaboraion/cohesion, sharing/constribution, ethical norms and equality
Universalism	**Craft values 1**: inner fulfilment and well-being from rewarding works, sense of purpose **Craft values 2:** eco-ethics – caring for nature, eco-wisdom and beliefs

Benevolence: craft values 3 – communality

Craft has long since been a community-based production. This is especially prominent in the YRD of China – crafts are often produced by the collaboration of local craftspeople in particular places, such as the embroidery community in Suzhou and the porcelain community in Jingdezhen. Benevolence is the core of Confucian philosophy in Chinese society, which has long been practised in many craft communities (Tu, 1985). In the porcelain community of Jingdezhen, traits of mutual support and benevolence have always been practised in guilds system and are still valued among artisans in contemporary craft community (Li, 2011; also see Section 4.2.2.4). They include: sharing resources and knowledge; giving back profit to the community; responsibility of passing on craft knowledge to the next generations; responsibility of

protecting collective interests and welfare (Section 4.2.2). Except for voluntary support from individuals and at the grassroot level, these values in today's craft communities of the YRD are also enhanced in another way – through a series of top-down campaigns such as governmental ICH intiatives in cross-sectors promotion (Section 2.2.2).

Confucianism also pursuades people to extend love and favours to the broader society and to nature (Guo et al, 2012), which is consistent with Schwartz's values extension from benevolence to universalism.

Universalism: craft values 2 – eco-ethics

In addition to communality, the field research shows that craft also significantly conveys environmental values (Section 4.2.1). The environmental values of craft include two aspects: craft values 2 – eco-ethics focusing on caring for nature in a moral and broad sense; and craft values 6 – practical eco-benefits focusing on materials, resources and energy use.

Throughout history craft has generally been perceived to be an ecological and environmentally friendly practice (Section 2.1.2.1). However, findings from the field research indicate that some crafts are not necessarily eco-friendly at the practical level, such as porcelain which is an intensive energy consumption practice. But craft practices in general set out a good example of environmental stewardship (Section 4.2.1.5). An expert in craft commented: "*There have been many ethics and beliefs in traditional craft practices that respect nature, cherish materials, promote durability of artifacts and practise human-environment harmony"*. These universal concerns about the environment have been embeded in how people acquire materials, what products they produce, and how they make and use them. It is interesting that not many local craftspeople in the interviews mentioned environmental values or set them as their values priority (see Figure 7.14), but some of them talked at length about traditional beliefs in human-materials-environment relationships. Attitudes and practices that are conducive to nature were regarded as a great virtue in Chinese tradition, as expressed by the great Taoist idea – the integration of the individual human being and heaven (*tian ren he yi*). Craftspeople uphold craft's environmental value unconsciously – they

don't set environmental value as their primary goal but embody it through conforming to traditional practices, norms and beliefs. For examle, in many Chinese traditional craft practices, materials were revered as gifts from heaven, hence craftsmen made their best efforts to make them into the best artifacts, to be cherished, and passed on to their descendants (Sections 2.1.2.3, 4.2.1.5).

Therefore, universalism relates to environmental care in a larger sense of eco-ethics, and practical eco-benefits tend to support conservation values at a more immediate, fundamental level.

Universalism: craft values 1 – ego-transcending inner fulfilment and well-being

As identified in the literature review (Section 2.1.2.3), craft practice represents an authentic model of work and life and this authenticity is deeply related to satisfying labour and moral ethics, long defended by John Ruskin. This finding is corroborated by the findings from the field research that many makers highly value the intimacy with nature through their materials and the inner fulfilment gained from transcending personal interests in craft practices (Section 4.2.4.2). Research also recogizes craft as a therapy/cure for some mental illnesses caused by the stress of modern lifestyles such as depression and anxiety (Kimport and Robbins, 2012). Therefore, this deeply fulfilling aspect of personal inner growth and the mental well-being brought about by craft making are widely shared and appreciated. It extends beyond personal expression in terms of creativity and curiosity, and beyond communal benevolence in terms of mutual care, responsibility and equality, to more universal values of human nature and fulfilling experiences.

8.1.3.2 Self-enhancement and its related craft values

In contrast with self-transcending values, *power* and *achievement* are self-enchancing values that focus on social esteem through demonstrating "dominance and competence over resources and people" (Schwartz, 2012b). Wealth, fame, authority, and high social status are labelled as power values (ibid). People who seek to control resources obviously give supremacy to these values. Being ambitious, successful,

capable, intelligent and influential are markers of achievement values. Achievement values focus on higher levels of social esteem than power values (ibid). These are self-protection and anxiety-based values, which implies that people in a competitive and capitalist culture are more likely to seek these values.

In craft practice, values that are in line with self-enchancement are:

Table 8.3. The Self-enhancement: Craft values 8-10

Schwartz's self-enhancement values	**Craft values**
Power	**Craft values 8**: economic prosperity, wealth creation, immoderate growth **Craft values 9:** personal aspiration, raising profile/reputation, brand building (or partnership with renowned brands)
Achievement	**Craft values 10**: external affirmation by peers, awards, exhibitions

Power: craft values 8 – economic prosperity and growth

According to field findings, economic prosperity and growth is an important factor that influences stakeholders' values and priorities (Section 7.2.3). This is especially held by some ambitous masters, designers, support organizations and artists, as well as economic development organizations (Walker et al. 2019, p. 102). According to the appraisal done by participants in the field research, economic values are relatively more engaged in *innovative crafts* and *objets d'art* in the YRD than *traditional* and *modified crafts* (Section 7.2.4).

Power: craft values 9 – personal aspiration, raising profile and brand building

For further advancement, some makers and artists have personal ambitions of raising their professonal profiles and building their own brands or being in partnership with well-known brands (Section 7.2.3). Some craft masters in the YRD try to participate in academic conferences, societies, cultural boards and related events to enhance their CVs and profiles, e.g. a ceramic master has participated in and gained honour from a series of academic and social organizations and events. Also, some artists and

designers collaborate with artisans to set up their own brands to promote themselves (see *modified* and *innovative crafts*). Likewise, a master of bronze craft has created a brand under his own name, and he expressed that “building a brand of family crafts that represents the country’s best craftsmanship is more meaningful than just making economic profits” (M14). In addition, some makers collaborate with existing well-known brands to raise their profiles, e.g. several cercamic makers in Jingdezhen make tableware for the luxury brand Shangxia and share joint ownership (Section 5.2.3.2). These are not only prevalent in the YRD of China but are also common practices in other countries, albeit in different forms, e.g. Cumbria Crystal, a cut-glass crystalware enterprise in England made strategic parternships with Bentley cars and the Bristish television show Downton Abbey to raise their profile (Walker et al., 2019, p. 30).

Achievement: craft values 10 – external affirmation from others

In seeking recognition and affirmation, some craftspeople in the YRD are enthusiastic about participating in competitions such as the ICH inheritor programme in order to win honour and awards (Section 4.2.4.1). This is driven by pursuing a higher level of self-esteem than craft values 9, which focus more on the external recognition of personal capability and success among peers and society.

Although these three self-enhancing values of crafts are different in their emphasis, in many cases they share the same motivation/goals and mutually influence or support each other. Pursuing achievement values supports pursuing power values or vice versa, e.g. gaining external affirmation from society through participating in the ICH inheritor programme helps increase economic benefits and/or support craft brand building. In turn, aspiring to build brands and raise personal profiles sometimes helps win external affirmation and recognition.

8.1.3.3 Conservation and its related craft values

Tradition, conformity and *security* are three conservation values that advocate continuity when facing uncertainty, ensuring a continuation and consistency of well-established orders and traditions. *Tradition* is inherently conservative and values time-honoured customs, ideas and beliefs which have special significance with their origins

in the past (Green, 1997, p. 800). Respect for tradition, humility, devotion, accepting one's allocation in life, and moderation, are all typical markers used in Schwartz's theory to define values engaged in tradition. *Conformity* values include compliance to social rules and to interpersonal expectations, which emphasize self-restraint in actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate norms in everyday interaction. *Security* values refer to keeping social order, ensuring family and national security, clean and secure living conditions and environments (Schwartz, 2012b, p. 8).

In craft practice, values that are in line with conservation are:

Table 8.4. Concervation: Craft values 4-7

Schwartz's conservation values	**Craft values**
Conformity & Tradition	**Craft values 4:** cultural consistency and identity – customs, lifestyles, folklores of a particualr place
	Craft values 5: traditional aesthetics – distinctive patterns, designs, materials and techniques
Security	**Craft values 6:** practical eco-benefits
	Craft values 7: moderate/reasonable livelihood and economic issues

Tradition and conformity: craft values 4 – cultural consistency and identity

Cultural value of craft in terms of consistency and continuation of tradition, identity and local origin, as identified from the field and literature research, is one of the intrinsic values that characterize craft in the modern era (Sections 2.1.2.1, 4.2.3, 7.2.3). Crafts' age-old place specific materials, forms, uses, and culture determine its conservative nature. In the YRD, local tradition and cultural distinctivenss are regarded by almost all informants as the most significant value of craft. Through practising local crafts and conforming to traditional materials, techniques and processes, people feel they are preserving tradition, and building a sense of belonging and of psychological security in

a currently fragmented soceity.

Tradition and conformity: craft values 5 – traditional aesthetics

Aesthetics, referring to patterns and tastes of individuals and particular groups, is identified as another value that makers hold in their practices (Section 7.2.3). It includes traditional aesthetics and contemporary aesthetics. Although participants who suscribe to traditional taste talked about the pursuit of aesthetics in a very personal sense, what they described as “tastes or aesthetics” are related in many cases to particular patterns, forms, colour matchings, etc. These reflect the particular traditions, customs and preferences of their respective groups, and are therefore deemed by them to be “distinctive” from the tastes of other groups. Walker notes that “judgements of taste are related to the conventions of social groups”(2009, p. 27). In essence, one’s traditional aesthetics reflects self-identification of one’s distinctive cultivation that is rooted in collective tradition and norms of material culture. Thus, the value of traditional aesthetics engaged in craft and held by makers is by nature conservative and conforms to particular patterns, forms and designs from the past.

Security: craft values 6 – practical eco-benefits

As identified above, practical eco-benefits of craft support conservation values because they focus more on the immediate impacts on the enviornment. They focus on whether the materials, resources and energy are recyclable, renewable, clean, indispensible or pollution-free. These are values that support our behaviour and practices to do less, or no, harm to our living environment, thereby making our life untainted and secure. This is different from the univeral values supported by the eco-ethics in the larger sense, since practical eco-benefits maintain conservation values on a more technical level.

Security: craft values 7 – moderate/reasonable livelihood

As part of economic value, livelihood is the most basic element to ensure a sustainment of crafts into the future. A large number of craftspeople, especially artisans, make crafts to make a living or keep their enterprises in operation (Section 4.2.5). There are few craftspeople who express the ambitions of generating great wealth or pursuing economic prosperity. As a master said: “*This is just simple, I love*

it…weaving makes me happy…I am satisfied if it can support myself. I will carry on" (M7). Findings from the field indicate that some traditional crafts and craftpeople in the region still cannot sustain themselves, despite significant governmental and commercial promotion and support in the the region (Sections 4.2.5.4, 5.2.3.1). However, the amount of money perceived to be enough to live on varies from individual to individual and is strongly related to personal lifestyles and standards.

8.1.3.4 Openness to change and its related craft values

In contrast to conservation values, *self-direction* and *stimulation* are openness to change values which promote novelty and change, creativity, independence, autonomy and seeking pleasure. *Self-direction* refer to independence both of thought and action, which includes creativitity, freedom, choosing own goals, curiousity, independence, self-respect, being intelligent and maintaining privacy (Schwartz, 2012b, p. 5). *Stimulation* values excitement, novelty, and challenge in which change is the central issue.

In craft practice, values that are in line with openness to change are:

Table 8.5. Openness to Change: Craft values 11-13

Schwartz's openness to change values	**Craft values**
Self-direction	**Craft values 13:** self-expression, creativity, curiosity and autonomy
Stimulation	**Craft values 11:** novelty and change, contemporary aesthetics **Craft values 12:** openness to technologies/new techniques

Self-direction: craft values 13 – self-expression, creativity, curiosity and autonomy

In terms of creativity, curiosity, and the autonomy of integrative craft process Craft values 13 are viewed by the makers in the YRD as a freedom of self-drected process beyond external affirmations from others (Craft values 10) (Sections 4.2.4.2; 7.2.3). This is to some extent close to the universal value of deep inner fulfilment that craft

practice brings to the maker (Craft values 1). Similarly, creativity and curiosity are also claimed to play an imporatant role in the makers' mental well-being gained through the autonomy of a making practice (Sennett, 2008; Crawford, 2009). However, rather than focusing on deep inner fulfilment and well-being, craft values 13 emphasize more the expression of personality and one's uniqueness of creativity, which is more about ego-building than ego-transcending.

Stimulation: craft values 11 – novelty and change, contemporary aesthetics

Many crafts in the YRD are modified, redesigned and repurposed to suit contemporary use and culture, such *as innovative crafts, modified crafts* and *objets d'art* identified from the field (Sections 5.2.3.2-5.2.3.4). Innovation in terms of novelty and change that cater to contemporary aesthetics were regarded as important values and priorities in crafts' development by some participants in the case study (Section 7.2.3). These values are driven by stimulation that seeks for change and newness. Almost all participants in the case study who suscribe to contemporary aesthetics valued avant-garde tastes and trends that are often valued in fashion and modern design.

Stimulation: craft values 12 – openness to technologies/new techniques

Though the majority of informants and participants in the field research objected to adopting technologies in making crafts, there were some that adopted new technologies to improve crafts, especially some *innovative crafts*, such as the Digital Emulative Colour Silk Wevaving Technique (Figure 5.13). What is more, digital technologies have been widely used for storytelling and marketing in product sales and promotion, e.g. designing digital platforms, such as Dongjia – a Chinese social e-commerce platform for handicrafts, to tell the stories of the crafts, and design maker-user connections, such as scanning barcodes to view the videos showing where and how the crafts are made. If used appropriately, technologies and new techniques can become a positive stimulation for revitalizing traditional crafts in the contemporary era.

The issue of change

Self-direction and stimulation are driven by organismic needs for mastery and interactional requirement of autonomy and independence in order to maintain an open

level of activation (Schwartz, 2012b, p. 5). In other words, seeking change is an inherent need, especially when facing challenges and threats (ibid). Similarly, the value of change is very well recognized in traditional Chinese philosophy, as represented in the ancient classic text, *I Ching* (*i.e.The Book of Changes*) in which change within a dynamic, holistic and continous flow is regarded as the supreme nature of any enterprise (Redmond and Hon, 2014, p.32; Tu 1985). Furthermore, Confucianism holds that change should obey classical principles, do no harm to others, and be appropriate (Guo et al, 2012). These imply that novelty and change should be sought for internal causes consistent with tradition.

However, if the value of change is engaged and excessively celebrated for external causes (e.g. seeking endless innovation of consumer goods, fashion garments and accessories, etc.), it contradicts traditional aesthetics and cultural values that can allow appropriate changes but require continuity and conformity. Externally purposed novelty and changes, on the contrary, deviate from the very nature of *change* in the first place.

In order to make sense of the foregoing discussion, these values embedded in contemporary craft practices of the YRD are mapped onto Schwartz's Values Circumplex in Figure 8.2. Thirteen individual values engaged in crafts are adapted and organized into the circumplex.

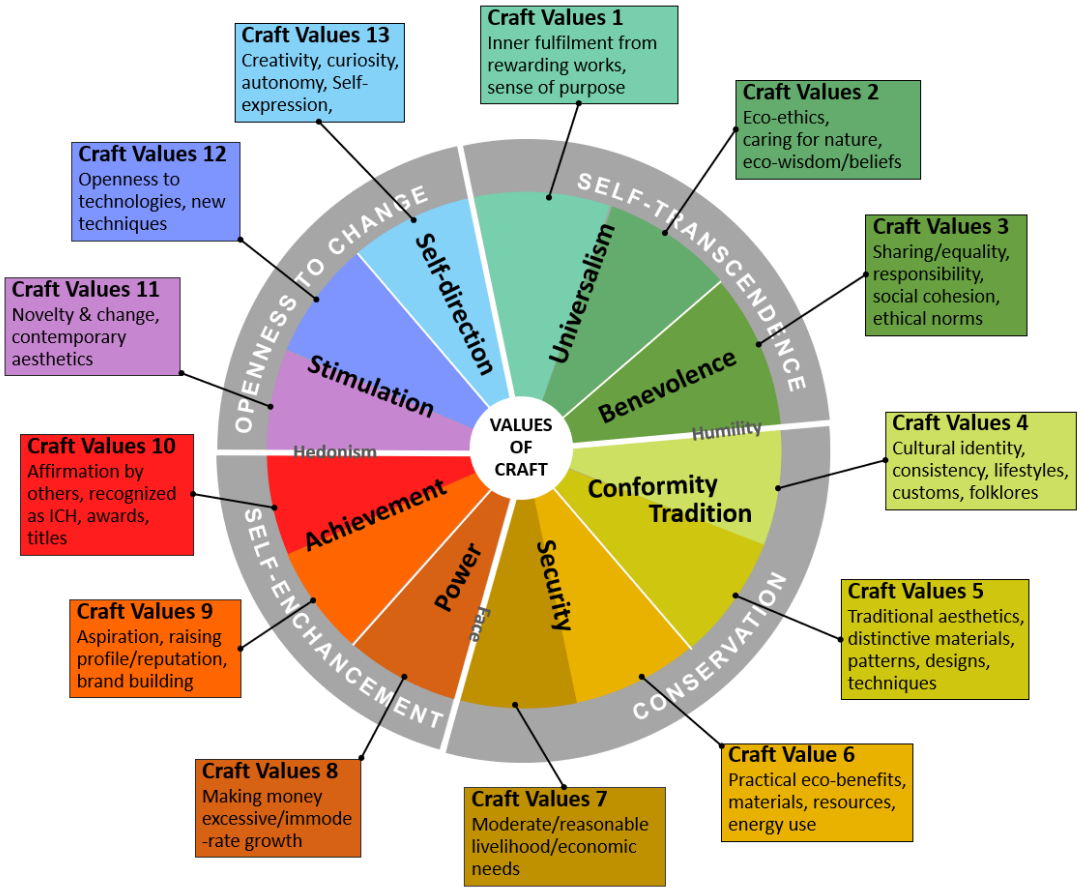

Figure 8.2. Mapping values embedded in craft practices onto Schwartz's Values Circumplex

8.1.4 The Values of Craft in Relationship to Walker's Quadruple Bottom Line

This section discussed the values of craft practices as they relate to Walkers' *Quadruple Bottom Line of Design for Sustainability*. As was presented in Section 2.3.1.2, Walker (2011, p.188) proposes the QBL in terms of three categories of meaning and one category of means. By comparing the 13 craft values engaged in craft practices with Walker's QBL, it is found that some of the craft values are highly consistent with the four elements of design for sustainability whereas others can act as ways of ensuring the three meanings to be fulfilled. This relationship is discussed in the following paragraphs and presented later in Figure 8.3.

