



# The Impact of Short Videos on the Dissemination of Intangible Cultural Heritage: A Case Study of Creator Jiang Xunqian (Jiu Yue)

Meijuan Wu

School of Culture & Education, Shaanxi University of Science & Technology, Xi'an, China  
Email: 1769487203@qq.com

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## Abstract

This study takes TikTok creator Jiang Xunqian (Jiu Yue) as a typical case to explore the impact mechanism of short video platforms on the dissemination of intangible cultural heritage (ICH). The research finds that short video platforms, represented by TikTok, have systematically promoted the transformation of ICH from “niche perseverance” to “mass sharing” through technological empowerment and ecological reconstruction: breaking spatiotemporal barriers and achieving a breadth revolution at the communication level; driving model renewal and injecting vitality at the inheritance level; activating market value and constructing a consumption loop at the industrial level; and strengthening identity and facilitating global reach at the cultural level. Jiang Xunqian’s dissemination practice, centered on “cultural authenticity + narrative affinity + visual innovation”, provides a replicable successful paradigm for ICH short video dissemination, while also revealing homogenization concerns such as the dilution of cultural depth under traffic logic and algorithmic information cocoons. In the future, it is necessary to build a multi-party collaborative governance ecosystem involving platforms, creators, academia, and the government to deepen short videos from a “dissemination tool” into “fertile ground for inheritance”, ultimately achieving the sustainable development of ICH in the digital age.

## Subject Areas

Culture, Journalism and Communication

## Keywords

Intangible Cultural Heritage, Short Video Dissemination, TikTok, Jiang Xunqian, Digital Inheritance

## 1. Introduction

In the dual processes of globalization and digitalization, the transmission and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage (hereinafter referred to as “ICH”) face profound paradigm shifts. The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage emphasizes that ICH, as a living heritage of human civilization, is crucial to cultural diversity and social cohesion [1]. However, traditional transmission models, constrained by geographical limitations, generational gaps, and single-channel dissemination, struggle to effectively engage contemporary society—particularly younger generations. Concurrently, short-video platforms like Douyin, characterized by low-barrier creation, algorithmic recommendations, and strong interactivity, have emerged as new spaces for public engagement with cultural heritage. They provide fresh technological and social foundations for the “living” dissemination of ICH.

Against this backdrop, TikTok creator “Jiang Xunqian (September)” stands out with her “ICH + lifestyle aesthetics” creative approach. Through videos showcasing techniques like embroidery, tie-dyeing, and sugar painting, she has achieved over 200 million views per video, driving the transformation of intangible heritage from static display to daily practice. This case has also sparked discussions on deeper issues such as the transformation mechanisms, transmission pathways, and cultural identity of intangible heritage in the digital age.

Academic circles have initiated multidimensional explorations on this topic. Theoretically, digital cultural heritage studies indicate that digitization is shifting heritage practices from “archiving” to “participation”. Giaccardi (2012) proposed the “heritage as participation” paradigm, emphasizing how digital media transforms users from passive recipients into co-creators of cultural value [2]. Kidd (2018) introduced the concept of “digital authenticity”, arguing that digital representation prioritizes accurate transmission of cultural meaning and the establishment of emotional resonance [3]. Empirically, existing research primarily follows two pathways: first, analyzing how short video’s medium-specific characteristics (e.g., fragmentation, visuality, algorithmic mechanisms) enhance the dissemination efficiency and visibility of intangible cultural heritage [4]; second, exploring the narrative transformations and symbolic reconfigurations occurring as intangible cultural heritage adapts to platform ecosystems [5]. Industry reports (e.g., TikTok Research Institute, 2025) provide data support on dissemination scale and consumer conversion [6].

However, existing research still exhibits significant shortcomings: it either over-emphasizes macro-level narratives of “technological empowerment” or remains confined to descriptive case studies. There is a lack of analysis treating short-video platforms as a “structural logic” that shapes cultural practices, and a deficiency in examining how intangible cultural heritage creators engage in strategic practices within this logic to reconcile “cultural depth” with “traffic demands”, thereby influencing the micro-mechanisms of the inheritance ecosystem.

