

# Inheritance and Innovation: The Multi-Dimensional Charm and International Influence of Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage

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## Abstract

The Chinese nation, with its development spanning over five millennia, has created a rich and illustrious civilization that encompasses not only tangible cultural heritage but also intangible cultural heritage embodying the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese people. As a crystallization of wisdom, Chinese intangible cultural heritage (ICH) represents the accumulated life and production experiences of our ancestors through their interactions with society and nature. It is one of the key representatives of Chinese traditional culture. Chinese ICH enhances national cultural confidence and shapes the image of a culturally powerful nation, serving as a crucial cultural resource for establishing the national image internationally. It is imperative to actively promote the traditional forms and connotations of ICH and to establish the cultural image of a great nation through international exchanges.

**Keywords:** Intangible Cultural Heritage Dissemination; Culture; National Image

## The Importance and Current Status of Disseminating Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage

### *The Historical Significance of Intangible Cultural Heritage Transmission*

China, an ancient nation with a history of over five thousand years, is akin to a profound cultural compendium, recording enduring wisdom and emotions. Intangible cultural heritage, like bright pearls, has preserved the unique spirit and wisdom of the Chinese nation to the present day. These cultural elements are imbued with historical imprints, becoming invaluable treasures and embodiments of collective wisdom, constructing a rich and diverse cultural landscape that showcases the profound connotations and unique charm of the Chinese nation (Liu Ning, 2018; Jiang Heng, 2018). Chinese ICH carries the collective memory of the Chinese people and is a vital component of the national spirit, possessing profound historical significance and cultural value.

*Transmission Methods and Challenges*

Chinese ICH has been sustained through oral transmission, a traditional mode that, while consolidating rich life experiences, also faces limitations. Outstanding ICH projects are often confined within families or between masters and apprentices, hindering broader dissemination (Liu Ning, 2018). Although this method preserves the purity and integrity of the skills, it also leads to a gradual decrease in the number of practitioners, putting many techniques at risk of extinction (Lin Meihua, 2019).

Moreover, modern societal transformations have disrupted traditional modes of ICH transmission. Industrialization, globalization, and the rise of entertainment culture have gradually replaced venues for ICH transmission, such as celebratory events, with modern forms of entertainment (Xue Ke & Long Jingyi, 2020). The younger generation's diminished sense of identity with traditional culture and their preference for modern lifestyles have led to waning interest in ICH (Wang Jing, 2021; Huang Jianwen, 2021). Additionally, rural depopulation, the aging of traditional artisans, and a lack of interest among the youth pose severe challenges to the transmission chain of ICH. The aging of practitioners and the generational gap further exacerbate the endangerment of ICH projects (Liu Yun, 2022).

*Inheritance and Innovation in the New Era*

The digital age has brought new opportunities for the inheritance and dissemination of ICH. The widespread application of modern technology and digital media enables ICH to reach broader audiences through the internet, social media, and online platforms (Wang Jing, 2021). For instance, the "Digital Dunhuang" project uses digital technology to accurately recreate Dunhuang murals, allowing the public to experience the charm of Dunhuang art through virtual platforms, thereby bridging the gap between the public and traditional culture (Xue Ke & Long Jingyi, 2020).

Primary and secondary schools, as well as universities, are incorporating ICH courses to inspire young people's love for and awareness of ICH protection through hands-on experiences. Many schools integrate ICH skills into craft classes, allowing students to appreciate the allure of Chinese culture while learning traditional techniques. This educational approach not only helps students master traditional skills but also enhances their sense of cultural identity.

Technologies like virtual reality enable immersive experiences of ICH, further increasing public interest. For example, using AR technology to showcase paper-cutting art through three-dimensional virtual models allows young people to develop a strong interest in this traditional craft. In summary, technology, education, and innovation have paved a broader future for the inheritance of Chinese ICH.

*Mutual Benefits of International Exchange and Inheritance*

International exchanges inject new vitality into Chinese ICH, enriching global cultural diversity through cultural comparisons and interactions with other nations. Showcasing Chinese ICH on the international stage not only promotes Chinese culture but also draws inspiration from other cultures. For example, engaging in ICH exchange activities with other countries allows us to learn from their transmission experiences and improve our own preservation and dissemination methods (Gao Lina, 2020).