8.1.4.1 Practical meaning and its related craft values

In craft practice, values that are consistent with practical meaning are:

Table 8.6. Practical meaning: Craft values 6-7 – Conservation

QBL	Craft values	Schwartz's values
Practical meaning utilitarian needs plus environmental impacts	**Craft values 6:** practical eco-benefits **Craft values 7:** moderate/reasonable livelihood and economic needs	**Conservation** • Security

In the QBL, practical meaning refers to "utility for human benefits and the environmental consequences", such as caring for the environment while fulfilling human need for food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, and doing this in a manner that is economically viable (Walker, 2011, p. 188). Craft practice as a livelihood to earn a moderate and reasonable income relates to practical meaning that secures a decent life. In the YRD, there is increasing interest in pursuing craft as a career (mainly in profitable crafts such *as modified, innovative* and *objets d'art*) since some crafts show promise in offering craftspeople a sufficient income (Section 4.2.5.4). Also, many crafts are resourced and produced locally and some of their materials, processes and techniques have even been improved with modern design and technologies to reduce environmental impact (e.g. some *modified* and *innovative* crafts, Sections 5.2.3.2, 5.2.3.3). These factors help protect the environment and ensure a healthy living, thus also contributing to the practical meaning of sustainability.

As Figure 8.2 shows, the two aspects of craft values that relate to practical meaning of sustainability align with *security* and *conservation* in Schwartz's Values Circumplex. This implies that the practical meanings associated with craft practices are in accord with ensuring a sense of security, including financial security, and conservation of practices, cultural meanings (also see social meaning below), and environmental conservation by, for example, reducing transportation needs due to local-scale production.

8.1.4.2 Social meaning and its related craft values

In craft practice, values that contribute to social meaning are:

Table 8.7. Saocial meaning: Craft values 3-5 – Benevolence,Tradition and Conformity

QBL	Craft values	Schwartz's values
Social meaning social justice, equity, community, benevolence	**Craft values 3:** responsibility, collaboraion, cohesion, sharing/constribution, ethical norms and equality	**Self-transcendence** • Benevolence
	Craft values 4: culture – consistency, identity, customs, lifestyles, folklores **Craft values 5:** traditional aesthetics – distinctive patterns, designs, materials and techniques	**Conservation** • Tradition • Conformity

Social meaning refers to the substantive values that have "proven to be critical to individuals and societies over the centuries", including one's moral compass and relationship to others (ibid, p. 188). Social justice, equity, community and benevolence are typical markers of social meaning in the QBL. Craft values 3 acknowledges that craft practice is a communal activity. As the porcelain and Su-silk embroidery crafts of the YRD embody, makers mutually support each other; share best practices and skills; take responsibility to pass down their skills; and conform to the ethics of their practice (Section 4.2.2). These traits strongly align with equity, community and benevolence of social meaning.

In addition, social meaning also recognizes a deeper aspect of collective mental enrichment which crystalizes those substantive values in human societies over time, that is, cultural identity and tradition (Walker, 2014). As Craft values 4 indicates, a number of crafts in the YRD are recognized examples of Intangible Cultural Heritage that have been produced in this region, and the knowledge and skills related to their making handed down from one generation to the next for around a thousand years; these include Jingdezhen porcelain making and Su-embroidery. Hence, these craft practices have strong cultural identities and are representative of rich, place-based traditions and knowledge – the values of the community, a sense of responsibility to

continue the tradition, and their respective ethics are also symbolized and manifested in these products and practices. As craft values 5 represents, the established cultural identity of a craft, and hence the place and people, is embodied in its distinctive patterns, materials, designs and techniques, all of which contribute to the unique aesthetics of its tradition. Therefore, within the tradition, to ensure its integrity, individual artistic freedom is limited and change is slow.

As shown in Figure 8.2, Craft values 3 is consistent with benevolence values, which are part of the *self-transcendence* area of Schwartz's circumplex, while Craft values 4 and 5, tradition and conformity, belongs to the *conservation* area. Thus, through their relationships to community, cultural identity and "beyond self" values, *benevolence*, *tradition* and *conformity* in Schwartz's Values Circumplex all contribute to the social meaning of design for sustainability.

8.1.4.3 Personal meaning and its related craft values

In craft practice, values that are in line with personal meaning are:

Table 8.8. Personal meaning: Craft values 1, 2 & 13 – Universalism and Self-direction

QBL	Craft values	Schwartz's values
Personal meaning spiritual development & well-being, inner values, conscience	**Craft values 1**: inner fulfillment from rewarding works, sense of purpose **Craft values 2**: eco-ethics – caring for nature, eco-wisdom/beliefs	**Self-transcendence** • Universalism
	Craft values 13: freedom of thought and action – creativity, curiosity, autonomy	**Openness to change** • Self-direction

In the QBL, personal meaning refers to one's inner values and development including 'truth, self-knowledge, freedom of thought, one's moral compass to others' and to nature (Walker, 2011, p. 189). It also addresses a deeper aspect of humanity that "lies beyond ethics and wisdom", that "can take us beyond ego and self-oriented preoccupation" to a more examined life and matters of ultimate concern (ibid, p.1 88).

Many craftspeople in the YRD view their work as spiritually rewarding and deeply

fulfilling when they work independently and directly with materials and their peers in the process. The fully engaged process in turn, as many makers expressed, brings a sense of inner peace and harmony, and a sense of intimacy to the place, people and nature. They said that it not only boosted their curiosity and creativity, but also raised deep emotional relationships with the places they live and the people they work with (also see Section 4.2.4). These shared personal experiences imply three levels of corelated values: Craft values 1 – an inner fulfilment and sense of purpose gained through engaged working process; Craft values 2 – an ecological ethic nurtured through working closely with the materials, people and nature; Craft values 13 – a sense of freedom that relates to creativity, curiosity and autonomy.

However, it is noteworthy that the self-direction values of Craft values 13 in some cases include self-expression and ego-building. Therefore, it often results in two contradictory consequences. On the one hand, freedom driven by one's internal pursuit (e.g. pursuing excellence and improvement of the craft in itself) that involves curiosity, creativity and autonomy, plays an important role in one's mental well-being (Sennett, 2008; Crawford, 2009), thus contributing to personal meaning of the QBL. On the other hand, freedom driven by one's external purpose or self-indulgence (e.g. some *objets d'art* are made mainly to express the artists' or makers' unique personality and specific tastes) can contribute to ego and image-building that in many cases ignores deeper, inner needs.

While distinguishing the levels of personal meaning, Walker recognizes that ethics, wisdom and ultimate concern are reciprocally related to each other (2011, p. 188). This is also reflected in craft practice: a sense of ultimate meaning gained from inner fulfilment of making is built on the realization of inner freedom, curiosity and creativity, and closely relates to one's ethics and relationship with one's culture, others and nature.

In Figure 8.2, Craft values 1 and 2 are universal values in the self-transcendence complex, while Craft values 13 shows self-direction values in the openness to change complex. Therefore, it is clear that personal meaning of the QBL involves mainly self-

transcendence values that require a small degree of openness to change.

8.1.4.4 Economic means and its related craft values

In craft practice, values that can act as means to enhance the other values and meanings are:

Table 8.9. Economic and Non economic means: Craft values 7-12 – Security, Power, Achievement and Stimulation

QBL	Craft values	Schwartz's values
Economic means A means, rather than an end	**Craft values 7:** moderate/reasonable economic issues **Craft values 8:** economic growth and prosperity	**Conservation** • Security
Non-economic means	**Craft values 9:** aspiration for raising reputation, brand building **Craft values 10:** external affirmation - recognized as ICH, titles, awards **Craft values 11:** openness to new techniques/technologies **Craft values 12:** novelty and change, contemporary aesthetics	**Self-enchancement** • Power • Achievement **Openness to change** • Stimulation

In the QBL, economic means refers to the financial viability of the enterprise or practice so as to ensure the three meanings (practical, social, personal) are fulfilled and sustainable. Economic viability is a means to this end, not an end in itself (Walker, 2011, p. 189). This is very true for craft practice. In the contemporary socioeconomic conditions, it is necessary to find appropriate means for traditional craft to continue and flourish. According to the QBL, none of the Craft values 7-12 represent meaning in itself but can be seen as a means. Although Craft values 9-12 are not directly related to economic issues, if viewed as means, they can help revitalize traditional crafts in present-day life, which in turn contributes to financial viability. In order to distinguish them, Craft values 9-12 are classified as noneconomic means, and Craft values 7-8 as economic means (see Table 8.9).

This research found that craftspeople in the YRD make changes to traditional crafts, adopt new technologies, promote their products on digital platforms, take part in competitions/exhibitions, partner with reputed brands and, in some cases, even make money out of one craft to sustain another. For example, some embroiderers in Suzhou modified intricate traditional designs and patterns to better suit contemporary sensibilities and modern consumer preferences. This acknowledges Craft values12: contemporary aesthetics, novelty and change. Based on traditional weaving techniques, Master Li in Hangzhou created a revolutionary digital method of traditional weaving which greatly expanded the spectrum of colour and enhanced the effects and details (Section 5.2.3.4). This represents Craft values 11: openness to new techniques and technologies. Craftspeople endeavour to be recognized by the government as ICH inheritors which brings them a sense of pride, as well as receiving public funding to support their crafts and transmit the skills. Similarly, some ceramic makers in Jingdezhen took part in craft shows, competitions and exhibitions to allow their skills to be better recognized by their peers and others (see the description of affirmation value in Section 7.2.3). In addition to bringing about a sense of achievement, the awards or titles enable young ceramicists' entry into this "creative market". Otherwise, "it's hard for them to make a living" in the community. This implies that Craft values 10 – external affirmation in terms of official ICH recognition, awards, titles, etc. – could, in particular circumstances, be a "viability" strategy. In addition, branding is frequently used to enhance the perceived value of crafts and of places, as exemplified by the Herdy company in Cumbria, UK (Walker et al. 2019, p.125). Likewise, some ceramic makers in Jingdezhen form partnerships with well-known brands (Section 5.2.3.2). These are related to Craft values 9 – personal aspiration – they may or may not be directly driven by these values, but branding through such partnerships has proved useful in raising the profile and perceived value of crafts, heritage and place.

Regarding economic means, Craft values 7 and 8 are different in nature. Economic prosperity is primarily concerned with making money. Though a moderate livelihood also acts as an economic means, it can also be seen as part of practical meaning,

since almost all basic human maintance is supported by economic transactions in modern societies (i.e, food, shelter, healthcare, clothing etc.). A woodcarver (M12) in Hangzhou who was passionate about his family craft told the researcher that because he could not earn a living solely by making traditional woodcarving crafts, he had started to apply small parts of carving onto readymade wooden tableware, and it turned out to be very successful in the market. He said that the profit from this tableware paid the cost of his traditional crafts, otherwise he would have had to give up. This case suggests that Craft values 8 can sometimes act as means to realize Craft values 7 (i.e. help ensure an adequate income), if its purpose is reasonable and justified.

As dicussed in the “social meaning” section, it is part of traditional crafts’ nature for change to be limited and slow. As agreed by many informants in the field, craft has always stayed relevant to changing tastes and cultural mores (Section 4.2.3.3). Traditions have never “stood still” – part of their success is that they have changed over time in order to stay relevant to people.

Although these values are strongly evidenced in the field research, a number of craftspeople expressed that some of the interventions were not what they “really wanted”; but because “there was competition everywhere”, especially competition with new tastes and industrial goods, they “had to change” to maintain their livelihood and business. Some craftspeople who collaborate with designers also said that they did not like some of the changes/interventions because they were “unnecessary and distracting”. This is consistent with the finding that there is a tension in values between local craftspeople who prioritize self-transcendence and conservation values, and the designers/support organizations who are more encouraged by innovation and enhancement values (Section 7.2.3).

However, this paradoxical situation also tells us that some of the openness to change and enhancement values, if applied with moderation, can help revitalize traditional crafts so as to protect their intrinsic values and retain the craft spirit; if mistaken as ends and over-stressed, interventions guided by these means-values could do harm to traditional crafts and damage the very nature of those things we want to protect in the

first place.

As Figure 8.2 shows, Craft values 7 is in the *conservation* section of the circumplex whereas Craft values 8-12 are in *openness to change* and *self-enhancement* areas. This suggests that as openness to change and self-enhancement values are a means rather than a meaning, they need careful consideration and justification when applied in craft practices.

Taken collectively, the relationship between the QBL, values engaged in craft(s), and Schwartz's Value Circumplex are presented in Figure 8.3, the "*Combined Values Model*". This model can be used to understand the values and priorities of contemporary craft practices and to appraise relevant approaches and directions.

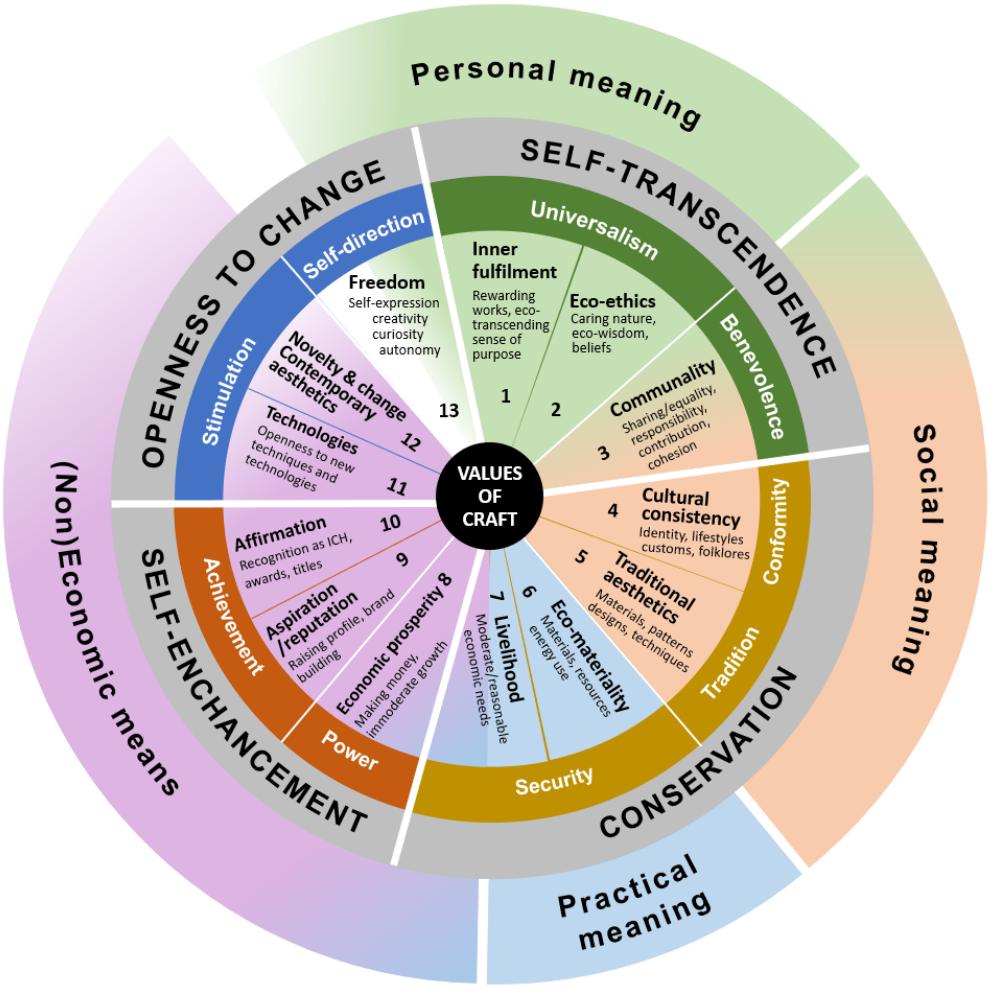

Figure 8.3. Walker's QBL and Schwartz's Circumplex Combined – the *Combined Values Model*

8.1.5 The Intangible Nature of the Craft Values

In the UNESCO's definition of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), instead of "collection of objects", "the importance of ICH is not the cultural manifestation itself but rather the wealth of knowledge and skills that is transmitted through it from one generation to the next" (UNESCO, 2003). Knowledge and skills are of the prominent characteristics of craft as identified in Section 2.1.2.1. Apart from this, this research also acknowledges the intangible nature of craft's knowledge and skills, i.e, seeing them as a tacit and complex way of knowing and thinking about the mateiral world (Section 2.1.2.2), and as an authentic way of working and living that is conducive to more ethical attitudes and mental well-being of individual makers (Sections 2.1.2.3, 4.2.4). In addition, this research also finds that craft practice embodies the values of communality, cultural consistency, continuity of tradition, and innovation, all of which are intangible aspects of craft related to but distinct from the aspects of physical artifact.

Although this research acknowledges and emphasizes the importance of the intangible nature of craft, some tangible qualties are equally valued in order to sustain the intangible heritage itself, e.g. the environmental benefits gained from sustainable materials, technqieus and processes, and the economic potential to secure a decent livelihood of craftspeople and the viability of craft industries.

Therefore, as in Figure 8.3, the intangible nature of craft values lies more in the areas of inner-fulfillment, eco-ethics, communality, cultural consistency, and traditional aesthetics which are more self-transcending and consevation based. The intangible nature of craft values also reflected in the areas of freedom, novelty and changes, and techological innovation which are openness to change based values.

8.2 Values Embedded in the Four Craft Categories

The analysis of the data collected from fieldwork Phase I (Chapter 5) has identified four categories of craft areas in the YRD. In fieldwork Phase II, the workshop participants used the initial typology of craft values and the newly identified three "other values" to

evaluate the four categories in porcelain crafts (Section 7.2.4). In this chapter, the researcher assessed the current relevance of these four craft categories by reviewing each within the *Combined Values Model* (Figure 8.3), based on synthesized information gathered from both the field and the discussion. This information includes:

- The manifestations of the four categories of crafts in Chapter 5. These data sources include interviews, photos and observations (Section 5.2.3).
- The initial values-based appraisal of the four categories of crafts by workshop participants in Chapter 7 (Figure 7.15; Section 7.2.4). In this appraisal, eight values (the initially identified – personal-spiritual, local-cultural, communal, environmental, economic – and the other three values – innovation, aesthetics and reputation) were used to assess the four categories of porcelain crafts.
- Developed information regarding each individual craft values in relationship to the four craft categories (8.1.3).

In the appraisal of the four categories with the *Combined Values Model*, the estimates (Low=1, Low-Medium=2, Medium=3, Medium-High=4, High=5) are used. The results of the review of the four categories of crafts in the YRD are plotted in Figures 8.4-8.7 respectively. The four craft categories with their respective definitions, characteristic manifestations and values profiles are presented in the following paragraphs.

8.2.1 Traditional Crafts (Figure 8.4)

These crafts adhere to long-standing, well-established methods and designs and tend to be produced mainly for decorative or symbolic purposes. This allows craft practices to be sustained that are important to the region's and/or nation's Intangible Cultural Heritage. The products of these practices include items like heritage embroidery samples, oiled-paper umbrellas and reproductions of antique porcelain of Jingdezhen.

Characteristics (Sections 5.2.3.1, 5.3-Finding 1):

- Frequently recognized as examples of ICH at the national, regional and/or municipal level, some of which are supported to a varying degree by government funding and policies;
- Conforming to entirely traditional processes and techniques, copying and repetition of traditional designs, which are deemed to be intricate and sophisticated;
- The designs/products can seem outdated by today's standards, they may not suit modern preferences and the products may not be relevant to modern needs;
- They often have a significant spiritual value, but few craftspeople seem keen to pursue their production as a career;
- ICH craft courses lack attraction to young generations which makes the transmission difficult;
- Very few pieces are made for daily use, very limited market (e.g. government commission, museums and collectors), and often they are not viable economically.