To bridge this gap, this study adopts “mediation theory” as its core analytical

framework. This theory posits that media are not merely information conduits but institutional forces that reshape social relations and the rules governing cultural practices. It is particularly suited to analyzing the structural constraints and active practices of cultural production in the platform era. Based on this, this study aims to explore: how the technical architecture, algorithmic rules, and commercial ecosystem of short-video platforms collectively constitute a new media logic for intangible cultural heritage dissemination; and how creators, within this logic, reconstruct the production, dissemination, and transmission pathways of intangible cultural heritage through content strategies and practices that balance adaptation and reflection.

Methodologically, this study employs a “qualitative case study” design, focusing on TikTok creator Jiang Xunqian (September) as the key case. Her exemplarity manifests across three dimensions: first, dissemination influence (over 50 million followers across platforms); second, breakthrough in inheritance identity (first female inheritor of the millennia-old Queshan Iron Flower tradition); third, the significance of her practice paradigm (her model of “cultural authenticity + visual innovation + narrative affinity” has become an industry benchmark). The study systematically analyzes 128 core ICH videos released between 2021 and early 2025, integrating platform data, media coverage, and literature to achieve triangulation.

This case study aims to elucidate how short-video platforms, through technological empowerment and ecosystem restructuring, propel intangible cultural heritage from “niche preservation” to “mass sharing”. It also offers a dialectical examination of the cultural vitality and potential risks this transformation sparks, seeking to provide theoretical references and practical insights for the sustainable development of intangible cultural heritage in the digital age.

Terminological Clarification: The short-video platform primarily examined in this study is TikTok, which operates within the Chinese mainland under the name Douyin. To ensure terminological consistency and align with international academic conventions, this paper will uniformly use “TikTok” to refer to the platform throughout the subsequent analysis, even when discussing data and phenomena specific to its Chinese iteration.

## **2. The Context and Potential for Integration between Short Video Platforms and Intangible Cultural Heritage**

Intangible cultural heritage (ICH), as the core carrier of China’s outstanding traditional culture, carries profound ethnic heritage yet faces significant challenges in transmission. Meanwhile, short-video platforms—characterized by low barriers to entry and broad reach—are leveraging technological advantages to build new spaces for nationwide dissemination. The convergence of these two elements offers a critical opportunity to break through the impasse in ICH transmission. This chapter will first clarify the core concepts and developmental contexts of short videos and intangible cultural heritage. It will then analyze the role of short videos in advancing ICH dissemination, ultimately exploring their integration po-

tential to support the living transmission of intangible cultural heritage.

## **2.1. Core Concept Definition and Development Context**

To explore the impact of short video platforms on the dissemination of intangible cultural heritage, it is essential to first clarify the core essence and developmental trajectory of both the dissemination medium (short video platforms) and the subject matter (intangible cultural heritage). Defining the concepts, contexts, and characteristics of both is fundamental to subsequent analysis of their communicative functions and potential for integration.

### **2.1.1. Evolution and Communication Characteristics of Short Video Platforms**

Short video platforms leverage mobile internet as their medium, centering on fragmented videos ranging from 15 seconds to 5 minutes in length. They integrate functions such as filming, editing, dissemination, and interaction. Their development began during the early stages of mobile internet proliferation. The advent of 4G nationwide coverage, enhanced smartphone capabilities, and lightweight AI editing tools propelled them from mere “tools” to “ecosystem platforms”. By 2025, China’s short video audience reached 1.04 billion, forming a dissemination matrix centered on TikTok and Kuaishou. This ecosystem is built upon the trifecta of “low creative barriers + intelligent algorithmic recommendations + strong social interaction”.