Through cross-cultural exchanges, Chinese ICH not only spreads globally but also gains new inspiration from other cultures, invigorating inheritance and innovation. Under the "Belt and Road" initiative, China collaborates with multiple countries to conduct ICH exhibitions and exchange activities, promoting mutual cultural understanding and integration (Zhou Jian, 2023). Such international exchanges not only foster mutual understanding between different cultures but also create new models and development paths for inheritance, enhancing the global influence of Chinese ICH.

### **Pathways for Disseminating Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage**

#### *Building ICH Brands to Enhance Cultural Prestige*

To enhance the influence and prestige of ICH, China has successively announced five batches of national-level ICH projects, categorized into ten major types, including traditional music, dance, drama, and craftsmanship. These intangible cultural heritage resources are spread across the country, featuring ethnic and regional characteristics and embodying the diversity of Chinese culture (Jiang Heng, 2018; Huang Jianwen, 2021).

With the development of the cultural tourism industry, ICH resources are combined with local culture to form regional cultural tourism brands. For example, Guizhou Province has developed a culturally distinctive tourism brand centered around Miao silver craftsmanship, attracting numerous domestic and international tourists. This approach not only drives local economic development but also enhances the influence and recognition of ICH.

Additionally, transforming representative traditional crafts into national gifts or exhibits is a significant means of disseminating ICH. For instance, Jingdezhen's ceramic works are selected as national gifts, showcasing the exquisite traditional craftsmanship and profound cultural heritage of China in international exchanges. This method not only boosts the international influence of ICH but also highlights the cultural confidence of the Chinese nation.

#### *Leveraging Media Advantages to Promote ICH Dissemination*

In the era of digital media, new media has become a backbone for disseminating ICH, with platforms like Douyin (TikTok), Kuaishou, and WeChat Public Accounts playing crucial roles in promoting ICH to the world (Liu Yun, 2022). For example, short video platforms use vivid imagery and concise explanations to transform complex ICH techniques into easily understandable content, attracting a large number of young viewers (Huang Jianwen, 2021). Through social media, ICH can be disseminated more widely and diversely, especially through user-generated content and interactive features (Zhang Mingjie, 2022). This new mode of dissemination not only broadens the audience for ICH but also sparks public interest, enhancing their sense of identification and awareness for ICH protection.

#### *Establishing Nationwide Awareness for ICH Dissemination and Protection*

Protecting ICH requires not only the efforts of the government and cultural institutions but also the participation of the entire population (Jiang Heng, 2018). Through government policy support and the integration of ICH into the education system, nationwide awareness for ICH protection and dissemination can be elevated, encouraging public participation, especially among the youth, in ICH preservation activities.

For instance, many local governments have formulated special policies for ICH protection, providing financial support and organizing ICH education programs in schools to encourage public and particularly young people's involvement (Wang Jing, 2021). Additionally, integrating ICH into primary and secondary education guides young people to develop awareness for ICH protection, thereby achieving nationwide ICH preservation (Liu Ning, 2018). By explaining the historical background and cultural connotations of ICH in classrooms, students gradually understand and appreciate these traditional cultures through learning (Liu Yun, 2022).

Establishing nationwide awareness for ICH protection not only aids in the inheritance and preservation of ICH but also enhances the overall cultural identity and pride of society (Huang Jianwen, 2021). This cultivated sense of protection from an early age lays a solid foundation for the future development of ICH.

### **Opportunities and Challenges in Digital Dissemination of ICH**

#### *The Role of Digital Technology in Promoting ICH Dissemination*

In recent years, digital technologies such as AR, VR, and AI have been increasingly applied to the dissemination and protection of ICH (Wang Jing, 2021). Digital technology not only enables the "activation" display of ICH but also reinforces its transmission value during the cultural reproduction process. For example, virtual reality technology allows audiences to experience traditional dances and handicrafts in virtual spaces, appreciating the charm of ICH. The "Digital Dunhuang" project is a model of ICH digitization, using high-precision digital restoration and online interactive exhibitions to bridge the gap between the public and traditional culture. This immersive experience significantly enhances public interest in ICH, especially among young people.

Furthermore, the application of artificial intelligence technology offers new methods for ICH inheritance. AI can learn and simulate the operational processes of traditional crafts, digitally preserving these techniques and preventing their loss due to the decline in practitioners. This fusion of modern technology with inheritance methods opens new pathways for the protection and dissemination of ICH.