(See next page)

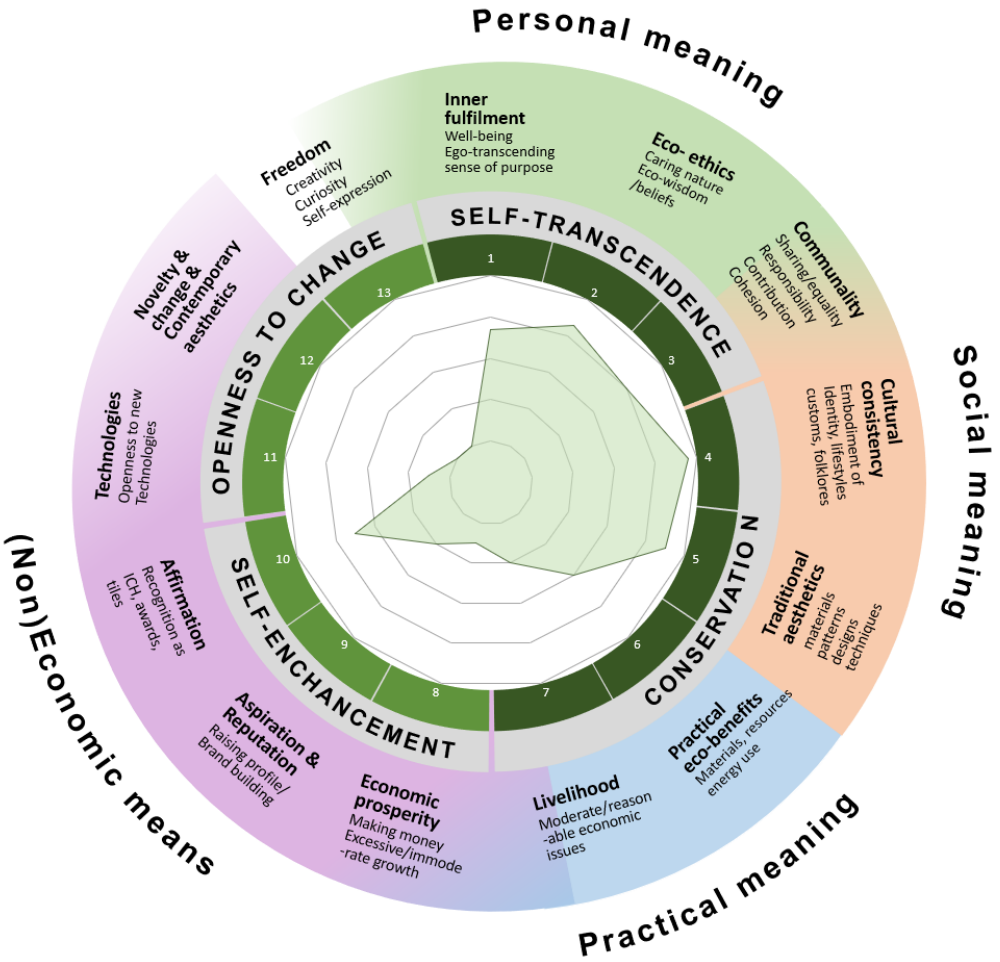

Figure 8.4. Profile of values embedded in the *traditional crafts* of the YRD

8.2.2 Modified Crafts (Figure 8.5)

In this category, the design of traditional crafts is updated to reflect contemporary sensibilities. Produced for both utilitarian and decorative purposes, they are principally handmade in small batches, and may be customizable and bespoke. Examples include bronze tea services and porcelain tea sets.

Characteristics (Sections 5.2.3.2, 5.3-Finding 2):

- Simplification and optimization of designs, with small changes in design, product, and process;
- Small-batch production for target clients (high-end bespoke and middle-low-end customization);
- Customization based on maker-customer relationships;

- Use of branding and packaging to raise perceived value;
- Satisfying customers' need for "quality" products for everyday use;
- Difficulties in the balance between modern adaptation and protection of tradition.

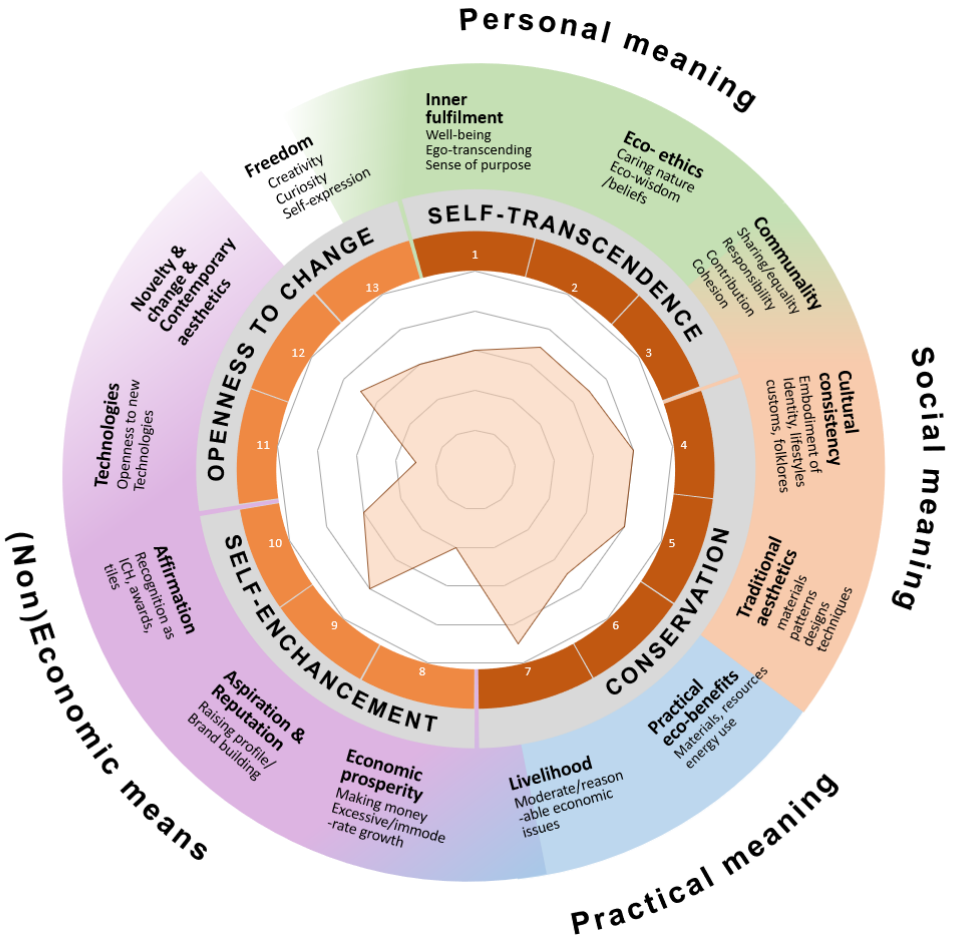

Figure 8.5. Profile of values embedded in the *modified crafts* of the YRD

8.2.3 Innovative Crafts (Figure 8.6)

These crafts are significantly modified from traditional products using innovations in design, functions, use of materials, and/or making processes, often with new technologies. The products are made to suit primarily practical purposes, they may involve novelty and they seek efficiency in the making processes. The aim is to cater to

a larger population of consumers. Examples include the *zhuyu* bamboo umbrella and ceramic loudspeakers.

Characteristics (Sections 5.2.3.3, 5.3-Finding 3):

- Environmentally friendly materials used while being mass-made/produced;
- Rapidly innovated or repurposed;
- Technology intervention often used;
- Concerns raised regarding authenticity and the loss of craftsmanship.

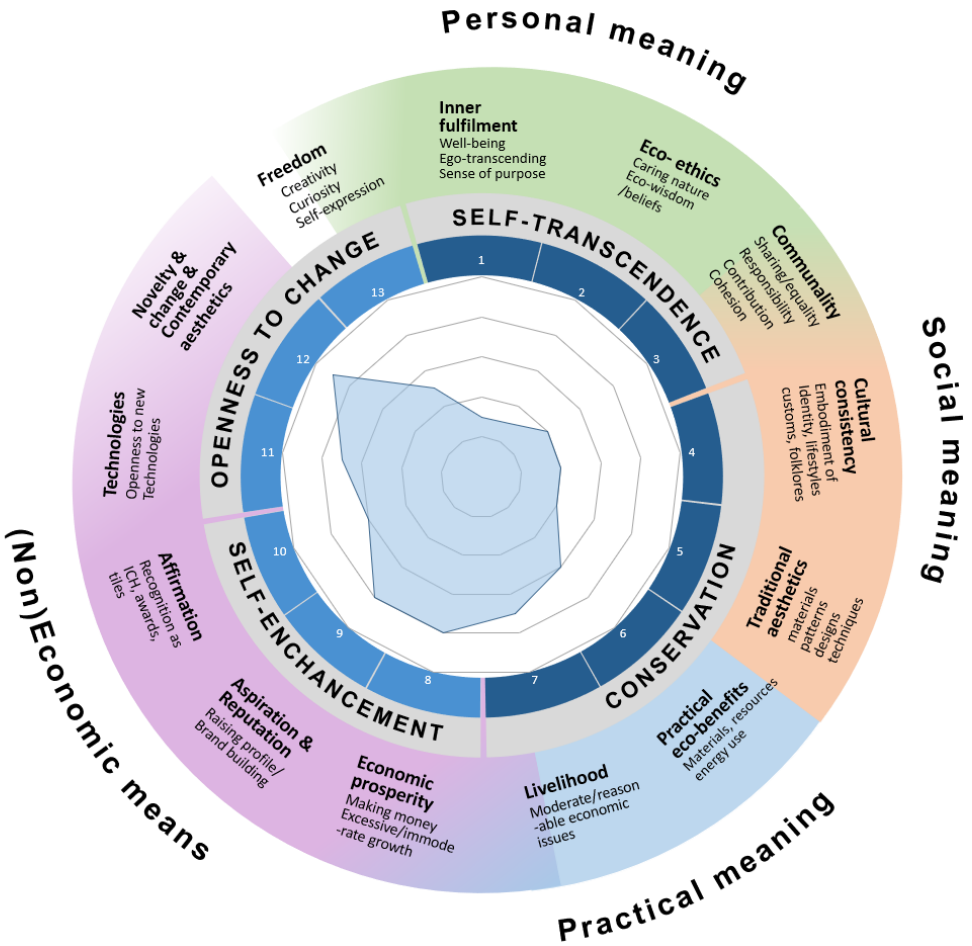

Figure 8.6. Profile of values embedded in the *innovative crafts* of the YRD

8.2.4 Objets d'Art (Figure 8.7)

These are decorative/symbolic objects that are produced using traditional craft techniques and materials. They are aimed primarily at the gift market, at collectors, or for display in galleries. They may be of traditional or contemporary styling. They include celebratory objects for the Chinese New Year, and artifacts such as a bronze animal sculptures to display on a desk or side table.

Characteristics (Sections 5.2.3.4, 5.3-Finding 4):

- Art objects primarily for the gift market and/or gallery display;
- Satisfying consumers' increasing need for enlightenment through art/beauty;
- Often conceived by artists and made by craftspeople/artisans;
- Raising the perceived value of local crafts and bringing opportunities for collaboration to craft communities;
- Side effect: "positional" goods that display social standing and "high" tastes, which can have a negative effect on the social equity elements of sustainability. Positional or status-oriented goods also tend to be drivers of consumption. Issues of inequality are related to the expense (unaffordability) of many such objects and also, with respect to the making process, the artists' dominance over artisans within collaboration practices.

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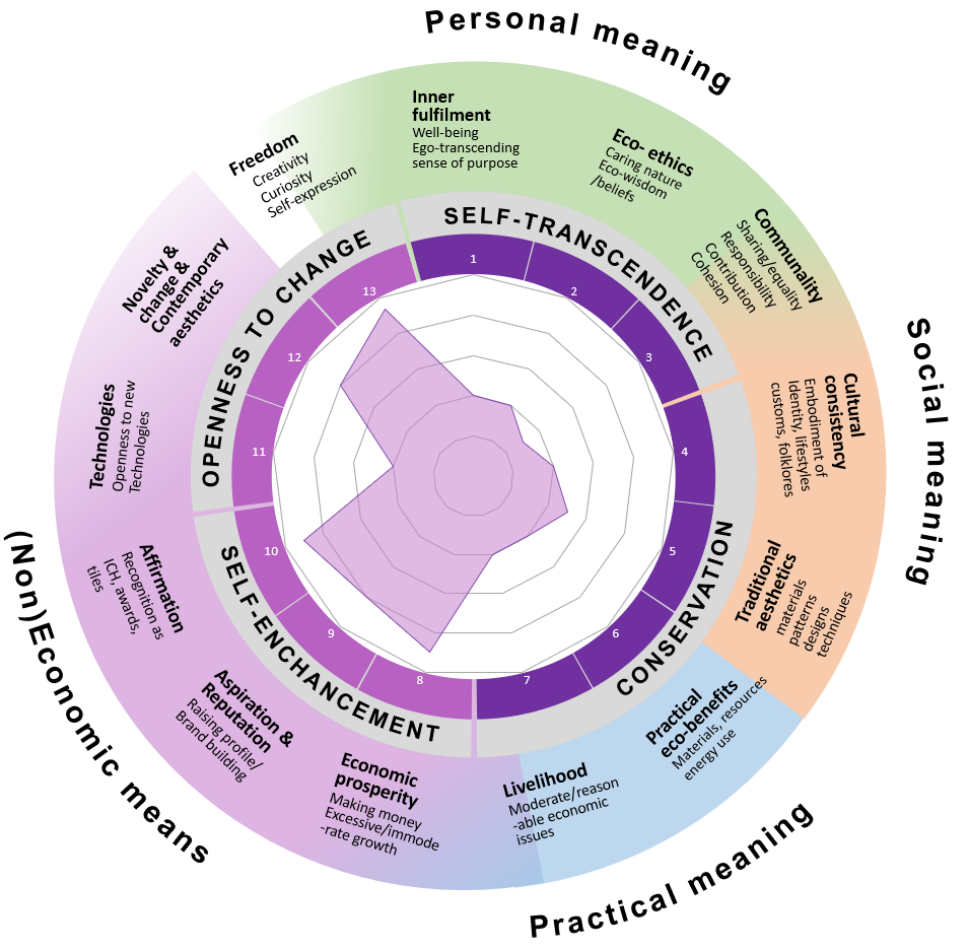

Figure 8.7. Profile of values embedded in the *objets d'art* of the YRD

8.3 Finding: Fundamentally Different Approaches

As revealed in the diagrams (Figures 8.4-8.7), the four craft categories exhibit quite different emphases with respect to their embedded values. This shows that within the current developments in YRD crafts there are a range of value sets and priorities which reflect fundamental differences in both purpose and product outcomes.

Many *traditional craft* practices in China are supported through a non-commercial conservation approach as per the state's ICH programme. These practices have been context-specific, i.e. using local materials and adhering to local, traditional methods and processes, which ensures significance of cultural tradition and authenticity of the practices, and thus, accords well with sustainability principles (Figure 8.4). However, *innovative crafts* have largely compromised these intrinsic traits to rapid innovation and

high consumption/fashionable approaches that are catering for a larger, non-place-based user base (Figure 8.5); For *objets d'art*, much of their traditional, cultural and environmental values gave way to self-expression, aesthetics and self-enhancement values (Figure 8.6). By contrast, *modified crafts* that adhere to traditional forms and processes while also changing relatively modestly are more conducive to retaining their cultural traditions and intrinsic values in an economically viable fashion (Figure 8.7).

These diagrams also reveal that the means-values play an important role in the revitalization of traditional practices and significantly contribute to the economic viability of crafts. But for *innovative crafts* and *objets d'art*, culture and tradition – conservation and self-transcendence values – are largely compromised to innovation and consumerism – openness to change and enhancement values. Traditionally, craft practices tended to value consistency and continuity in which change is limited and slow. By contrast, modern consumer culture demands rapid innovation and the "always new", which goes against the values – and the sustainability-related issues – of traditional, place-based craft practices (Walker et al, 2019, pp. 61-62).

The values diagram of *innovative crafts* also reveals that the forms of cost-effect-driven and novelty-dominant innovation cannot protect crafts' intrinsic values (their personal, communal, and cultural values are largely lost), though they could in the short term create extrinsic financial and, in some cases, environmental benefits. Likewise, manifested by *objets d'art*, art intervention without the strong cultural context of the local craft traditions seems to be inappropriate because it often results in exclusive and "positioning" items.

By comparison, m*odified crafts* that adhere to traditional forms and processes while also changing relatively modestly are more conducive to retaining their cultural and traditional values in an economically viable way. These crafts are often produced in a customizable, small-batch mode of production, in which the values of crafts are shared and more highly appreciated through a closer relationship between customers and craftspeople developed through customizable making (Section 5.2.3.2).

In moving from *traditional* through *modified* and *innovative* to *objets d'art* we see clear, progressive change in values from primarily "self-transcending" and "conservational", which accord well with principles of socio-cultural and environmental sustainability, but which are economically less viable, towards "self-enhancing" and "innovative", which are more economically viable because they employ modern design and techniques and are more responsive to customer preferences and needs. However, due to their ever-changing nature, their relatively high cost, and their use of energy-reliant technologies, they also tend to be less socially inclusive and equitable and less environmental. Consequently, they accord less well with sustainable principles.

8.3.1 Four Different Approaches

These four craft categories characterize four different approaches of the development of contemporary craft practices in the YRD. For a clearer comparison of these four approaches, the differences between them are condensed with respect to their purposes, value priorities, product outcomes, outlets, pros and cons. These are presented as follows.

Sustaining traditional crafts through non-commercial conservation approach (i.e. China's ICH programme and related initiatives)

Purpose: to protect traditional crafts in terms of Intangible Cultural Heritage through fully conforming to well-established designs, processes and methods.

Value priorities: cultural significance, traditional aesthetics, ethical connotations.

Product outcomes: reproduction and replicas of traditional versions

Outlets: museums, collectors, government commissions, gifts for international delegations, business partners

Pros: best at ensuring cultural and ethical significance of traditional practices

Cons: economically unviable, irrelevance to everyday life due to outdated styles and insensitivity to contemporary needs and preferences

Modified craft approach

Purpose: to revitalize and make relevance of traditional crafts to present-day life though modifications and improvements in designs, techniques and processes, in order to ensure the long-term viability of traditional practices.

Value priorities: livelihood guarantee, cultural significance, reputation and branding

Product outcomes: modified or updated versions of traditional crafts

Outlets: creative market, customization, bespoke, partnership with well-known brands etc.