Its dissemination features align with contemporary information needs: On the content production side, template editing and special effects tools lower barriers to entry, enabling both intangible cultural heritage inheritors and ordinary creators to participate. On the dissemination mechanism side, intelligent algorithms break geographical constraints, precisely pushing intangible cultural heritage content. In consumption scenarios, bite-sized videos fit fragmented time slots, making intangible cultural heritage accessible anytime. In interactive logic, features like likes and comments drive viral sharing, propelling intangible cultural heritage from “one-way display” to “two-way interaction”.

### **2.1.2. The Concept of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Its Challenges in Dissemination**

According to the Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage, intangible cultural heritage is defined as various forms of traditional cultural expression passed down through generations by all ethnic groups and regarded as an important component of their cultural heritage, along with related objects and sites. It encompasses ten major categories including folk literature, traditional music, and traditional skills [7].

As a key bearer of China’s outstanding traditional culture, intangible cultural heritage possesses distinct characteristics of living transmission, rich regional cultural identity, and profound spiritual value. It stands as a vital symbol of collective national memory and cultural foundations. However, the dissemination of traditional intangible cultural heritage has long faced numerous challenges: First, lim-

itations in transmission models. Most intangible cultural heritage relies on one-on-one transmission through oral instruction and heart-to-heart teaching, resulting in narrow dissemination and low efficiency. This makes it highly susceptible to disruption in the transmission chain due to the aging of practitioners. Second, the dissemination context is limited. Traditional dissemination primarily focuses on offline settings like museum exhibitions and festival performances, which are clearly constrained by time and space, making it difficult to reach a wide audience. Third, poor adaptation to the modern era. Some intangible cultural heritage skills are disconnected from modern life scenarios and lack forms of expression that align with the aesthetic preferences of younger generations. This leads to a decline in cultural identity and creates a communication dilemma.

## **2.2. The Potential for Integration between Short Video Platforms and Intangible Cultural Heritage**

The integration of short video platforms with intangible cultural heritage (ICH) transcends mere technological layering; it represents a deep alignment rooted in cultural attributes and platform characteristics. Its potential stems from the platform's technical capabilities, user engagement willingness, industrial synergy demands, and the living transmission nature of ICH. This integration manifests across four core dimensions: Leveraging 4K ultra-high-definition filming, 3D modeling, and AI restoration, short video platforms meticulously digitize endangered intangible cultural heritage, addressing traditional preservation challenges. The integration of VR/AR with short videos reconstructs dissemination scenarios, transforming users from passive viewers to active participants. The over 10 million views of relevant intangible cultural heritage AR filters on TikTok and Kuaishou demonstrate the potential of technological convergence. Second, the comprehensive activation of user co-creation potential. The “mass creation” ecosystem of short videos has shifted ICH transmission from “sole mastery by inheritors” to “public participation”. Ordinary users integrate ICH into daily life—for instance, TikTok's “ICH Creative Challenge” attracted 2.3 million participants with over 5 billion views. As the core audience (62%), youth engage through diverse creative formats, fostering a desire to inherit traditions. Third, cross-sector collaboration has expanded into an ecological ecosystem. Short-video platforms break down industrial and geographical barriers in ICH transmission. Cross-industrially, ICH is deeply integrated with cultural creativity and education, driving diverse innovations. Cross-regionally, initiatives like the “North-South ICH Dialogue” foster exchange, while TikTok's “ICH Map” lays the groundwork for transregional dissemination, paving the way for future cross-disciplinary works. Fourth, the potential for cultural identity is elevated. Global dissemination of short videos propels intangible cultural heritage from “ethnic symbols” to “globally shared resources”. Domestically, diverse approaches reinforce ethnic memory and cultural confidence among younger generations. Internationally, multilingual content and global reach enable “going global” initiatives—as exemplified by cre-

ator “Li Ziqi”, whose overseas followers exceed 100 million. This approach can attract secondary creations from international users, achieving global value recognition.

In summary, the potential for integrating short videos with intangible cultural heritage (ICH) fundamentally lies in the multidimensional release of “technology empowering culture, users activating inheritance, industry supporting development, and recognition consolidating value”. As technology evolves, user engagement increases, and industrial collaboration improves, this integration will deepen from the “dissemination level” to the “inheritance level”, expand from the “cultural dimension” to the “economic dimension”, and ultimately achieve the living transmission and sustainable development of ICH.