#### *International Dissemination Challenges in the New Media Era*

With China's increasing international influence, Chinese ICH faces challenges such as cultural misinterpretation and recognition barriers during overseas dissemination (Liu Ning, 2018). Although new media platforms facilitate ICH dissemination, cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings or incomplete acceptance by foreign audiences.

To address these challenges, it is necessary to design dissemination content that harmonizes localization and internationalization. Lin Meihua (2019) suggests designing dissemination content with local characteristics tailored to different cultural backgrounds to achieve cultural resonance in cross-cultural communication. Gao Lina (2020) further proposes focusing on "bidirectional interaction" to allow international audiences to gain a deeper understanding of ICH culture through experience and participation.

For example, incorporating interactive experience segments in international art festivals allows foreign audiences to actively participate in Chinese traditional crafts, thereby

deepening their understanding and recognition of Chinese ICH culture (Zhou Jian, 2023). This bidirectional interactive dissemination method not only eliminates cultural misunderstandings but also fosters mutual understanding and respect between different cultures.

#### *Analysis of Successful Cases on Short Video Platforms*

Short video platforms play an increasingly significant role in the dissemination of ICH. Liu Yun (2022) studied the dissemination effects of platforms like Douyin on ICH projects, noting that frequent updates, user interactions, and high-quality content production significantly enhance the social attention of ICH. The short video format is particularly suitable for the modern fragmented reading habits, enabling the presentation of complex ICH techniques to the public within short video durations (Huang Jianwen, 2021).

For example, traditional artisans showcase their creation processes on short video platforms, allowing audiences to visually observe each step and the stories behind them, thereby bridging the gap between the audience and ICH. Huang Jianwen (2021) found that the integration of Bilibili's (B Station) anime culture with ICH content attracts a large number of young users, enhancing the influence of ICH among the youth. This integration not only facilitates the spread of traditional culture among young people but also ignites their interest and desire to explore traditional culture.

#### *The Integration of ICH Protection and Sustainable Development*

The combination of ICH with sustainable development is becoming a research hotspot. Zhou Jian (2023) analyzed the role of ICH protection in rural revitalization, indicating that ICH can inject new momentum into rural economies. For example, the revival of traditional handicrafts not only preserves traditional skills but also drives the development of rural tourism, increasing farmers' incomes.

Li Xue (2021) approached ICH protection from the perspective of green development, advocating for the balance between ecological friendliness and cultural innovation to promote modern transformation. For instance, traditional plant dyeing techniques use natural materials, aligning with modern society's environmental protection requirements. Promoting such techniques not only protects the environment but also facilitates the application of ICH in modern society, adhering to sustainable development principles (Huang Yiping, 2022).

The protection of ICH is not merely about preserving traditional skills but also about inheriting and promoting their cultural connotations and ecological philosophies. By integrating ICH with sustainable development, traditional techniques can find new applications in modern society, achieving comprehensive economic, social, and environmental benefits.

#### **Exploring the Multi-Dimensional Connotations of ICH**

##### *Humanistic Care and Emotional Resonance*

ICH projects are imbued with profound humanistic emotions, generating emotional resonance in modern society through the stories of inheritors and the transmission process of techniques (Liu Ning, 2018). For example, a traditional music project passed down through generations may record the rise and fall of a family, embodying nostalgic sentiments for ancestors and evoking feelings of family and kinship (Wang Yingjie & Wang Yue, 2022).

This emotional resonance not only strengthens people's sense of identification with ICH but also promotes its dissemination in modern society. For instance, showcasing the perseverance and efforts of ICH inheritors in the face of transmission challenges can touch more people, prompting them to pay greater attention to and participate in ICH protection (Lin Meihua, 2019).

#### *Sustainable Development and Ecological Philosophy*

The integration of ICH inheritance with sustainable development emphasizes the rational use of resources and harmonious coexistence between humans and nature (Li Xue, 2021). For example, traditional bamboo weaving techniques have long emphasized the reasonable harvesting and regeneration of bamboo resources, aligning with contemporary environmental protection ideals and promoting the development of green production and consumption methods (Huang Jianwen, 2021).

By combining ICH with ecological philosophies, traditional techniques can drive environmental protection and green development while preserving skills. For example, the production of certain traditional handicrafts requires natural materials, and the sustainable harvesting processes protect the natural environment and promote local ecological balance (Zhou Jian, 2023).