Pros: improving economic viability while not destroying the intrinsic nature of traditional practices

Cons: difficulties in the balance between modern adaptation and protection of tradition

Innovative craft approach

Purpose: to seek mass-production of traditional crafts through rapid innovations in products and processes with fashionable designs and technologies, in order to utilize and maximize cultural capital of traditional practices

Value priorities: novelty and change, economic prosperity (mainly relying on cost-effectiveness), profile and branding

Product outcomes: redesigned and rapidly innovated objects from traditional crafts

Outlets: mass-consumption market, creative market, niche market demanding artifacts with avant garde designs and new technologies

Pros: economic benefits, practical eco-benefits at individual product level due to the replacement of green materials and renewable energies but lacking systemic consideration of environmental cost at macro level caused by, e.g. mass-production

Cons: less environmental due to mass-production, loss of authenticity and craftsmanship

Objets d'art approach

Purpose: to make art objects with locally based traditional craft skills and materials primarily through collaboration between craftspeople and artists.

Value priorities: creativity and self-expression, affirmation and recognition, economic prosperity (mainly relying on high perceived value of the fame and ideas of individual maker)

Product outcomes: decorative/symbolic objects, positioning items

Outlets: gallery display, gift market, collectors, exhibitions, business partners

Pros: raising perceived value of traditional crafts, high economic value

Cons: issues of inequality caused by: 1) the unaffordability of these products, and 2) artist's dominance over craftspeople in the collaboration

8.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter presents the development of a comprehensive understanding of values – the *Combined Values Model*, and the appraisal of the values embedded in the four craft categories. Through discussion, development and appraisal, this chapter results in an outcome and a finding. To make continuity with the Key Findings 4-6 from Chapter 7, this finding is named after Key Finding 7 and the outcome named after Outcome 2.

Outcome 2: A comprehensive understanding of values in contemporary craft practice of the YRD, drawing from Schwartz's values theory, Walker's QBL and empirical findings from the field research – a *Combined Values Model* (Figure 8.3), which can be made as a values-based tool for identification and assessment of crafts and practices.

Key Finding 7: The four categories of crafts have rather different emphases in purpose, value priorities, product outcomes and outlets as well as pros and cons,

representing four different approaches of craft development in the region. *Modified craft* tends to be a relatively promising approach to sustain crafts in an economical viable fashion without destroying the intrinsic nature of traditional crafts, while continuing *traditional craft* practices through non-commercial conservation and government support can best ensure the cultural and ethical significance of the region/nation's intangible cultural heritage (Section 8.3).

Chapter 9. Recommendations and Conclusions

This chapter brings together the various findings and outcomes to form general conclusions. Through the discussion of the overall findings and outcomes a series of recommendations are made and how these meet the research aim and address the main research questions (9.1). In addition, the research's original contribution to knowledge is discussed (9.2), together with its potential beneficiaries. Then, the limitations of this investigation are reflected upon (9.3), and opportunities for further research outlined (9.4). Finally, the chapter closes with the concluding remarks (9.5).

9.1 Discussion of the Overall Findings and the Recommendations

The research findings are determined from three main data sources: Literature Review (Chapter 2); Field Data Acquisition and Analysis Phase I (Chapters 4 and 5); and Field Data Acquisition and Analysis Phase II (Chapter 7, the in-depth case study); as well as from two phases of Discussion and Development (Chapters 6 and 8). By synthesizing the findings and outcomes from previous phases, it results in five main research findings (named as MRF1-5) and one outcome which are presented in Figure 9.1.

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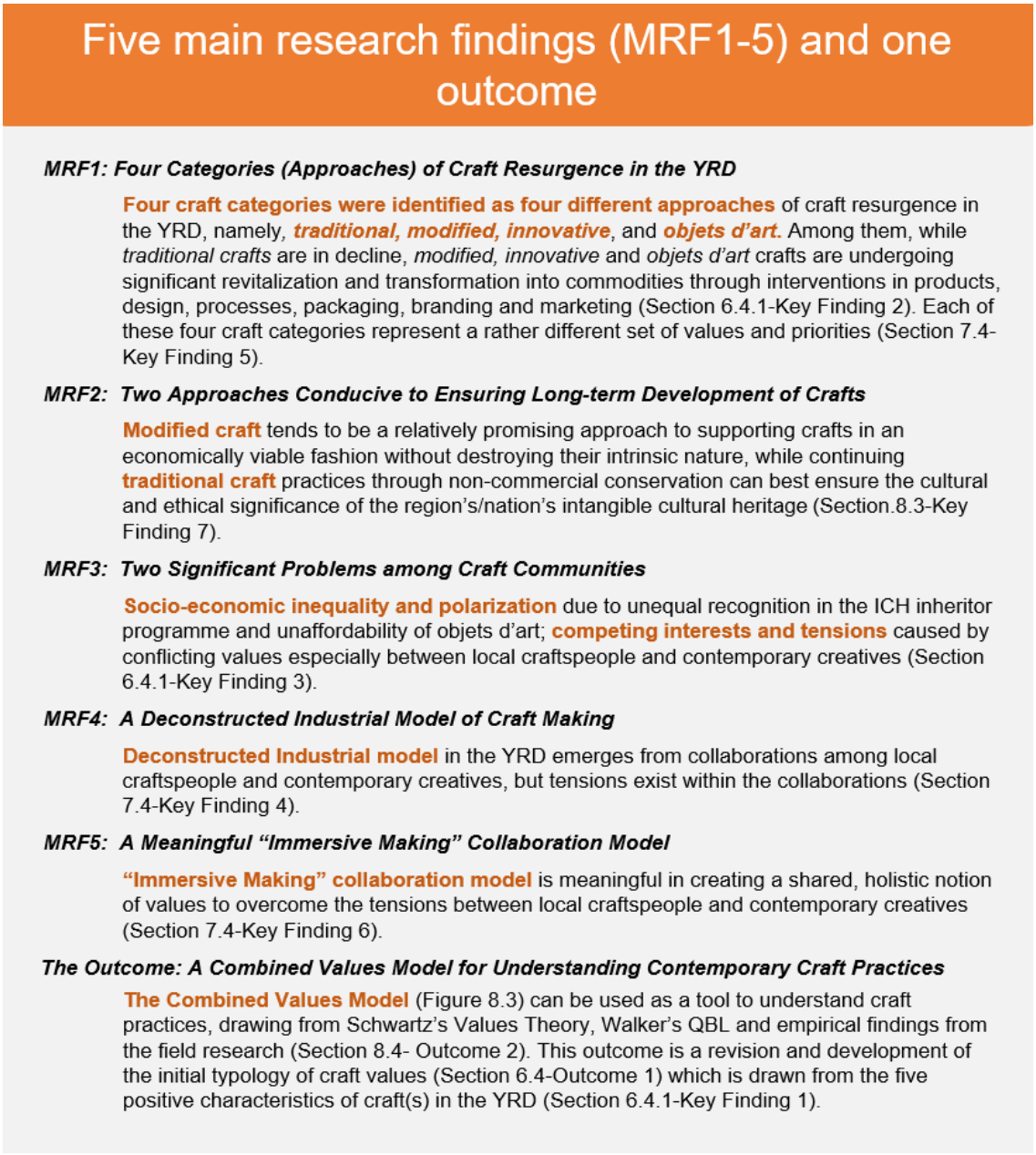

Figure 9.1. Main findings and the outcome of the research

The Outcome (the *Combined Values Model*) is a further development and revised version of the initial typology of craft values (Section 6.3.3) and has been discussed in detail in Chapter 8 (Sections 8.1-8.2). In this chapter, the main findings will be discussed in the following sections in order to comprehensively answer the research questions, offer potential solutions to the problems identified from the field, and inform recommendations, including opportunities for design contributions to ensuring the long-term sustainability of crafts in the region. These five main research findings are divided into two major groups and discussed in the following two sections (9.1.1-9.1.2). MRF1-

2 are discussed and their relevant recommendations are made in Section 9.1.1; MRF 3-5 are discussed and their relevant recommendations are made in Section 9.1.2. The recommendations resulting from these two sections are summarized in 9.1.3. Section 9.1.4 clarifies and communicates how these main findings, the outcome and the recommendations answer the research questions.

9.1.1 The Four Categories of Crafts and the Recommendations (MRF1-2)

In the context of China's craft resurgence and ICH initiatives, crafts in the YRD are undergoing transformation into everyday commodities and arts as the booming creative industries, spurred by consumerism, turn to traditional making practices. This is evidenced in the rise of *innovative, objets d'art* and *modified* crafts and they have contributed to the economic viability of crafts in the region. The four craft categories identified from the field have different sets of values and priorities, representing four different approaches of resurgence in contemporary YRD craft practices. These are discussed and the recommendations for them are made in the following paragraphs.

9.1.1.1 Traditional crafts and recommendations

As discussed in Section 8.2, *traditional crafts* have the highest intrinsic values and are the closest among the four categories to sustainability principles, but many of them are economically unviable and cannot sustain themselves. The research finds that an important reason for the economic unviability of these crafts lies in their "outdated" styles and irrelevance to contemporary life and consumer markets (Sections 2.2.3.6, 4.2.5.4, 5.2.3.1).

Among these crafts, many of them are regarded as culturally vital and spiritually meaningful, i.e. they have high self-transcendence and conservation values (Figure. 8.4) and a certain number of them has been recognized as national or provincial ICH status (Sections 2.2.3.2, 5.2.3.1). However, some of these crafts have fewer possibilities to be made for contemporary use, e.g., the oiled-paper umbrellas and the Woollen Needlepoint Tapestry brocade (Sections 5.2.3.1-5.2.3.3). The particularity of

their materials, forms and techniques determines that it is hard for these crafts to be converted to contemporary use. Or if unnecessary changes are made to them, it might significantly undermine their cultural values. The market is always changing and subject to trends and fleeting fashions. If these traditional crafts gear themselves to the market, they cannot survive through strong market competition, or they may be successful for a while, but then as fashions change, they need to "keep up" or die (see Section 5.2.3.2 for the dilemma of Woollen Needlepoint Tapestry craft).

China's ICH initiatives have shown great power for protecting these culturally significant traditional practices. A number of ICH crafts in the YRD are protected through a non-commercial approach. Government supplies financial and facility support to varying degrees for selected craftspeople to make a decent living so they can concentrate on their traditional practices and training apprentices without concerns about their livelihood (Section 5.2.3.1).

Meanwhile, a number of people appreciate traditional crafts for what they were and exactly how they were made, and they value them as a symbolic item and important tradition (as reflected in Sections 4.2.3.1, 4.2.3.2), especially for collectors and museums. ***Therefore, one realistic and effective way for sustaining these crafts is to preserve them via conservation which is more relevant to cultural purposes through a non-commercial approach***. This work can be done through conservation with government, museums and collectors. Based on the current conservation work in the YRD, there needs some improvements, especially in the areas of government ICH recognition and support. To overcome the socioeconomic inequality and polarization among craftspeople (Sections 2.2.1.2, 4.2.3.5, 4.3.5.4, 6.1.3), it is necessary for the government to review and improve the current ICH programme to make it more equal and just and include more culturally significant but economically unviable crafts when possible (also see Section 9.1.2 on inequality). In addition, policies and organizations are needed to help craftspeople closely collaborate with museums and collectors.

In addition, lack of incentives and motivation to learn craft knowledge and skills is a challenge facing crafts in the region (Sections 2.2.4, 5.2.3.1). China's widespread

practice of offering ICH courses at schools demonstrates that introducing crafts to younger generations is an important aspect of transmission (Section 2.2.2.2). However, findings from the field show that most of these courses at schools are not successful, because a systemic design of the curriculum is lacking for students to know about the background of the crafts and arouse their interests. In addition, teaching methods used by ICH masters in apprentice training do not fit modern pedagogy of classroom teaching. (Section 5.2.3.1). Developing interesting courses and digital education platforms for younger people and children was explored in some other places in China and worldwide and regarded as an important approach to transmitting crafts skills to younger generations in today's digital age. For example, "serious" games were used in the learning and transmission of ICH and crafts (Dagnino et al., 2015; Yang et al., 2020); a number of crafts in the National Palace Museum of Taipei are adapted into carton animations with digital interaction technologies to suit children and young people's preferences (Xie, 2018). However, few cases regarding these kinds of digital education platforms were seen in the YRD, although there are many promotional craft videos on e-commerce platforms and social media (Sections 2.2.2.1). Therefore, there is also a need to develop digital education platforms and heritage teaching courses that suit children and young makers' preferences. Design can help with this, e.g. by developing interactive apps, games, and online courses with digital technologies as well as simplifying traditional processes for pedagogical purposes.

On the other hand, ***for traditional crafts that have the potential for everyday use while at the same time retaining their tradition and local values, they can be introduced to more people and adapted into contemporary markets.*** In fact, many traditional crafts are widely appreciated in Chinese society, since being recognized as national or provincial ICH affirms their cultural significance and creates a "brand" effect among the consumers (Section 2.2.3.2). Therefore, the primary concern of these crafts is how to create a relevance to present-day life and to more contemporary markets. This can be achieved through trying to maintain the craft in its traditional form where possible, but increasing the level of branding/storytelling. It needs to recognize that a

craft maker can only hand produce a limited number of artifacts so that makers need to raise the price of the artifacts in order to 1) ensure they can maintain a decent standard of living; and 2) ensure young people are attracted to this craft as a career option. This might also mean that craftspeople would have to be more discerning in how and where their products are sold – websites, galleries or shops – so as to ensure that the high prices are seen as appropriate by potential customers.

This is especially applicable to those highly recognized ICH crafts that have great potential but no utility in their current state, e.g., traditional woodcarving, silk embroidery, etc. (Section 5.2.3.1). In this approach, design can help make them more relevant to today in terms of product modification, process improvement, packaging, branding, marketing, etc., in which case they would shift towards *modified crafts*. See *modified crafts* in Section 9.1.1.2.

In a nutshell, no matter what approaches and outlets the crafts adopt – whether they are produced for local customers or for other targeted consumers, museum collections, private collectors or international delegations – they all affirm the importance of the crafts, cultures and traditions. This is the very purpose of UNESCO's ICH convention. It does not necessary mean, that in order to protect traditional crafts, they can only be confined within local domains and made for local purposes. This research finds that many craftspeople in the YRD appreciate their crafts and hope that their crafts will be sold, affirmed and recognized by external societies and countries (Section 4.2.3.1), because it helps craftspeople affirm their sense of identity and gives them a sense of pride in terms of what they are making (Section 8.1.3.2). Otherwise, they might take them for granted that they are not able to realize how distinct their particular cultures are if these crafts are confined to their local regions. This will in turn rebuild craftspeople's sense of contribution and sense of cultural self-confidence, which most Chinese people wish to retrieve and rejuvenate (Yang, 2018). The connection of crafts to place will be enhanced accordingly. As their perceived values are raised, more people will be encouraged to enter into the craft sector.

9.1.1.2 Modified crafts and recommendations

Compared to the other categories, *modified crafts* offer a relatively ideal approach for sustaining crafts in an economically viable fashion. Since they adopt moderate intervention in traditional crafts to suit more contemporary needs while being consistent with tradition, this protects their intrinsic values (Section 8.2.5). Thus, the *modified craft* approach is also called the *moderate commercial revitalization* approach for this research. The research finds that design has played an important role for these crafts. Design's contributions were not only in product and process modification, but were also conveyed effectively through packaging, branding, and marketing in terms of graphic information, and creating the points of sale and website designs (Section 8.2.2). Traditional crafts are modified, improved and adapted in their design, product, and process to more suit modern needs and consumer preferences. Craftspeople produce a limited production of customized products for well-established customers (Section 5.2.3.2). This model enables prices to be kept appropriate and maintains maker-customer relations, which is not the case for a higher production model.

A large number of craftspeople in the YRD use social media (e.g. the social networking application WeChat), rather than large e-commerce platforms, to build relationships with customers and promote their work. However, currently this model is not working very well because marketing through social media is often very time-consuming and many craftspeople are not good at promoting their work due to the lack of knowledge in design and use of new technologies (e.g. digital) (Section 5.2.3.2-6). Therefore, this model can be improved through developing customized services to support individual makers to promote their work and effectively interact with potential consumers. This is another opportunity for design and worth exploring in future research, especially for interactive and service design with new information technologies.

In addition, there is also a critical issue regarding these crafts – how to maintain the balance between modern adaptation and the protection of tradition (Section 5.2.3.2-7). This especially involves the discernment and judgement of designers. Because, when introducing changes, it requires particular knowledge and care on the part of designers

to understand where the intrinsic values of the crafts lie and to decide what changes should and should not be made. As the case study finds, many designers/artists do not understand the crafts, makers and traditions well, and they are not empathetic and informed enough, because their values and priorities are different from those of the makers (Sections 7.2.3, 7.2.5.1). Thus, this is not only an issue of knowledge for designers, but also an issue of values and mutual understanding for both parties.

This is not an issue that can be easily solved, but it is recommended that designers work more closely with local craftspeople so they can get to know the craft better and make any adaptations and changes in a more informed way. Meanwhile, the case study finds it is helpful to strike a balance between modern and tradition by nourishing a shared, holistic notion of values among designers and local makers through engaging them in “immersive making” collaboration practices (Sections 7.2.6.2, 7.2.7). Through a real immersion in local craft communities and effective collaboration strategies, designers are expected to gain a deep understanding of and empathy with the craft, its tradition and the people who make it. This will expand design’s contribution in crafts to a broader area of collaboration and practice.

9.1.1.3 Innovative crafts and recommendations

A large variety of new craft products have been developed in the YRD with modern design and innovation, many of which have been categorized in this research as *innovative crafts*. This research finds that the intrinsic values of innovative crafts have been largely eroded by fast innovation and fashionable design (Sections 8.2.3, Figure.8.6). People are concerned that the craftsmanship and authenticity of these crafts have been lost (Section 5.2.3.3). If *innovative crafts* were in the first place established as an approach to protecting and revitalizing traditional crafts, they are now running counter to this purpose. Rather than developing more novel products to attract consumers and compete with mass-produced industrial goods, this research argues that increasing quality/care and reducing quantity/throwaway should be of primary concern to these crafts.

A quality product with enduring value is helpful in mitigating environmental issues and peoples' anxiety caused by the "throwaway" culture and the endless pursuit of new/fashionable goods (Walker, 2014; Davies, 2015). This is especially relevant, and can be a valid way for the craft field to respond to sustainability related issues, and to the notion of "small is beautiful" (Schumacher, 1973) as well as the larger concept of "circular economy" (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2012).

Given that e-commence and commercial promotion platforms are predominant in China and there is consumer demand and enthusiasm for high-quality craftwork in the region, the economic value of crafts can be realized accordingly. Therefore, instead of externalizing them through fast innovation to merely cater to consumer culture, more efforts should be made to raise awareness of more intangible aspects of values. These crafts have gone so far in terms of the pursuit of economic viability and innovation by using modern fashionable design. And the return to approaches of *modified crafts* will be the right direction for these crafts to become more sustainable. Apart from this issue to be solved, there are no other recommendations to be made for these crafts.

9.1.1.4 Objets d'art and recommendations

As discussed in Section 8.2.4, *objets d'art* are the least inclusive and equitable crafts among the four categories. They have raised the perceived value of crafts but have been virtually elevated to symbolic items that display taste and class (Section 5.2.3.4-2), which raises the significant issue of inequality. Though these crafts are commercially viable and have economically contributed to craft communities, there are a number of problems related to sustainability. In terms of product, *objets d'art* mainly serve a decorative purpose, often for display and to be sold in the gift market, whereas traditional crafts are rooted in place, often originated as functional objects, and are used in everyday life and thus convey the culture of lifestyles though they may or may not be any longer in use. In addition, *objets d'art* are often the self-expression of individual artists without the strong cultural context of local craft traditions. This seems to be inappropriate because it often results in exclusive and "positioning" items with "hollow" aesthetics.