### **3. Analysis of Jiang Xunqian’s Intangible Cultural Heritage Dissemination Practices and Outcomes on TikTok**

Short video platforms provide a vast practical arena for intangible cultural heritage (ICH) dissemination, with high-quality creators serving as the vital link between these platforms and ICH culture. TikTok creator Jiang Xunqian has garnered significant attention in ICH cultural dissemination through his unique creative perspective and content presentation style, emerging as a prototypical example of ICH short video communication. This chapter will examine Jiang Xunqian’s personal background and creative characteristics, analyze his specific methods for disseminating intangible cultural heritage, and explore the dissemination effects and social impact of related videos. This approach aims to concretely illustrate how short-video platforms empower the dissemination of intangible cultural heritage.

#### **3.1. Personal Background and Creative Characteristics of Blogger Jiang Xunqian**

Jiang Xunqian (formerly known as Liu Yaqing, with the online alias “Jiu Yue”), a post-95s TikTok creator, stands as a prime example of revitalizing intangible cultural heritage for younger audiences [8]. With over 50 million followers across platforms, she is also the first female inheritor in a millennium to carry on the national intangible cultural heritage “Queshan Iron Flowers”. Her journey into intangible heritage promotion stems from deep-rooted foundations: Born in Hengyang, Hunan, she studied painting from childhood. Six years as a concept artist in the gaming industry honed her professional visual skills. Influenced by her grandfather, she also underwent six years of systematic Peking Opera training, deepening her understanding of intangible heritage. After transitioning to social media in 2019, she first gained millions of followers through lifestyle videos. In 2021, her sugar painting tribute to Yuan Longping awakened her to the value of promoting intangible heritage. Since then, she has dedicated herself to uncovering endangered crafts. In 2023, she apprenticed under Yang Jianjun, overcoming the risk of burns from 1600°C molten iron to master the iron flower craft. She also formed an all-female iron flower troupe, traveling nationwide to document doz-

ens of intangible cultural heritage crafts—including Miao silver jewelry and paper flowers—and hundreds of practitioners, fulfilling her mission to “bridge tradition and modernity”.

Jiang Xunqian has redefined the logic of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) dissemination through a dual approach of “personal practice + visual storytelling”, forging a distinctive creative style. Her subject selection balances rarity with everyday relevance—focusing on endangered crafts like rolling lanterns and paper-mache flowers while also capturing the practical value of ICH in daily life. Her content spans multiple regions, forming a “ICH map” matrix. Through a learner’s perspective, her narratives document the journey from molten iron burns to mastered craftsmanship, interwoven with inheritors’ steadfast commitment to preserving endangered skills—infusing these traditions with human warmth. Leveraging her background as an illustrator, she employs close-up slow-motion shots to magnify technical details, pairs traditional folk music to create immersive experiences, and avoids jargon through concise narration and subtitles. She further engages users through interactive challenges like “sugar painting contests”. Facing skepticism, she responded with live ice dragon carving and offline performances. Her sincerity in “doing more than talking” earned official recognition, leading to her selection as the 2024 “China Intangible Cultural Heritage Figure of the Year”. [9] She has become a vital bridge connecting young people with intangible cultural heritage.

### **3.2. Specific Strategies and Content for Jiang Xunqian Intangible Cultural Heritage Dissemination**

As a leading practitioner in intangible cultural heritage (ICH) short video dissemination, Jiang Xunqian leverages her deep understanding of ICH culture and platform communication expertise to establish a dissemination system that balances authenticity and viral appeal. Her communication strategies and content design are both rooted in the essence of ICH techniques and precisely aligned with the dissemination patterns of short video platforms, serving as a vital bridge connecting ICH with the general public.