#### *Innovation and Future Vision*

The fusion of traditional ICH techniques with modern technology and art can create products with contemporary aesthetics. For example, combining traditional brocade weaving with digital design technology results in more exquisite products that retain cultural elements, attracting the interest of young people (Zhang Mingjie, 2022). This innovation revitalizes traditional techniques in modern society.

Moreover, the integration of ICH techniques with modern art provides new avenues for the dissemination of ICH among younger demographics. For instance, designers incorporate traditional embroidery elements into modern fashion designs, preserving the aesthetic characteristics of traditional culture while aligning with contemporary fashion tastes, thereby winning the favor of young consumers (Huang Yiping, 2022).

#### *Cultural Diversity and Cross-Cultural Communication*

ICH embodies the cultural diversity of China, and promoting cultural dialogue and integration through cultural exchanges enhances mutual understanding between different cultures. Such exchanges not only deepen mutual cultural understanding but also expand the influence of ICH on a global scale (Lin Meihua, 2019). For example, showcasing traditional Chinese dance and music in international cultural exchange activities allows foreign audiences to experience the charm of Chinese culture, thereby fostering cultural understanding and respect.

Cross-cultural communication also brings new ideas for ICH inheritance. For example, collaborating with foreign artists allows the combination of Chinese traditional techniques with foreign art styles, creating new art forms and invigorating ICH globally (Zhang Mingjie, 2022).

## **Conclusion**

This paper explores the inheritance and innovation of Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and its opportunities and challenges in digital dissemination. Through technological integration, optimized dissemination strategies, and cross-cultural exchanges, ICH culture can not only be preserved domestically but also demonstrate its influence internationally, contributing to global cultural diversity. The application of modern technology has revolutionized the inheritance methods of ICH, with digital technologies and virtual reality offering new means for dissemination and protection.

In terms of dissemination strategies, through brand building and media dissemination, ICH can better integrate into modern life, particularly through short video platforms and social media, significantly enhancing its influence among young people. Additionally, by strengthening international dissemination and cross-cultural exchanges, ICH culture can showcase its unique charm globally, thereby enhancing the international influence of Chinese culture.

With relentless efforts, Chinese ICH culture will shine even brighter in the new era. Through the collective efforts of society, ICH will not only remain a traditional symbol but also become an essential cultural bridge connecting the past and the future, tradition and modernity, contributing to the inheritance and innovation of Chinese culture.

The deepening of ICH dissemination not only helps enhance national cultural confidence but also lays a solid foundation for building a society rich in creativity and cultural depth. Continuous exploration in teaching practices and seeking innovations in educational content and forms are necessary to meet the educational demands of the new era and make greater contributions to the comprehensive development of students and the prosperity of Chinese culture. Through comprehensive and diversified ICH education, students will gain richer spiritual experiences and deeper cultural identity in their study of art and culture, which is crucial for cultivating modern talents with a global vision and adherence to national spirit.

## **Contribution**

This study makes significant contributions both theoretically and contextually to the field of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) dissemination. Theoretically, it extends existing cultural transmission frameworks by integrating modern digital technologies such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and artificial intelligence (AI) into the preservation and dissemination processes of Chinese ICH. This integration not only enriches the theoretical understanding of how digital mediums can facilitate cultural transmission but also offers a nuanced perspective on the interplay between technology and cultural heritage. Additionally, the research bridges gaps in the literature by systematically analyzing the current status, challenges, and innovative strategies for ICH dissemination in the digital age, thereby providing a comprehensive theoretical foundation for future studies.

Contextually, this research offers practical insights and actionable strategies for policymakers, cultural institutions, and educational bodies involved in ICH preservation. By examining successful case studies such as the "Digital Dunhuang" project and the utilization of short video platforms, the study demonstrates the efficacy of digital tools in enhancing public engagement and cultural identity among younger generations. Furthermore, the exploration

of international exchange mechanisms under initiatives like the "Belt and Road" highlights the role of cross-cultural interactions in amplifying the global influence of Chinese ICH. These findings provide valuable guidelines for developing robust ICH dissemination policies and educational programs that leverage digital innovation and international collaboration. Overall, this study not only advances theoretical knowledge but also contributes to the sustainable and impactful dissemination of Chinese ICH, fostering both national cultural confidence and global cultural diversity.

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