In terms of *Intangible Cultural Heritage*, symbolization of ICH crafts as exclusive "tastes" through art intervention contributes to economic, sociocultural inequality, because these super high-end *objets d'art* cannot be afforded by most people nor by the craftspeople who make them. Ironically, elevating traditional crafts with art intervention started with a conservational purpose of heritage, but this approach is in contradiction with the "cultural diversity" and human rights objectives of UNESCO's ICH convention as well as with grassroot craft traditions.

Rather than catering to exclusive consumers, the recommendation is to make these *objets d'art* more accessible to all people by moving them from the luxury market into public museums and spaces with low-priced or free admission where more people can appreciate (consume) them. In so doing, it can effectively raise the profile and perceived value of local crafts while ensuring equality and inclusivity. On the other hand, as commodities on the market, fair pricing policies should be made to ensure these *objets d'art* are affordable to a wider audience. In addition, artists who are financially better-off shall be called upon to contribute to this equality through charitable sales of their *objets d'art*, in which they donate part of the profits to public craft funds or relevant organizations for local craft conservation and development.

From the perspective of taste, the styles of *objets d'art* are often influenced by modern avant garde ideas and determined by artists/designers. This is also problematic from the sustainability point of view. The case study finds that facilitating closer and "immersive" craft collaboration practices has the potential to allow designers/artists to understand the local culture better so as to build deep relationships with and appreciation of craftspeople and place (Section 7.3.3). In so doing, contemporary designers/artists and their ideas are no longer the major force that dominates the outcomes and styles of new work. Craftspeople are expected to play a larger role than before in the co-creation/design process and their traditions and tastes have more influence on the new craft objects (Sections 7.2.7.4). In the long term, it can hopefully influence contemporary designers/artists-led aesthetic judgements and nourish "a wide variety of tastes" with characteristics, as suggested by Walker (2009).

9.1.2 Inequality, Tensions in Values, Deconstructed Collaborations and Recommendations (MRF3-5)

As the findings show, two significant problems were identified in craft communities of the YRD (MRF3), which raise the issues of inequality and polarization caused mainly by unequal ICH recognition and the unaffordability of *objets d'art*, and the issue of tensions in values caused by competing interests in craft communities especially between craftspeople and designers/artists in Jingdezhen. In addition, collaboration between local craftspeople and contemporary creatives within a deconstructed industrial model was identified as an important ingredient of craft practices in the region (MRF4).

The issue of inequality and recommendations

Economic polarization is emerging within the craft society of the YRD (Sections 4.2.5.4). Though craftspeople's social status is generally rising, division is also evidenced between high profile masters and "ordinary" artisans, and between local artisans and contemporary artists (Sections 4.2.2.5, 7.2.3). This is because, in part, the government has recognized and supported some crafts and craftspeople while neglecting others, and those who were recognized were able to easily promote themselves by taking advantage of their title and reputation (Section 4.2.2.5). In addition, some research on the ICH policies in China identifies that the current ICH inheritors programme tends to recognize crafts that have relatively more potential for commercialization (Maags, 2019, p.788). These are not consistent with sustainability principles and the guidelines of the UNESCO ICH initiative. Therefore, there is a need for the Chinese government to review current policies in order to ameliorate the situation. This also highlights a need for the government to make the ICH recognition and support policies more inclusive and accessible, especially to craftspeople whose practices are vital to local tradition and cultural diversity but are not currently fully recognized. In this regard, it is critical to develop ways of identifying and selecting crafts and craftspeople in need. The *Combined Values Model* (The Outcome) can be used as a reference for developing selection criteria.

In addition, the unaffordability of *objets d'art* for most consumers has contributed to the aspect of inequality (Section 9.1.1.4).

Tensions in values, deconstructed collaborations, and recommendations

The case study identified a deconstructed industrial model of craft production (Section 7.2.1.4) and corroborates the fact that most craft production in the YRD today is a form of vibrant collaboration between various stakeholders (Section 2.2.3.2). In these craft communities, competing interests and values, especially between local craftspeople and the creatives (designers/artists), are the hindrance to sustainable collaboration, and there is a need to develop a shared understanding of the values and to facilitate the collaborations in practices (Section 7.2.6). To solve this disparity, this research suggests that attention should also be paid to craft collaboration practices and there is an urgent need for collaborators in the craft sector to develop a holistic and shared understanding of the values through building closer relationships in their practices (Section 7.2.7).

The idea of "immersive making" offered a strategical proposition for craft practice (MRF5). It advocates that effective and sustainable collaboration between contemporary creatives and local craftspeople needs a platform to allow them to communicate and share their respective values and ideas (Section 7.2.7). This platform requires a local, open, inclusive and flexible environment that allows any divergence of ideas to converge (Section 7.2.6.2). This is consistent with Sheehan's (2011) notion of respectful design, which advocates setting up a respectful design space where local makers' indigenous knowledge is assured a central position.

The research also suggests that there is a need for developing facilitation strategies to help build shared values in practice (Section 7.2.6.1). Findings from the case study suggested that encounters between craftspeople and designers/artists in Jingdezhen create a genuine blend of practices that reflects a true collaboration. Some designers/artists in clustered craft contexts in rural and small urban centres, have developed strategies and embedded their design knowledge of new processes in ways

that are not effectively addressed in post-industrial production and mainstream design education. These strategies include *engaging in immersive practices* through residence in the local region; *creating empathetic space*; *facilitating meaningful co-creation;* and *boosting collective creativity* with situated design and dialogical negotiations (Sections7.2.6.2, 7.2.7).

Therefore, the role of design in this area is to help create a craft ecology for immersion and improve craft collaboration between craftspeople and the creatives in real-time practices. In the meantime, guiding ideologically and professionally different people into a “common space” needs design facilitation. Facilitation is one of the seven emerging roles for designers working for social good (Tan, 2012). Situated design that involves dialogical negotiation with site-specific tools has been reported in the case study to be useful for creating a helpful and effective co-creation experience in the collaborative making. This situated design with specific methods identified from the field resemble the methods of participatory co-design which help to address complex problems involving multiple stakeholders with different expertise and backgrounds (Sanders and Stappers, 2008; Aguirre et al., 2017). In Jingdezhen, most of these methods and tools aiding the situated design were generated and developed in the emergent process of participation on the making site itself (Section 7.2.7.4). There is a need for further exploration of how to generate more universal tactics and tools for facilitating this type of co-creation, because this is very important for creating more shared notion of values and ensuring sustainable collaborations. Therefore, it is an identified opportunity for future research, especially for participatory co-design in craft-design collaborations.

9.1.3 Summary: Recommendations for Crafts in the YRD

This section brings together the discussion and recommendations in Sections 9.1.1-9.1.2, resulting eight recommendations which are summarized in the following paragraphs (named after R1-8), and presented in Figure 9.2.

R1: For *traditional crafts* – two approaches to sustaining them effectively are recommended.

- Approach 1 – *moderate commercial revitalization* (*modified crafts*) for the crafts that have the potential to be revitalized through design into present-day life.
  In this approach, for areas identified for design to make contribution, see *modified crafts* below.

- Approach 2 – *non-commercial ICH conservation* for the crafts that are culturally vital and spiritually meaningful, especially for those that have less potential for contemporary use.
  In this approach, areas around conservation are recommended to make further efforts, especially in the *development of education and learning courses* for younger generations and *improvement of ICH recognition and government supports.*

R2: For *modified crafts* – 1) to maintain and improve *modified crafts* with design in product, processes, packaging, branding, and marketing (graphic information, points of sale, websites, etc.), so as to make them more relevant to contemporary use while being more consistent with tradition; 2) designers should work more closely with local communities to get a deeper understanding of the crafts, and thus make more informed and discerning judgements, when introducing changes and innovations.

R3: For *innovative crafts* – No recommendation to be made in terms of the current level of design; to slow down the pace of innovation, reduce the scale of production, revise the values and return to the *modified crafts* approach.

R4: For *objets d'art* – 1) to move *objets d'art* from the luxury market to public museums and spaces with low-priced or free admission where more people can appreciate (consume) them; 2) as commodities on the market, fair pricing policies should be made to ensure *objets d'art* are more affordable for a wider audience. In addition, artists will be called upon to contribute to equality through charitable sales, by which they donate part of the profits to public craft funds or relevant organizations for local craft conservation and development.

This research highlights a need for design to play an important role in less tangible and

less commercial areas, besides focusing on material aspects of commercial revitalization in crafts (i.e. product design, process improvement, packaging, branding, and marketing). These areas are identified as *facilitation of immersive, meaningful collaboration in practices, development of education platforms and learning courses,* and *development of customized services to enhance maker-consumer relationships and support their effective interactions,* presented as follows.

R5: To facilitate immersive, meaningful collaborations in practices between local craftspeople and contemporary creatives, engage contemporary creatives in immersive making practices with local craftspeople to nourish a shared, holistic notion of values, thus building closer relationships and boosting collective creativity. Design can help with the collaborations especially in the area of guiding professional and ideologically different people into a “common place” and facilitating co-creation process with situated tactics and tools. Considering how design can help this type of collaboration with more universal and effective tactics and tools is an identified opportunity for further research.

R6: To develop education platforms and learning courses that suit children and young makers’ preferences, in order to more widely transmit craft culture and skills with a contemporary context in today’s digital era. Design can help develop new teaching methods, interactive apps, games, etc. with new digital technologies.

R7: To design customized services enhancing maker-consumer relationships and interactions in the customized production-consumption model (as identified *in modified crafts*). Design can help develop interactive services and apps, etc. to satisfy individual makers’ needs with information technologies.

In addition to the recommendations above, recommendations regarding *government recognition and support* are also made to overcome the problems of inequality.

R8: To review government recognition policies and supports

1) to review the current ICH inheritor recognition programme and make it more inclusive and equitable by developing more just and effective ways of identification and selection; make the recognition more accessible especially to

the marginalized craftspeople whose practices are vital to local tradition and cultural diversity but are not fully recognized;

2) according to the values and significance of their crafts, increase appropriate financial and facility support for inheritors in disadvantaged situation or inheritors with lower status of recognition (county and municipal levels).

Eight Recommendations for Crafts in the YRD (R1-8)

Recommendations for the Four Categories of Crafts

R1. For Traditional Crafts – *two approaches to sustaining crafts are recommended:*

Approach 1 – moderate commercial revitalization (modified crafts) for the crafts that have the potential to be revitalized through design into present-day life.

Approach 2 – non-commercial ICH conservation for the crafts that are culturally vital and spiritually meaningful, especially for those that have less potential for contemporary use.

R2. For Modified Crafts: *to maintain and improve modified crafts with design in products, processes, packaging, branding, and marketing; 2) designers should work more closely with local communities so as to make more informed and discerning judgements, when introducing changes and innovations.*

R3. For Innovative Crafts: *no recommendation to be made in terms of the current level of design; to slow down the pace of innovation, reduce the scale of production, revise the values and return to the modified crafts approach.*

R4. For Objets d'art: *to move objets d'art from the luxury market to public museums and spaces where more people can appreciate (consume) them; 2) as commodities on the market, fair pricing policies should be made to ensure objets d'art are more affordable for a wider audience.*

New Areas for Design to Make Constructive Contributions

A need for design to play an important role in less tangible and less commercial areas, besides focusing on materialistic aspects of revitalization (i.e., product design, process improvement, packaging, branding, and marketing). These areas are recommended as:

***R5. Facilitation of Immersive, Meaningful Collaborations in Practice* between Local Craftspeople and Contemporary creatives**

R6. Development of Education Platforms and Learning Courses for Young Generations

R7. Design of Customized Services to Enhance Maker-Consumer Relationships and Interactions

Recommendations For Government

R8. To Review Government Recognition Policies and Supports

Make it more ***inclusive and equitable***; make the recognition more ***accessible*** especially to the marginalized craftspeople whose practices are vital to local tradition and cultural diversity but are not fully recognized; ***increase appropriate financial and facility supports*** for inheritors in disadvantaged situation or inheritors with lower status of recognition (county and municipal levels).

Figure 9.2. Recommendations for crafts in the YRD

9.1.4 Answering the Research Questions

The aim of the research was to investigate crafts in the Yangtze River Delta of China in order to determine what approaches could facilitate a healthy and sustainable development of crafts in the region, and if and how design could make constructive and meaningful contributions. Accordingly, three main research questions were developed. The following section summarizes how each of these research questions was answered, and the relevant main findings, outcome and recommendations.

RQ1: *How can we understand the characteristics and values of crafts and the resurgence of traditional practices in the YRD?*

Relevant Findings: (Figure 9.1).

> **MRF1**: four craft categories were identified as four different approaches of craft resurgence in the YRD, namely, *traditional, modified, innovative*, and *objets d'art*, each of which represent a rather different set of values and priorities.
>
> **MRF3**: socio-economic inequality and polarization due to unequal recognition in the ICH inheritor programme and unaffordability of *objets d'art*; competing interests and tensions caused by conflicting values especially between local craftspeople and contemporary creatives.
>
> **MRF4**: deconstructed Industrial model in the YRD emerges from collaborations among local craftspeople and contemporary creatives, but tensions exist within the collaborations.
>
> **The Outcome**: a *Combined Values Model* (Figure 8.3) for understanding contemporary craft practices was drawn from Schwartz's Values Theory, Walker's QBL and empirical findings from the field research.

Significance: MRF1 identifies four categories of crafts which characterize four approaches of the current craft resurgence in the YRD and represent four sets of different values. MRF3 identifies two significant problems among craft communities. MRF4 identifies a de-constructed industrial model existing in the YRD craft production. The outcome in terms of the *Combined Values Model* identifies 13 craft values and illustrates their relationships to Schwartz's values circumplex and Walker's QBL. This model contributes to our understanding of the spectrum of values in contemporary craft

practices in line with the principles of sustainability and can be used as a tool for evaluating different craft cases. These three main findings and the outcome (*Combined Values Model*) contribute to our understanding of the main characteristics and values of the current resurgence of traditional practices in the YRD, which have answered RQ1.

RQ2: *What are the appropriate and effective approaches in line with sustainability principles to ensuring the long-term development of crafts in the region?*

Relevant Findings and Recommendation:

> **MRF2**: *Modified craft* tends to be a relatively promising approach to supporting crafts in an economically viable fashion without destroying their intrinsic nature, while continuing *traditional craft* practices through non-commercial conservation can best ensure the cultural and ethical significance of the region's/nation's intangible cultural heritage (Figure 9.1).
>
> **MRF5**: "Immersive Making" collaboration model is meaningful in creating a shared, holistic notion of values to overcome the tensions between local craftspeople and contemporary creatives (Figure 9.1).
>
> **R1**: two approaches to effectively sustaining crafts are recommended – a) moderate commercial revitalization and b) non-commercial ICH conservation (Section 9.1.3, Figure 9.2).

Significance: MRF2 recognizes that *modified craft* tends to be a relatively promising approach to supporting crafts in an economically viable fashion while continuing traditional craft practices through non-commercial conservation can best ensure the cultural and ethical significance of intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, these two approaches (as per R1) were recommended as two appropriate and effective approaches of crafts development in the YRD that are in line with sustainability principles. In addition, MRF5 suggests that "Immersive Making" is a meaningful collaboration model in creating a shared, holistic notion of values to overcome the tensions between local craftspeople and contemporary creatives. This model can ensure a meaningful collaboration of craft practices in the region. These findings and the recommendation contribute to the solutions to ensuring long-term development of crafts in the region, which have answered RQ2.

RQ3: *Can design make a constructive and meaningful contribution to enabling a sustainable transformation in crafts of the region, if so, in what areas?*

Relevant Findings and Recommendations:

> **MRF1:** While *traditional crafts* are in decline*, modified, innovative* and *objets d'art* crafts are undergoing significant revitalization and transformation into commodities through interventions in products, design, processes, packaging, branding and marketing (Figure 9.1).
>
> **R5:** To *facilitate meaningful collaboration in practices* between local craftspeople and contemporary creatives. Design can help with the collaborations especially in the area of guiding professional and ideologically different people into a "common place" and facilitating co-creation process with situated tactics and tools (Section 9.1.3, Figure 9.2).
>
> **R6:** To develop *education platforms and learning courses* that suit children and young makers' preferences, in order to more widely transmit craft culture and skills with a contemporary context in today's digital era. Design can help develop new teaching methods, interactive apps, games, etc. with new digital technologies (Section 9.1.3, Figure 9.2).
>
> **R7**: To develop *customized services enhancing maker-consumer relationships and interactions* in the customized production-consumption model (as identified in modified crafts). Design can help develop interactive services and apps, etc. to satisfy individual makers' needs with information technologies (Section 9.1.3, Figure 9.2).

Significance: MRF1 identities four categories of crafts in the YRD among which *modified* and *innovative crafts* improve and/or innovate crafts with design in products, processes, packaging, branding, and marketing. This finding proves that design has significantly contributed to the viability of crafts in the YRD and worldwide. In addition, this research finds and highlights that, beside focusing on these more material aspects of commercial revitalization above, design should play an important role in less tangible and less commercial areas. These areas are identified and recommended as R5-R7. This finding confirms that design can make effective contribution to crafts, and the recommendations offer three areas for design to make constructive contributions. These has answered RQ3.

9.2 Contributions to Knowledge and Potential Beneficiaries

9.2.1 Contributions to Knowledge

The main motivation for conducting this research was the limited amount of literature in the field of design for sustainability that dealt specifically with contemporary craft practices in the YRD. In particular, there was little research that has systemically examined the current resurgence of craft practices in this region and explored approaches to a sustainable development of them that is in line with the holistic notions of sustainability (as stated in Section 2.6). It is in this context that the contribution to knowledge of the research lies in four aspects:

- **New understanding and insights of crafts in the YRD**, **highlighting the importance of the "values" perspective** which draws attention to the often-overlooked relationship between craft, sustainability and the holistic notion of values. This contribution includes the characteristics of crafts in the YRD (Section 4.2); the identification of a deconstructed industrial model of craft production and its tensions (Section 7.3); two significant problems concerning inequality and tensions in values among craft communities (Sections 6.4.1, 7.2.3, also see 9.1.2); and a comprehensive understanding of values for contemporary craft practices drawing from Schwartz's Values Circumplex, Walker's QBL and empirical findings from the field research (Figure. 8.3 *Combined Values Model*). This claim of contribution to knowledge is based on the lack of existing literature in the field that theoretically investigates the current craft practices of the YRD in relationship to sustainability and values. This contribution is achieved through synthesized analysis of empirical data collected from semi-structured interviews (Chapter 4), the in-depth case study (Chapter 7), and the development of the model (typology) of craft values (Chapters 6 and 8).

- **New classification of crafts in the YRD – four categories of crafts** (Section 5.2.3) **and their profiles of embedded values** (Section 8.2, Figure 8.4-8.7). This

claim of contribution to knowledge is based on a need to understand the patterns of, and examining the current resurgence in, craft practices of the YRD identified from literature (Section 2.6). It is achieved through iterate examinations using empirical data and the model of craft values developed along the way (Chapters 5, 7 and 8).