In terms of specific dissemination strategies and content, Jiang Xunqian has established a comprehensive system centered on “Precise Topic Selection - Diverse Presentation - Interactive Conversion”. The topic selection strategy focuses on “three core areas”: First, uncovering endangered techniques, such as the two-month restoration of the Qing Dynasty Empress’s paper-mache floral headdress and learning the 800-year-old rolling lantern craft, filling gaps in the dissemination of niche intangible cultural heritage. Second, integrating festival scenarios, launching tutorials like “Making a Fish Lantern for the New Year” to align intangible cultural heritage with folk customs. Third, deep regional cultural exploration, from Henan’s Queshan iron flower displays to Xiangxi’s corpse-carrying rituals, creating a regional intangible cultural heritage matrix through documentary series. Content delivery employs a dual format of “micro-documentaries + prac-

tical guides”, featuring visually stunning skill demonstrations like iron flower forging and ice dragon carving, alongside hands-on content such as tool selection and step-by-step breakdowns—for instance, sugar painting videos clearly labeling sugar boiling temperatures and technique tips.

In terms of communication and conversion, she enhanced effectiveness through “trust-building + participation guidance”: Addressing skepticism by verifying authenticity via “live-streamed demonstrations + offline exhibitions”, such as broadcasting the entire ice dragon carving process after controversy, which garnered coverage by CCTV News; She activated user engagement through “challenge initiation + resource linkage”, launching the “Intangible Cultural Heritage Handicraft Relay” topic that attracted millions of submissions. Simultaneously, she included information about inheritors’ studios in videos, driving a closed-loop process of “content dissemination → skill learning → product consumption”. Furthermore, she collaborated with cultural tourism venues to stage offline iron flower performances, participated in intangible cultural heritage expos to expand influence, and partnered with brands like OPPO and Xiaomi to integrate intangible cultural heritage elements into modern consumption scenarios, achieving a win-win for cultural dissemination and commercial value.

### **3.3. The Effectiveness and Social Response of Jiang Xunqian’s Intangible Cultural Heritage Promotion**

Jiang Xunqian’s intangible cultural heritage dissemination practice achieved dual breakthroughs in both dissemination metrics and social value through precise strategies and authentic expression. Its impact and resonance can be concretely demonstrated across three dimensions: dissemination reach, promotion of heritage transmission, and cultural influence. In terms of dissemination effectiveness, the explosive reach of individual content resonated with the stable influence of the overall account: The Quanshan Iron Flower series videos accumulated over 400 million views across platforms, while the Fuzhou Three-Strand Hairpin creative shorts achieved single-platform viewership milestones—13 million views on TikTok and 17 million on Kuaishou. Combined likes across both platforms exceeded 1.24 million. Related topics topped Kuaishou’s national charts, attracting 13.4 million viewers, and ranked first in Weibo’s trending videos [10]. Overall account metrics show over 22 million TikTok followers, with 68% aged 18 - 35. This demonstrates highly effective penetration of ICH content among young audiences, breaking traditional age and regional barriers in ICH dissemination.

In terms of social impact, its value extends beyond mere data metrics to encompass intangible cultural heritage preservation, cultural identity, and industrial development. Firstly, it has propelled endangered techniques beyond traditional boundaries for broader transmission. As the first female inheritor of Queshan Iron Flower in a millennium, she established the first all-female iron flower team, challenging the traditional practice of passing this craft exclusively to males. This initiative inspired dozens of young women to seek apprenticeships, addressing the

shortage of successors in certain intangible cultural heritage projects. Her rediscovery of niche crafts like tongcao flowers and rolling lanterns gained national attention through viral videos, leading to their inclusion in local intangible cultural heritage protection lists and a surge in inquiries for apprenticeships. Second, strengthening cultural identity and aesthetic innovation. Her “Three-Pronged Hairpin” video sparked nationwide interest in Fuzhou’s traditional attire. Celebrities like Zhao Liying and Liu Tao wore the hairpin in fashion shoots and CCTV programs, transforming this intangible heritage accessory from a “nostalgic Fuzhou memory” into a trendy symbol. Netizens spontaneously shared its historical origins in comment sections, creating a virtuous cycle of “content dissemination-cultural discussion”. Third, establishing a virtuous cycle of “dissemination-consumption-heritage preservation”. The intangible cultural heritage handmade soap she promoted sold over 10,000 units, her commercial endorsement fee reached 600,000 yuan, and her intangible cultural heritage-themed videos with brands like Supor garnered over 200 million views, with one video alone reaching 28 million views. More significantly, the inclusion of inheritor workshop information in her videos directly boosted sales of intangible cultural heritage products like Queshan iron flowers and bamboo weaving, enabling artisans to earn “decent incomes” that sustain skill transmission. Her model gained official recognition when she was named a 2024 “China Intangible Cultural Heritage Figure of the Year”, providing replicable practical experience for the industry.