- **Recommendations for crafts in the region** – include the recommendations for the four craft categories and the recommendations for collaboration practices, craft education and transmission, support of maker-consumer interaction in customized production, and government recognition and support policies (Section 9.2). This claim of contribution to knowledge is based on the fact that these recommendations do not only address supporting crafts per se that mainly focus on economic viability, but also ensures the support of crafts in a way that takes environmental, cultural, social and personal aspects into holistic account. This contribution of knowledge is achieved through the synthesis of all the research findings and outcome.

- **This research highlights that design should pay more attention to less tangible and less commercial areas**, such as *facilitation of meaningful collaboration practices, development of education platforms and learning courses* with new technologies, and *development of customized services supporting maker-customer interactions* (Section 9.1.3). This claim of contribution to knowledge is based on the fact that major efforts of design have been focusing on product development, packaging, branding and marketing (as identified from literature, as per Section 2.5.1, and from field research as in *modified* and *innovative craft*), while the areas relating to less tangible aspects of collaborations in craft practices, knowledge transmissions to younger generations and maker-consumer relationships have been neglected. Moreover, these areas are critical places for ensuring the sustainability and long-term development of crafts. This contribution to knowledge is achieved through the in-depth case study in the

porcelain community of Jingdezhen (Chapter 7) and the development of the overall research findings and outcome (Sections 8.2, 9.1).

The claim of contribution to knowledge is supported by the dissemination of initial findings of the research at different research stages. The dissemination includes three journal articles and three referred conference papers (see Section 1.3.6 for full details). In addition, some findings have been presented at several sustainability-, design- and craft-related forums (Section 1.3.6). These publications and presentations aim to demonstrate that this research has already contributed to the corpus in the scholarly arena of craft and design for sustainability. The researcher contends that these contributions to knowledge can be defended through the rigour of the research approach and associated methodology.

9.2.2 Potential Beneficiaries

Potential beneficiaries of this research were initially communicated during interviews with experts during field research (2017) and finally identified from discussions with researchers presented in two forums in China (2019). Potential beneficiaries include:

- Craftspeople, craft communities and enterprises;
- Designers, design researchers, design-makers, design educators and students;
- Artists who work with craft communities;
- Policymakers, advisors, strategic planners of craft and Intangible Cultural Heritage sectors;
- Buyers and merchandizers of crafts.

These stakeholders will benefit especially if they are involved in educational institutions, research institutions, government agencies or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and companies.

9.3 Limitations of the Research and Potential Improvements

Although this research resulted in informative findings and developed original

contributions to knowledge, several limitations were experienced throughout the process.

9.3.1 Limitations of Data Sources and the Scope of Samples

One of the main areas of the research is crafts in the YRD of China, especially the current resurgence of craft practices in the region. When the researcher first embarked on the project, the literature review was limited to books, journal articles and formal online documents, but there was insufficient information in the literature on the resurgent craft practices of the recent decade. As the research progressed, the researcher found that the information on weblogs and social medias could provide abundant data. In retrospect, the research could have considered more data from these less-formal sources at the early stage, as it could have helped provide a clearer view of the status quo at that time and avoided repetition later. Meanwhile, information from these new media helped expand the scope of sample compositions for the primary research.

The YRD of China is a large geographic region that has large numbers of crafts covering ten main categories (categorization by Suzhou Arts and Crafts Research Institute). This research investigated five types of crafts with porcelain and textiles as the main focus. 27 semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 informants. 11 individual, contextualized interviews were carried out for the in-depth case study, and the research also included four validation interviews on the categorization of crafts with four experts. The total number of participants was 43 including 30 key informants, four experts in the validation interviews (two of whom were key informants from previous semi-structured interviews), and 21 participants in the in-depth case study (ten participants being key informants from the semi-structured interviews). This sample was relatively small, geographically limited to Suzhou, Hangzhou, Jingdezhen and Shanghai. For future work, including more craft types and geographical areas is recommended.

In addition, this research gathered data main from four groups (Makers including

artisans/masters, artists and designers, Supporters, Buyers and Researchers) of informants and participants. However, a reviewer who commented on the researcher's journal paper, suggested that the data could have been more holistic if the interviews had included a consumers group. In view of future work, it is recommended that the consumers' perspective should be considered.

9.3.2 Limitations of the Question regarding craft's environmental impact Designed for Semi-structured Interviews

One limitation of the question regarding craft's environmental impact designed for the semi-structured interviews was identified in retrospect when the researcher was analyzing interview data at an early stage. The question was designed to be quite straightforward while neglecting human psychology. The original question for craftspeople was "Do you think the craft you are making is environmentally friendly or not?". This kind of question may not affect the reliability of answers from other informant groups (i.e. Researchers and Supporters), but it highly likely to affect the answer from craftspeople. Asking someone if their craft is either pro-environmental or not tends to invite a pro-environmental answer as no one would want to be seen as doing things that are harmful to the environment. To remedy this shortcoming, the researcher contacted the nine makers who gave pro-environmental answers again and asked check-up questions about the detail of their craft processes. Although the final result of their answers stayed more or less the same, it is a lesson to be learned for future work.

9.3.3 Limitations of the In-depth Case Study

Due to the high level of engagement required from the participants and the fact that this case study of such an exploratory project could not offer immediate benefits at the time, several participants quit halfway through the research activities. The researcher had to look for new participants and refamiliarize the context and build relationships with them. This was frustrating, and at times influenced the degree of research

implementation. For future work, in order to allow further engagement of participants, it is recommended to have a more flexible plan and negotiate the expected timeframe with the participants.

The fieldwork of the case study lasted one and half months in total. If not for the limited budget it could have had further engagement with both participants and the researcher to allow more in-depth generation of knowledge. In addition, due to weather and time constraints, the experimental stage of the practice-based project didn't produce interesting examples of porcelain (though these were not the research focus) and systematic tools for collaboration, but it did draw the researcher's attention to a potential area where design can facilitate more organic and fruitful collaborations between craftspeople and creatives. As this area also involved knowledge and approaches of participatory co-design, there are limits to one researcher exploring further by working alone within this PhD course. As a potential area for design's contribution to craft practice, this has been identified as an opportunity for future research.

9.4 Value of the Research Outcomes and Recommendations for Further Research

Aspects of the research outcomes (Section.9.1) could be more widely applicable as part of further research in craft, design and sustainability related fields and communities with the same context. The *Combined Values Model* (Figure.8.3) could be further developed into appraisal criteria/tools for researchers and policy makers to select and evaluate crafts, and could be tested in different contexts worldwide. Meanwhile, the recommendations for crafts in the YRD with opportunities for design (Section 9.2), especially the recommendations for *traditional crafts* and *collaboration practices*, could be developed into guidelines and tested in the YRD or elsewhere with the same context. Based on the outcomes of this PhD project, future research is recommended as follows:

- To promote small-batch, customized production and sustainable consumption, specific design services could be researched further regarding how to enhance people's emotional connections to crafts and places, and help build closer and long-term relationships between individual craftspeople and customers.
- To widely transmit craft culture and skills to younger generations within today's digital era, there is an opportunity for craftspeople, educators and designers to develop new forms of educational systems and craft courses with multimedia and new digital technologies.
- Design facilitation of collaboration practices could be further explored in practice with approaches and methodologies of participatory and co-design, especially regarding how to generate more universal tactics and tools for facilitating collective creativity and building mutual respect to overcome competing interests and tensions in values among collaborators.
- Mechanism regarding how to make the inclusivity and equality of *objets d'art* could be further investigated, e.g., what strategies can influence the justice of *objets d'art* and fair distribution of benefits, motivate artists and related stakeholders to dedicate to charitable endeavour and ICH conservation? If and how can design help in these regards?

9.5 Concluding Remarks

From this investigation into crafts and their embedded values in the YRD of China with the context of sustainability and Intangible Cultural Heritage, it is found that while many traditional crafts in this region are in decline, some are undergoing significant revitalization, for use in contemporary culture, transforming into commodities and arts. This research identifies four different approaches of this resurgence in the contemporary craft practices of the YRD, represented by the four craft categories as *traditional, modified, innovative* and *objets d'art*. These four approaches have fundamentally different sets of values in both purpose and outcomes.

In order to sustain crafts of the YRD in a both economically viable and healthy fashion, this research recommends two approaches: *moderate commercial revitalization* (i.e.

moderate craft approach) and *non-commercial conservation* (i.e. China's ICH programme and related initiatives). The research argues that it is vital to adhere to traditional processes while also changing incrementally and relatively modestly within a small-batch, customized production to ensure the outcomes are relevant to contemporary needs. It highlights that moderate intervention and "slow" change are key to healthy and sustainable development of crafts. Over-exploitation helped with inappropriate interventions of fashionable design and fast innovation, as *innovative crafts* demonstrated, has at the same time caused the loss of their intrinsic values and craftsmanship. Likewise, elevating traditional crafts as *objets d'art* erodes the core values of craft tradition and the sustainability issues of equity and equality. Neither of these are the appropriate approach to ensure the long-term development of crafts towards a sustainable future. The research highlights the importance of the "values" perspective. The main argument of this research is that craft practices should be understood with a holistic notion of their embedded values, which not only supports crafts per se on a more immediate level, but also considers deeper sustainability-related issues of ethical implication, cultural significance and equality.

From this research, it is clear that design has been positively contributing to the viability of crafts and raised their perceived value, especially in the development of products, processes, packaging and branding, and marketing (graphic information, creating points of sales, website design). However, this research argues that in addition to those tangible and commercial areas of craft production and consumption, design's focus should also be on less tangible areas. Design can help build more equitable and more inclusive craft communities by facilitating meaningful collaboration practices among different stakeholders. Design can help transmit craft skills to a wider audience of younger generations through the design of attractive and effective teaching methods and interactive courses instead of merely helping to sell more objects. Design can help enhance consumers' deeper understanding of crafts and build maker-customer relationships through more customized production and services instead of merely "polishing" consumer goods.

This research also acknowledges that there are many areas of the issues with craft communities in the YRD that are beyond design's current scope to make a contribution, e.g., the inequality caused by the government's ICH recognition and unaffordability of *objets d'art*. Addressing these issues needs collective efforts from a broad range of sectors and interdisciplinary research fields. It is for this reason that the researcher strongly recommends that designers and researchers collaborate with wider groups of sectors and fields in future work to ensure the long-term sustainability of crafts in the YRD and worldwide.

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Appendices

Appendix – A

Documents Related to Ethical Approval and Consent from Informants for Field Research

These documents include the information sheet and consent form that were approved by the Ethics Committee of Lancaster University

A—Information sheet and consent form (page 1/4)

Lancaster University

Participant information sheet

I am a PhD student at Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Art in Lancaster University and I would like to invite you to take part in a short interview as part of a research study about ***"Craft and Sustainability: Potential for Design Intervention in Crafts in the Yangtze River Delta, China***. This research explores traditional crafts, craft enterprises and the nature of their work in the Yangtze River Delta. Please take time to read the following information carefully before you decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the study about?
This study aims to understand the relationship between the nature of traditional crafts and the principles of sustainability, especially from a design perspective. The aim of the study is to develop design strategies that could help safeguard locally based traditional crafts in the context of contemporary technologies and mass-produced products. The ultimate goal of this research is to give directions and guidance for traditional craft development with considerations of modern design and appropriate application of *technology in craft enterprises.*

Why have I been invited?
The research aims to consult with local crafts people and associated stakeholders, e.g. retailers/suppliers, customers, public sector support officers, regional development offices and academics. I have contacted you as I believe that you will be able to provide important insights into this field and as such your views will be of value to the development of this research project.

I would be very grateful if you would agree to take part in this study.

What will I be asked to do if I take part?
I would like to interview you for approximately 45 minutes and ask a series of questions that explore the nature of local crafts. This will be a semi-structured interview where I will ask a series of set questions and follow these up with additional questions in response to your answers. I am willing to visit you at your place of work or another convenient mutually agreed location. I would ask your permission to audio-record the interview solely for the purpose of this research project (see Participant Consent Form). Where applicable, I would also like to photograph and/or make a short video-recording of your craft practice – for my future reference and, with your permission, for use in my PhD thesis, academic publications, conference presentations. You will have the option of not being photographed or vide-recorded.

What are the possible benefits from taking part?
Taking part in this study will allow you to share your experiences and expertise in craft practices. Your insights will contribute to our understanding of the cultural significance of craft products for the future. **I am willing to share my research with you and keep you informed as the project develops. I hope you will find my research project of interest.**

Do I have to take part?
No. It's completely up to you to decide whether or not you take part. Your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

What if I change my mind?
After you take part but change your mind, you are free to withdraw and we will extract any data you contributed to the study and destroy it. Data means the information, views, ideas, etc. that you and other participants will have shared with the research team. However, it is difficult and often impossible to take out data from one specific participant when this has pooled together with other people's data. Therefore, you can only withdraw up to 2 weeks after taking part in the study.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?
It is unlikely that there will be any major disadvantages to taking part. It is only 45 minutes of your time for an interview.

Will my data be identifiable?
After the interview/observation, only I and my supervisors will have access to the data you share with us. The only other person who will have access to the data is a professional transcriber who will listen to the recordings and produce a written record of what you and others have said. The transcriber will sign a confidentiality agreement.

A—Information sheet and consent form (page 2/4)

I would like to quote you in this study and address your name and profession, however, at your request I will keep all personal information about your confidential (e.g. your name and other information about you that can identify you), that is I will not share with others. I will anonymise transcripts of audio recordings and hard copies of any data. This means that I remove any personal information. Each participant's interview will be labelled with date and number, so if any of interviewees wants to withdraw, I will recognize it to move.

How will my data be stored?
Your data will be stored in encrypted files and on password-protected computers. Access to this data is restricted to me (the researcher) and my supervisors. Any identifiable data (including recordings of participants' voices) will be deleted from the recorder as quickly as possible, i.e. after the data has been transferred to a secure university server via a password protected PC. In the meantime, the recorder will be stored securely in a locked cupboard at the university. If you prefer, I will anonymise the transcript of interview and label it with code.
In accordance with University guidelines, I will keep the data securely for a minimum of ten years.

How will I use the information you have shared with me and what will happen to the results of the research study?
I will use the data that you share with us for academic purposes only. This will include 1) my PhD thesis and journal publication, 2) presentation of academic conferences to inform policy-makers about my study.
When writing up the findings from this study, I would like to reproduce some of the views and ideas you shared with us. However, at your request, I will only use anonymised quotes (e.g. from our interview with you), so that although I will use your exact words, you cannot be identified in our publications.

Who has reviewed the project?
This study has been reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Lancaster Management School's Research Ethics Committee.

What if I have a question or concern?

If you have any queries and concerns, please contact me: Xiaofang Zhan (researcher), *Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts, LICA Building, Lancaster University, LA1 4YW, E:* x.zhan@lancaster.ac.uk

If you have any queries or if you are unhappy with anything that happens concerning your participation in the study, please contact: *Prof. Stuart Walker (Supervisor of the researcher), Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts, LICA Building, Lancaster University, LA1 4YW T: 01524 510873 E:* s.walker@lancaster.ac.uk

If you have any concerns or complaints that you wish to discuss with a person who is not directly involved in the research, you can also contact: *Prof. Nick Dunn, Director of ImaginationLancaster Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts, LICA Building, Lancaster University, LA1 4YW T: 01524 510793 E: nick.dunn@lancaster.ac.uk*

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this project.

A—Information sheet and consent form (page 3/4)

CONSENT FORM

Lancaster University

Project Title: **Craft and Sustainability: Potential for Design Intervention in Crafts in the Yangtze River Delta, China**

Name of Researchers: **Xiaofang Zhan** x.zhan@lancaster.ac.uk

Please tick each box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. If I withdraw within 2 weeks after my interview, then my data will be removed. ☐

3. I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, academic articles, publications or presentations by the researcher. ☐

4. I understand that any interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed and that data will be protected on encrypted devices and kept secure. ☐

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5. **TICK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BOXES** ☐
EITHER: I agree for my name to be used and quotations attributed to me in any publications or other outcomes of this research.

OR: I wish to remain anonymous regarding any quotations included in publications or other outcomes of this research. ☐

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6. **TICK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BOXES** ☐
EITHER: I give permission for myself, my practice and/or my products to be video-recorded or photographed

OR: I do not wish myself, my practice and/or my products to be video-recorded or photographed ☐

---

7. **TICK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BOXES** ☐
EITHER: I give permission for such photographs and video-recordings (in Questions 6 above) to be included in any publications, presentations, websites or other published outcomes of this research

OR: I do not wish such photographs and video-recordings (in Questions 6 above) to be ☐

A—Information sheet and consent form (page 4/4)

included in any publications, presentations, websites or other published outcomes of this research

8. I understand that the data collected during this interview will be kept according to University guidelines for a minimum of 10 years after the end of the study (2019), then will be destroyed. ☐

☐

9. I agree to take part in the above study.

_____ _____ _____

Name of Participant Date Signature

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent_____ **Date** _____ Day/month/year

One copy of this form will be given to the participant and the original kept in the files of the researcher at Lancaster University

Appendix – B

Guidelines for Semi-structured Interviews in Field Research Phase I

B—Guidelines for semi-structured interviews

Time: 45 minutes

Mode: face-to-face

What role(s) do you have in relation to crafts?

1) Craftspeople (e.g. masters, inheritors, makers, artisans, or craft-designers)
2) Retail/suppliers (e.g. business advisors, enterprise managers, design managers)
3) Public supporters (e.g. NGO staff, curators, activists, initiators)
4) Policy officials (e.g. government agents, policy officers)
5) Researchers (e.g. academics, scholars)
6) Other than the above

If more than one choice, your main roles are _____

Questions primarily for Supporters, Researchers and some masters

1) Would you describe craft practices in the YRD as healthy and flourishing or in decline? Follow-up Question:

   Why do you believe this? Can you give some examples or add some details about this?

2) In your view, what are the most important craft items of porcelain and textile in the YRD?

   Why do you say this? What reasons do you have (e.g., contributing most to the economy, most historical, related to local culture or identity, most people employed, most forward looking?)

3) Is the environmental aspect of craft making a matter of concern in craft practices? Do you think the craft is pro-environment or harmful, and why do you think so?

4) How many types of crafts (products) that are currently produced in the region? What are the main categories of these crafts?

5) How do you find the craft education and apprenticeship in the region? Are there more people learning these crafts or less and even very few people learning them? If less, what is the reason? What do you think is the most important means to cope with this issue, or do you have other opinions? How do you think of the initiative of adding ICH crafts to the curriculum in primary and secondary schools' curriculum?

6) Do you think designers can contribute to craft? If so, in what way – product design, branding, packages, marketing, website service, projecting, etc.?

Questions primarily for Makers (artisans, masters, designer-makers)

1) Could you tell us about your background (your expertise, education or training, skills, experience, employment history, etc.)? And do you merely do craft to make a living, or do you do other things as well?

2) How would you describe, in general terms, the kind of work that you do? Can you briefly describe the kinds of artefacts you produce? How many types of artefacts do you make?

3) Is there any connection of your craft practice(s) to your community or the people you work/live with? If so, how do you think making crafts affects these connections; what does this practice(s) bring to you with respect to community relationships and notions, and how do you contribute or benefit from these practice(s).

4) Do you think the craft you make contains any meaning or something important that you value and want to pass on from one generation to the next? If so, what do you think are they, and do they have any relationship with your place and tradition?

5) Except for material and social issues, how do you feel about your work and does your work bring any meaning to you in your life? Does it make you happy or does it make you suffer hardship?

6) Can you tell us about the process you use in creating your work? What materials do you use and why? How and where they are sourced? Are there any distinctive characteristics of the materials? How do you find this material and resources? (i.e environmentally friendly, renewable, easily accessible, or unrenewable, short in supply, hard to get, etc.)

7) Are there any particular skills, methods or techniques that you employ in your work? Are these traditional, or do they have traditional aspects or are they recent (e.g., technologies)? How did you learn these (skills, methods or techniques)?

8) Can you make a living by only making crafts…how do you see crafts economically? Do you think the craft(s) you are involved in is (are) economically viable or unviable, Why?

9) Do you work in collaboration with others? If so, who are involved? Are they working in similar ways? Does your work differ from those of other people you work with? If so, how? What does working with others mean to you?

10) How do you communicate (promote) your work? Who is this promotion aimed at? How do you interact with these people and what are forms of interaction (e.g., online platform like Dongjia, or related events, exhibitions, personal websites, etc.)?

11) How do you think of the designer's work? Do you think they are helpful? If yes, what are the points of their help? If no, why is it?

12) How do you value your work? What do you value most in your work?

13) How many people are doing and learning the same craft as you do? Are young people willing to do this job? If so, what is their motivation? And if not, why and what is the reason?

Questions primarily for Buyers (detailers, suppliers and enterprise/design managers)

1) Could you briefly tell me what are you making in you company or selling in your store/platform? Is it single category of craft (e.g., porcelain, textiles)? Is it single type of product? Who is your customer (which class of people buy your products, e.g., foreign or domestic market, young or senior generation, middle class, upper class, etc.)?

1) What is in you view the most prosperous and potential craft category in the YRD? Why do you say this, what is the reason do you have (popular in market, traditional or modern attributes, environmentally friendly, cultural values, etc.)?

2) How do you perceive sustainability? How should it be implemented in business field (using green materials, renewable energies, creating more job places, protecting culture, tradition, etc.)? In what form and way is sustainability reflected and implemented in the craft and in business? What principle should enterprises and entrepreneurs follow in craft industry?

3) Do you think the crafts you are doing is prosperous and have a good future? If so, please give the reason; if not, why?

4) According to Question 2, what is the challenge facing your business and the craft you are doing? Could you elaborate on it in detail?

5) Do you think design could help craft in (your) company as well as in general? If so, what aspects do you think designer can do to help, and in what form? Please elaborate them a bit. And can you give some examples in which design makes contribution to craft in real case in the YRD?

Appendix – C

Grouping of the Informants in Semi-structured Interviews and Participants in the In-depth Case Study and their Attributes

C1—Four groups of 30 informants in the semi-structured interviews and their attributes

C2—Five groups of 21 participants in the in-depth case study and their attributes

C1—Four groups of 30 informants in the semi-structured interviews and their attributes

Code	Group				Informants' role at time of interview (2017)	Years of experience
	Makers	Supporters	Buyers	Researcher		
MAKERS						
M1	✓			✓	A national MCA master in ceramics, council member of China Arts and Crafts Association	42+
M2	✓	✓			A technique master, the founder of a national ceramic technique training centre, specialized in ceramic throwing	20
M3	✓				A national MCA master in ceramics, the owner of a ceramic art studio, previously worked in the state-run Jingdezhen Artistic Ceramic Factory, the member of China Crafts Association	30
$M4^{1-3}$					Including three ceramic artisans: two specializes in decoration ($M4^1$, $M4^2$) one specializes in kiln firing techniques ($M4^3$)	15+
M5	✓				An artist, designer and educator of ceramic art, specialized in ceramic plate painting, previously worked in a fine-art related foreign company	21
M6	✓				A designer-maker and the owner of a private ceramic workshop who produce everyday use porcelainware	10
M7	✓				A provincial MCA master in Su-embroidery, chief master of a renowned master studio	30
M8	✓				A master/designer of embroidery, the owner of a fashion enterprise	15+
M9	✓	✓			A national level ICH inheritor, the owner of a Woollen Needlepoint Tapestry studio, whose son graduated from design school and works with him	30+
M10	✓				A national MCA master of Silk Carpet Weaving, the owner of a large silk carpets factory with 40 years' history	40
M11	✓	✓		✓	A master/ICH inheritor of blue calico craft, the funder/curator of a blue calico museum, Vice President of the local Intangible Cultural Heritage Conservation Association	35
M12	✓				An ICH inheritor of woodcarving, the owner of a small workshop, whose son works with him and graduated from design school	31
M13	✓				A county level ICH inheritor of oiled-paper umbrella making, whose grandson works with him	40
M14	✓				A national level ICH inheritor, the owner of a family-run bronze enterprise with over 140 years' history, the fourth generation of	45+

					family masters	
SUPPORTERS						
S15		✓			A regional official of ICH sector of local authority particularly in ceramic heritage	16
S16		✓			The chief curator of a craft museum, an advisor in ICH craft education and transmission	30
S17		✓	✓	✓	The curator of the local International Design Week, a consultant of arts and crafts business, the director of a design company	14
S18	✓	✓			The director of a design studio, a co-founder of a NGO craft library, the studio's craft-based work has won numerous international awards like IF and Red Dot	16
S19	✓	✓			The owner of a traditional costume design company	22
S20	✓	✓		✓	President of the local artists association, an advisor/consultant of crafts business and connoisseur	21
S21	✓	✓			President of the local ceramic institute, advisor of ceramic arts and crafts, a renowned ceramic artist	32
S22	✓	✓			A staff of the state-owned ceramic creative park, previously worked as a ceramic artist	10
S23		✓	✓		The director of a craft promotion company, a business advisor	14
S24		✓		✓	Vice-Operational Director of a public art co-creation institute, the member of Shanghai Intangible Heritage Conservation Expert Committee	18
BUYERS						
B25			✓		The manager of a subsidiary company of an international fashion house brand	11
B26	✓		✓		A porcelain retailer who also designs and makes porcelain work	18
B27			✓		A craft agent advisor in a large e-commerce platform, previously worked as a curator of several arts and crafts organizations	20+
RESEARCHERS						
R28		✓		✓	A professor in crafts and design whose research outcomes on craft culture has been adopted by the government.	25+
R29				✓	A researcher in a craft research institute	18
R30				✓	An educator in a design school whose focus is textiles of YRD	12

C2—Five groups of 21 participants in the in-depth case study and their attributes

(Twenty-one participants including eleven informants who also took part in the semi-structured interviews. Another ten participants are coded Aa-Af, Da-Db, Sa, Ra-Rb)

Code	Group					Participants' role at time of case study (2017-2018)	Years of experience
	Artisans/mas	Artists	Designers	Supporters	Researchers		
ARTISANS/MASTERS							
M1	✓	✓			✓	A national MCA master in ceramic arts, council member of China Arts and Crafts Association	42+
M2	✓					A technique master, the founder of a national ceramic technique training centre, specialized in ceramic throwing	20
M3	✓	✓				A national MCA master in ceramics, the owner of a ceramic art studio, previously worked in the state-run Jingdezhen Artistic Ceramic Factory, the member of China Crafts Association	30
M4[1-3]	✓					Including three ceramic artisans: two specializes in decoration (M4[1], M4[2]) one specializes in kiln firing techniques (M4[3])	15+
M5	✓	✓	✓			An artist, designer and educator of ceramic art, specialized in ceramic plate painting, previously worked in a fine-art related foreign company	21
M6	✓		✓			A designer-maker and the owner of a private ceramic workshop who produce everyday use porcelainware	10
ARTISTS							
Aa	✓	✓				A ceramic Artist based in Jingdezhen, founder of Sanbao International Ceramic Village	33+
Ab	✓	✓	✓			A ceramic artist, designer, Professor at a design school of Shanghai	20+
Ac	✓	✓				A ceramic artist based in Jingdezhen, Professor at Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute	15
Ad		✓				A foreign artist from Kenya, PhD student at Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute	7
Ae		✓				A foreign artist from Uganda, member of UNESCO's International Academy of Ceramics, PhD student at Jingdezhen Ceramic institute	10
Af		✓	✓			A foreign designer-artist from Russia, visiting student at	5

						Jingdezhen Ceramic institute	
DESIGNERS							
Da	✓		✓		✓	A PhD student of ceramic design at Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute	6
Db			✓			A *jingpiao* designer whose work has won IF/red-dot awards	11
SUPPORTERS							
S15				✓		A regional official of ICH sector of local authority particularly in ceramic heritage	16
S20		✓		✓		President of the local artists association, an advisor/consultant of crafts business and connoisseur	21
S21		✓		✓		President of the local ceramic institute, advisor of ceramic arts and crafts, a renowned ceramic artist	
S22				✓		A staff of the state-owned ceramic creative park, previously worked as a ceramic artist	10
Sa				✓		The owner of a cultural enterprise centred on education and tourism of ICH and porcelain heritage	15
RESEARCHERS							
R29					✓	A researcher at a craft research institute in the YRD	18
Ra	✓		✓		✓	An educator/researcher at an Arts and Crafts school in the YRD	10
Rb						An educator/researcher at an Arts and Design school in the YRD	9

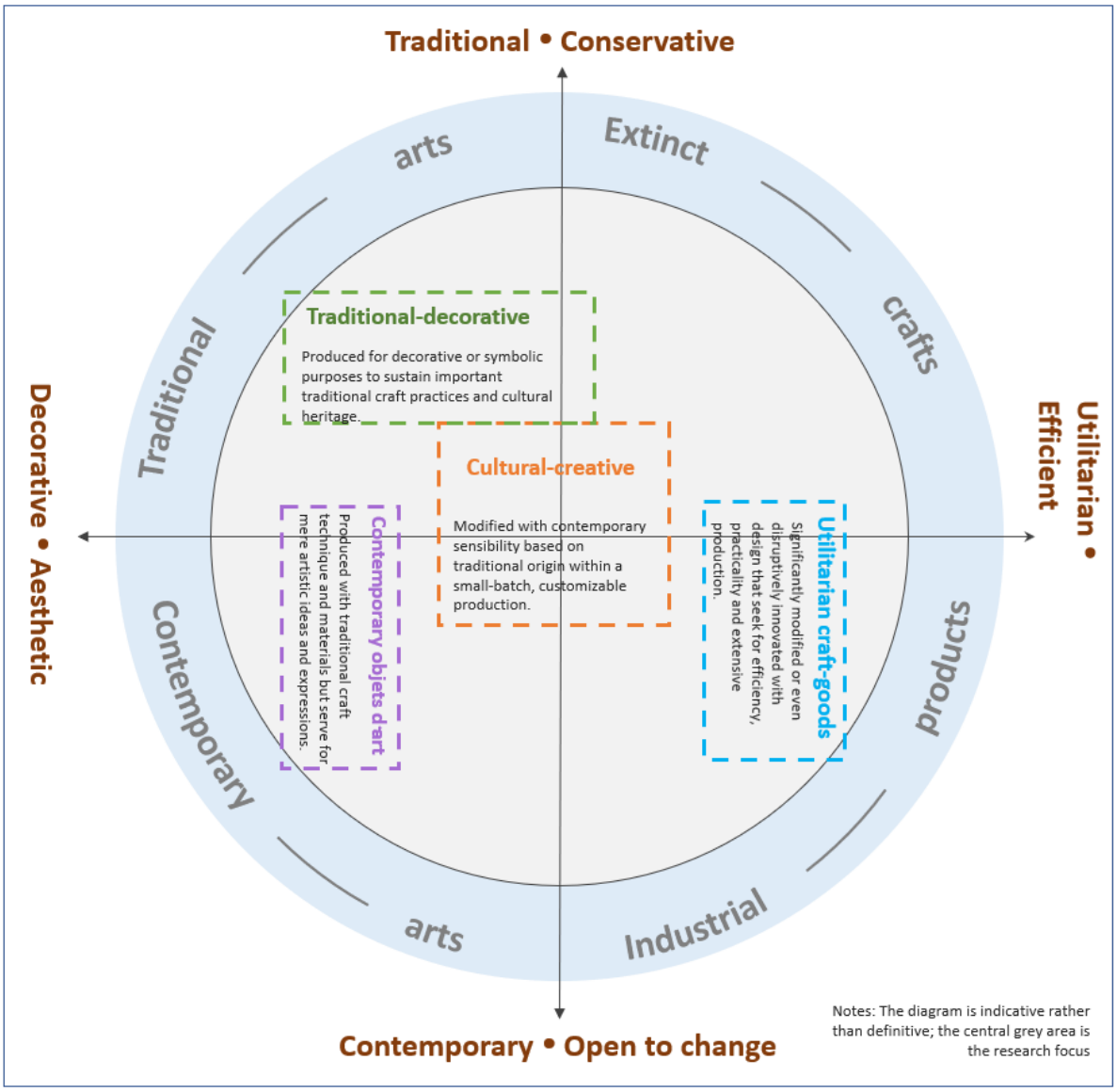
Appendix – D

Materials Used for the Validation of Initial Categorization of Crafts in the YRD

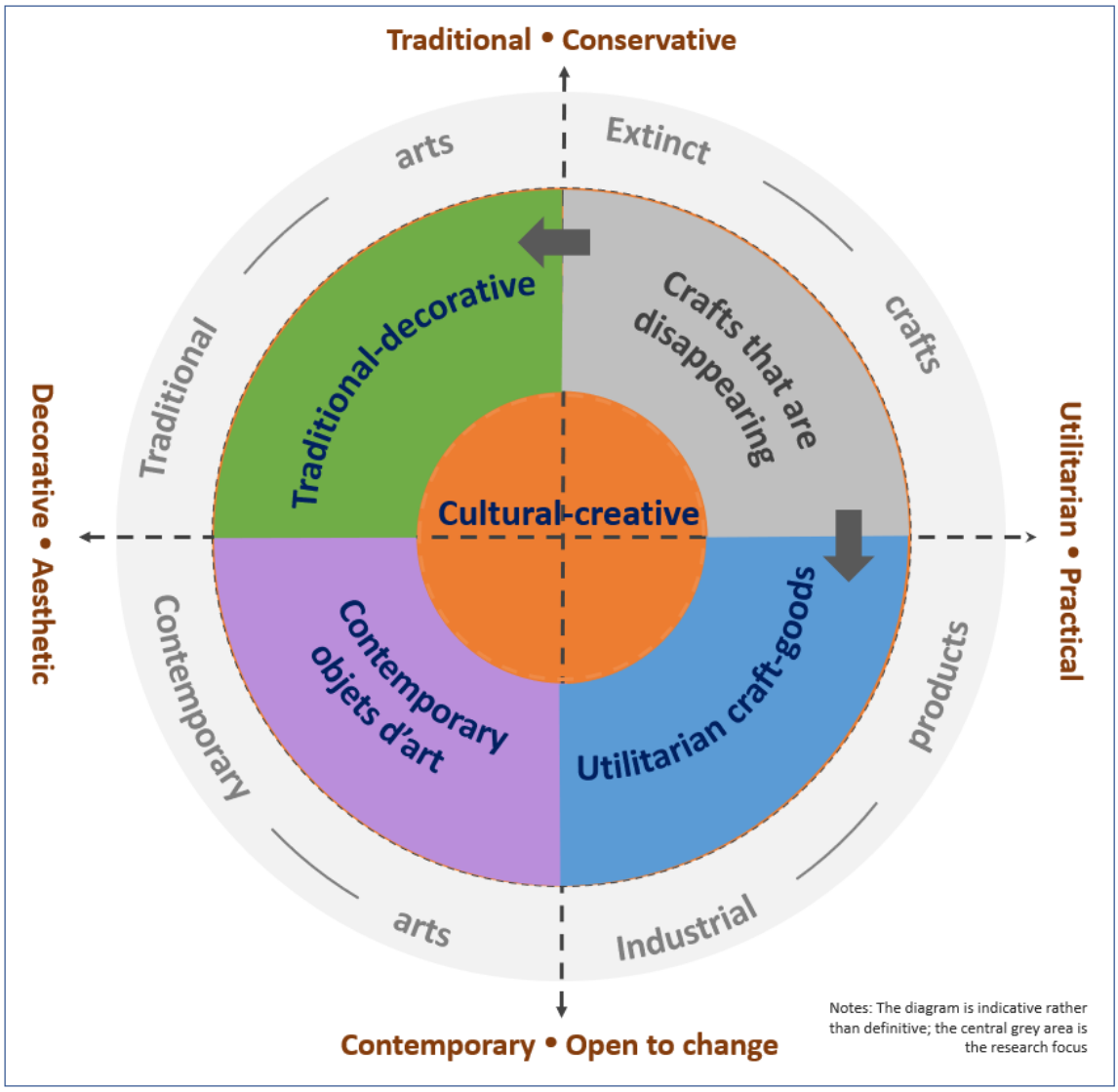
D1—Visualization of the initial craft categorization

D2—Attributions of the initial four craft categories

D1—Visualization of the initial craft categorization (1/2)



D1—Visualization of the initial craft categorization (2/2)



D2—Attributions of the initial four craft categories

Categories	Attribution
Culturally decorative crafts	Well-established traditional crafts, pure heritage, mostly ICH items, intricate/exquisite, high-middle-end, the use has faded, changeless and not used in contemporary Chinese culture, primary decorative, including traditional collectable items as art objects
cultural-creative crafts	Both decorative and utilitarian; modified to suit present-day use, with strong local identity, redesigned with contemporary elements and sensibilities, small-batch/bespoke, high-middle-end
Utilitarian craft-goods	Innovated with modern design/new technologies, close relationship with modern product design, mostly utilitarian, may or may not be handmade, primarily conceived or made by designers or engineers
Objets d'art	Contemporary art objects, primarily aesthetic or symbolic, high-end, high-culture, handmade, sometimes extravagant, primarily conceived by artists, made by artisans

Appendix – E

Materials Used for the In-depth Case Study in Field Research Phase II

E1—Prompt cards for sense-making interviews

E2—Schedule for the co-creation workshop

E3—Prompt questions relating to craft values for the appraisal session

E4— Workshop participant feedback questionnaire

E5— Co-creation workshop posters

E1— Prompt cards for sense-making interviews

E2—Schedule for the co-creation workshop

Phase	Method	Schedule
Introduction	The researcher gives a 15-minute introductory presentation to share previous findings, plus ice-breaking exercise.	10:00-10:15
Producers' map	In group, identify key producers of porcelain crafts, and draw their experiences. For each of them, identify the producer's needs and their motivations.	10:15-10:30
Values identification	In group, according to the 8 values, participants define and locate the four key porcelain producers' value propositions in terms of the 8 values (post-it sticks to whiteboard and the template)	10:30-10:50
Break		10:50-11:10
Challenges and opportunities	All together then in group, identify the key challenges and opportunities to achieve a sustainable future for porcelain crafts	11:10-11:40
Collaboration direction	In groups then all together, reflecting on the existing issues and, based on the challenges and opportunities identified from the last session, to propose meaningful direction. Each group choses a representative to summarize their discussion and opinions	11:40-12:10
Lunch		12:10-13:10
Collaboration strategy	In group then together, based on the collaboration direction, to propose effective strategy to facilitate craft practices towards this direction. Each group choses a representative to summarize their discussion and opinions	13:10-13:40
Appraisal of crafts (independent session)	In group, evaluate today's craft practices according to the four craft categories according to the 8 values and score them in the customized bar chart.	13:40-14:20
Wrap up	Quick feedback and refreshment	14:20-14:35

E3—Prompt questions relating to craft values for the appraisal session

1. LOCAL-CULTURAL VALUE

   Regarding tradition, stories, customs, folklores, legends and beliefs related to this craft, what and how much elements do they have? What meaning does the craft and its practice have? How long a history does this craft have, and what is the significance of it?

2. COMMUNLAL VALUE

   Does the craft practice improve or impair equality, social cohesion, ethics? Does it contribute to the local community, boost local investment by using local suppliers, services, etc.? Is the price fair and or does it use ethical pricing? Does it employ local people or train apprentices?

3. PERSONAL-SPIRITUAL VALUE

   Inner fulfilment – does this practice bring happiness? Is it a good working type, helpful for well-being? Is it continually challenging, fulfilling and spiritually enriching?

   Creativity/freedom – does it bring a sense of freedom and boost creativity? Is it an enjoyable practice that is fully under your control? How much degree of freedom can you design, innovate and create?

4. ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE

   Eco-materiality – regarding materials, skills, techniques, energy use and processes, what are the situations of these elements? Does it use local materials, renewable materials and services? And is it low production of waste products, low energy use, etc.?

   Eco-ethics – does it convey or embody in its pattern/design/use/process any moral/environmental/benign idea/virtue, symbolism, or traditional teaching that are conducive to sustainability and nourishing environmental awareness?

5. ECONOMIC VALUE

Ensuring livelihood – regarding the current economic situation – is it viable or unviable, is it enough or insufficient to make a living? Livelihood means sense of sufficiency rather than profit maximization.

Making money: does it bring about high, medium, or low profits? Or do you see the craft as a cultural capital of heritage or cultural assets? Means to raise perceived value and profiles: branding, packaging and marketing in terms of storytelling, points of sale, etc.

6. INNOVATION VALUE

Innovation: in traditional craft practices, the freedom of change is often limited. Do these crafts adopt something new or conform to traditional form and methods? Do they change traditional crafts to suit contemporary consumers preferences with modern design or sensibility? What is the degree of innovation in these types of crafts?

Use of technologies: is it modified/adapted with new technologies – digital, 3D printing, biotech, etc.?

7. AESTHETIC/ARTISTIC VALUE

Traditional aesthetics – regarding the patterns, forms, designs, and visual effect of techniques, what style are they? Do these elements embody any special meaning and local tradition? Are these styles popular in and liked by local people but not welcomed in the market? Or are they liked by both?

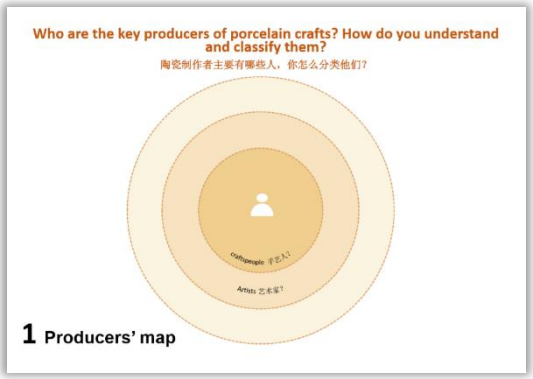
Contemporary aesthetics: innovative, with sense of time, contemporary uses/tastes, fashionable, avant-garde; or are they outdated and hard to sell?

8. REPUTATION/AFFIRMATION VALUE

Recognized as ICH (world, national, provincial municipal, county levels), other designations – time-honoured brands etc., awards, titles.

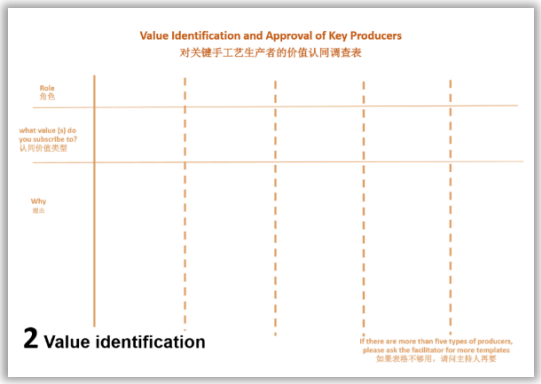
E4—Workshop participant feedback questionnaire

1. Was Task 1 the activity “Mapping potential stakeholders” in-depth and clear?



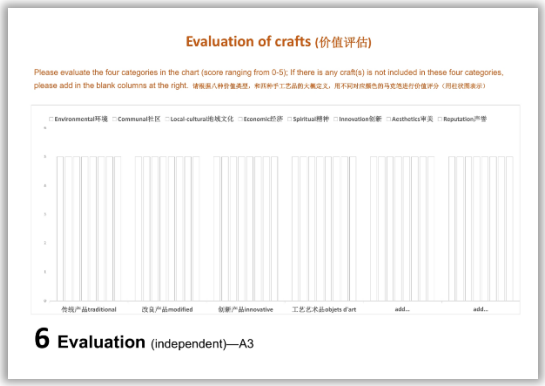
Choose: Not at all A little Enough Much Very much

2. Was the Task 2 “Value Identification and Approval of key Producers” comprehensive?



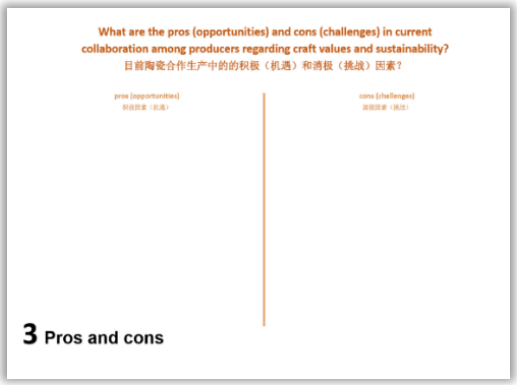
Choose: Not at all A little Enough Much Very much

3. Was Task 6 “Classification and Evaluation of Categories of Crafts” reasonable and comprehensive?



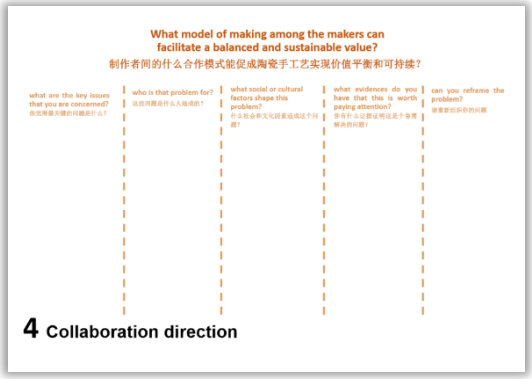
Choose: Not at all A little Enough Much Very much

4. Was the design of “pros and cons” in Task 3 reasonable?



Choose: Not at all A little Enough Much Very much

5. Was Task 4’s brainstorming different directions a creative and effective activity? Did it help organize your ideas?



Choose: Not at all A little Enough Much Very much

6. Was Task 5’s “Outline Future Strategy” an effective activity?

Choose: Not at all A little Enough Much Very much

7. Reflecting on your workshop experience, please comment “What you liked” and “Wh at

could be improved”

8. Overall, what was the main take-away from the workshop?

9. How likely are you to participate in the ceramic community?

10.
If you answered “much” or “very much”, in which capacity do you see yourself getting

involved?

11.Would you like to add any comments or recommendations to the further developme nt of

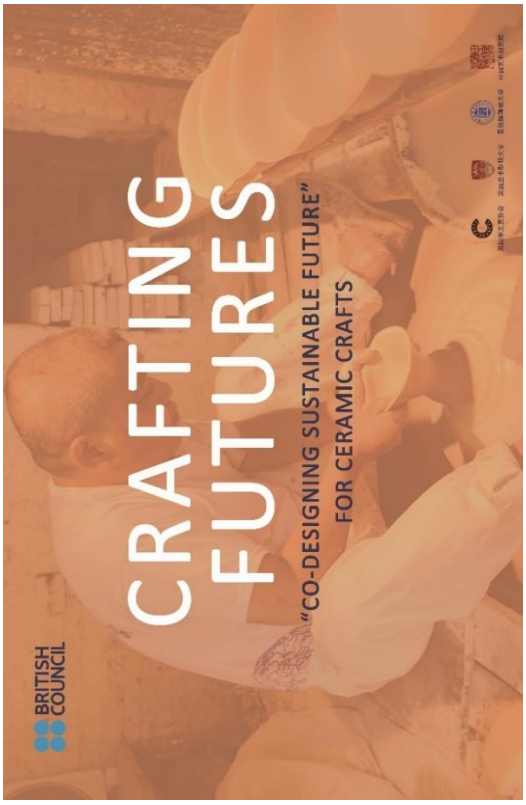
ceramic community in Jingdezhen?

12. Would you like to be updated about future development of this research?

13. If you answer “yes” to the last question, please follow my “public account”, or leave your email below:

E5—Co-creation workshop posters

(Posters designed by Xin Liang)



Appendix – F
Materials Resulting from Literature Review

F1—A literature review of the taxonomies of crafts in China

F2—A review of three best examples of craft revitalization in relationship to the four directions identified from literature

F3—Areas of design interventions in Crafts of the YRD in relationship to the four directions identified from literature

F1—A literature review of the taxonomies of crafts in China

(Pan, 1998; Zhang, 1999; Xie ,2013; ihchina.cn; Hang and Guo, 2012)

Material	Skill	Function	Market Factor	Cultural Form
• **Textile & Fabric:** Silk, wool and cotton craft • **Plant-based:** bamboo, wood, wicker, rush, straw, fan-palm, paper, etc. • **Earthenware:** ceramic, porcelain, celadon, red stoneware, etc. • **Metalsmith:** gold, silver, copper, brass, bronze, blacksmith, tin, etc. • **Glassware** • **Lacquer** • **Stone & Bone:** diamond, jade, ivory, crystal, artificial stones and gems, etc. • **Synthetics**	• **Sketching:** drawing, pattern making • **Modelling:** pottery-making, glassmaking, metalsmith-making etc**. (**throwing, casting, moulding, turning, etc.) • **Weaving & Dying:** embroidering, brocading, spinning, batik, etc. • **Engraving:** carving, etching, embossing, etc. • **Finishing:** painting, lacquering, gilding, printing, enamelling, inlaying, etc.	**Everyday use** • Apparel & wearing • Furniture • Utensil &Tableware **Tool & equipment for:** Woodworking, Metalsmithing, Gardening, Farming Fishing, Masonry, Foresting, etc. **Decoration** • **Environmental** New Year's picture Papercuts Chinese knot Adornment, etc. • **Jewellery** **Ritual & Entertainment** • Painting images • Horse God • Drama masks & props • Puppetry • Musical instruments • Folk toys • Coloured lantern • Kite, etc.	**Market Value** • **High-End** Art-crafts Masterpieces Original pieces Traditionally fine replicas. • **Medium** Artisanal crafts Fine craft replicas • **Low-End** Mass-produced crafts **Market Structure** • **Domestic** Tourist Household • **Export** • **Collection** Auction Company Gallery High-end Expo	**Level:** • Imperial • Folk **Region identity[1]:** • Nomadic • Tibetan • Ba-Shu • Central Plain • Southern • Shanghai style • Lingnan[2] • Wuyi[3]

[1] **Chinese culture** includes over a dozen of cultural types based on the geographic distribution. There are many classifications and sub-divisions. But it can be essentially summarized as eight typical cultural identities.

[2] **Lingnan culture** refers to the culture of Guangdong and the nearby areas in south-eastern China, which consists of Cantonese, Teochew and Hakka cultures.

[3] **Wuyi culture** refers to the culture of south-western Guangdong province including six cities and towns. Also known as *Qiaoxiang* culture (literally means hometown of overseas Chinese). This culture has a strong characteristic of integration of China and the West, reflected in the architecture, art and crafts.

F2—A review of three best examples of craft revitalization

—in relationship to the four directions identified from literature

Examples	Design interventions in study examples			
	Opening up to the world (cosmopolitanism)	Technique & innovation (productivity)	Values creation & entrepreneurial skill (Economic viability)	Inheritance (Continuation)
Santa Fe Art Town	• International markets and art events such as Santa Fe Opera festival and three markets. • Influenced by modern design and technology to create more contemporary products, communication, and sensibility. • Individual artists, galleries, museums, galleries and shops are interrelated globally.	• Complementary application of technology. • Traditional technique with modern design • Combination of multiple types of craft in terms of form, function, material, etc. • Fusion of art, craft and modern design	• Highly value Spanish and Indian art. • Craft value the same as art. • Quality and craftsmanship. • Creation of art and craft myth through related culture promotions.	• Craftsmanship • Adobe architecture • Crafts (products) • Literature, story, custom, religion within Indian and Spanish traditions.
Wedgewood Ltd.	• Renowned worldwide • Proper adoption of Mass production in daily use potteries • Development of international market through international research •	• Digital technology greatly improved productivity and expanded market. • Excellent craftsmanship remains in the whole process. • Innovating the material formulation, design, kiln technique. • making product in fashion, such as neo-classical style jasperware.	• Value creation through Heritage English culture (tea, monarchy) • Craftsmanship with contemporary design • Traditional technique with contemporary aesthesis and sensibility	• Craftsmanship • Historical factory sites. • Classical products such as Portland Vase, jasperware, etc.
Portland works	• Bring in multiple crafts and art and design studio, from steel forge to gin-distilling, digital art to instrument. • Artists, artisans, designers come from the UK and the world are working together. • Hold multiple events to gain impact and knowledge exchange, such as Sheffield Design Week.	• Makespace, creative hub, • high-tech • support by the NGO society and a series of promotion strategies.	• Tight integration of technology and craftsmanship • Fusion of arts and crafts (modern art studios, craft workshops) • Contemporary design with traditional crafts	• Early industrial craftsmanship • Historical building • Traditional cutlery and metal techniques such as stainless steel forging. • Preindustrial culture and spirit.

F3—Areas of design interventions in crafts of the YRD

—in relationship to the four directions identified from literature

Potential Areas of 1) design intervention in YRD & 2) critical reflection implications for craft			
Open up to the world (Cosmopolitanism)	**Technique innovation** (Productivity)	**Values creation & entrepreneurial skill** (Economic viability)	**Inheritance** (Continuation)
Product Level			
• **Transformation of crafts' functions**, e.g. from decoration to utility: integrating the elements (pattern, material, use) of other crafts to porcelain or textile • **Modification** and **redesign** of crafts by drawing on contemporary design and sensibilities	• Appropriate use of **Bio-gradable materials** • Technique improvement, e.g. modern kiln • Supplement to making process by 3D printing, laser cutting, digital weaving, etc. yet not destroying craftsmanship • **Innovation across traditional techniques** e.g. black pottery with bamboo charcoal technique	• Crafts innovation in function, form, use and materials with modern design • Design crafts for longevity and repair • Value increase by focusing on input in **craftsmanship, creativity, innovation, originality** and **emotion** • Construction of fine brand crafts • Revival of old brand crafts • Reinterpretation of craft-related stories	• Regeneration of typically traditional crafts forms, types and usage. • Preservation of locally featured materials • Revival of techniques, methods and making processes • Focusing on high quality **hand skills**
Production Level			
• Visiting and drawing lessons from advanced production models, especially **makespaces** and fab labs	• Innovation of production control and management by appropriate digital technologies	• Creation of makespaces for making, DIY, repairing products to add to products' emotional values • Creation of **lifestyle** that integrates work and life into one	• **Localization** of factories, studio and workshops • Local workforce • Local resources
Promotion Level			

Continued on the next page

• International exhibitions and related art events • Interactive and digital museums • **Knowledge exchange** activities (forum, workshop and symposium) • International conference for craftspeople, artisans and artists	• Interrelating individual artists, galleries, museums, and shops globally through construction of digital platforms, websites and Apps • A series of transformation of **historical buildings** or studios through modern design and technologies	• **Storytelling** and **narratives** of heritage crafts • Excavation of related cultural context, landscape and architecture • Development of brochure with 'artisan workshops' map including artisans' stories	• **Visualization** of craftsmanship, technique and process. • Making use of **historical sites** or buildings such as studios, museums and shops (e.g. Jingdezhen old kiln sites, residential houses of Wuzhen town)
Market Level			
• Development of international and daily use market,	• Construction of websites and digital platforms for selling products and market analysis (WeChat, App, C2C)	• Exploration of untapped market for specific needs • Branding & trademark • High market value based on **high quality hand skills** and solutions to people's potential problems	• Preservation of historic marketplaces Development of customisation and bespoke objects • Development of local market to meet local needs
Education Level			
• Programme of student exchange with international universities • Training course in design and marketing for local artisans	• Course construction of open source software • Biotechnology course • Emphasis on education for increasing students' ability in technical innovation across discipline, modern and traditional	• Improvement of students' proficiency both in **craftsmanship** and **modern design** • Increasing students' understanding of region-related traditional culture	• Support of inheritors and **craftspeople** • Development of **apprenticeship** within academic education

An initial version of these potential areas for design intervention was published in 2017 on The Design Journal entitled Craft and Sustainability: Potential for Design Intervention in Crafts in the Yangtze River Delta, China.

Product level: Walker (2016) loosely classifies product design into three categories: 1) traditional crafts, which are worthy, enduring, bear significant meaning, and are slow to change; 2) industrial design, which is design for mass production, dependent on technology and homogeneity; and 3) design-maker, which is a creative product model emerging with contemporary materials, culture and technologies. Potentially, traditional

craft can be modified by the other two categories. Traditional craftsmanship could be combined with creativity that relates to contemporary sensibilities in order to produce timely products to meet contemporary needs. In addition, design interventions in craft could address issues of material shortage; new craft product designs could reduce the amount of non-renewable materials and increase the use of renewable materials through creative solutions and new development of biotech materials.

Production level: here there are two aspects for design intervention: 1) developing a re-distributed manufacturing model (local resources, local and global consumption, local production workshops) (Prendevile, 2016); and 2) valuing the making process within place-based workshops, and to some extent, integrating making and consuming. Through the act of making, the new 'prosumer' (i.e. the person who becomes involved in the design and customization of products to meet their specific need) can foster a stronger connection with the craft being made (Kohtala & Hyysalo, 2015) and therefore a longer product lifespan can be expected and emotional values can be created.

Promotion level: creating crafts' popularity through storytelling and visualizing the craftsmanship, revealing the local cultural contexts and historical landscapes; visualizing information about the YRD to reveal the current situation and any gaps to the municipal government for policy and financial support; effectively reusing and renovating historic buildings and sites.

Market level: targeting markets from the high, middle and low ends, from the local and domestic to the international, from mass to niche. Here, each level of the market would require valuable products that integrate craftsmanship with contemporary creativity. Market value standards could be based on the degree of: 1) inheriting traditional techniques and materials, and 2) innovating techniques, materials and design. To realize these directions, there would be a need to establish standards of entry for the domestic market. Another approach to open untapped markets would be to develop customized and bespoke artefacts that could raise the crafts' market values.

Education level: increasing and expanding collaborations between universities and industries; reviving apprenticeships inside and outside the academic education system;

transdisciplinary collaboration and open innovation between science, engineering, business, craft and design; creating maker-spaces within and outside universities.