However, its dissemination practices also reveal notable shortcomings: First, cultural interpretations remain superficial. Videos emphasize visual displays of techniques and emotional resonance while offering only brief explanations of the historical context, craft principles, and cultural significance behind intangible heritage. This limits some viewers’ understanding to treating intangible heritage as mere “trendy symbols”, hindering deeper comprehension. Second, audience segmentation shows a tendency toward rigidity. Influenced by platform algorithmic recommendations, the core audience remains concentrated among young women, with insufficient reach to potential audiences such as middle-aged and elderly individuals and rural communities, failing to achieve broader nationwide coverage. While these issues do not obscure the campaign’s communication effectiveness, they provide reflection points for optimizing and upgrading the dissemination of intangible cultural heritage through short videos.

#### **4. The Positive Impact of Short Videos on the Dissemination of Intangible Cultural Heritage**

Short video platforms, with their ecosystem characterized by “low barriers to creation, precise content delivery, and strong interactive resonance”, align perfectly with the inherent dissemination needs of intangible cultural heritage (ICH)—namely, “living transmission, geographical dispersion, and the necessity for emotional connection”. Based on industry practices and multidimensional data, short videos have transcended their role as mere media tools to become a core engine

driving the innovation and transmission of intangible cultural heritage. They have systematically expanded dissemination reach, revitalized transmission vitality, created industrial value, and fostered cultural identity, powerfully propelling intangible cultural heritage from “niche preservation” to “mass sharing” in a leap-frog development.

#### **4.1. Dissemination Dimension: Breaking through Spatial and Temporal Barriers to Achieve a Revolution in Reach**

Short videos have fundamentally reshaped the dissemination landscape of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), achieving revolutionary breakthroughs in reach. Geographically, digital spaces have propelled rural-rooted intangible cultural heritage nationwide. Content from counties and smaller regions accounts for 42% of views on TikTok, while national-level intangible cultural heritage videos have accumulated 749.9 billion views, overcoming previous geographical dissemination limitations. At the audience level, intelligent algorithms precisely target interested users, significantly boosting engagement among younger demographics. In 2024, the number of intangible cultural heritage inheritors under 30 on TikTok increased by 72% year-on-year, while content related to intangible cultural heritage posted by those born in the 2000s surged by 95% [11]. In terms of efficiency, the concise and fast-paced content format perfectly aligns with fragmented viewing scenarios. In 2024, the average daily viewing time of intangible cultural heritage content on TikTok increased by 89% compared to 2022, driving the transformation of intangible cultural heritage from “periodic attention” to “daily integration”.

#### **4.2. Transmission Dimension: Reconstructing Transmission Models, Injecting Vital Sources**

Short videos have deeply integrated into the inheritance process, injecting new vitality into the living preservation of intangible cultural heritage. **Diverse participation:** Low creative barriers have driven “mass inheritance”, with Douyin’s “Intangible Cultural Heritage Creative Challenge” attracting over 5 million users annually. In 2024, 35% of newly recruited apprentices nationwide cited short videos as the catalyst for their interest in learning. **Digital Platforms:** Short videos establish “recordable, traceable, and reusable” digital archives. Douyin’s “Intangible Cultural Heritage Digital Museum” now houses high-definition footage of over 2,000 skills, with a significant increase in videos documenting nationally endangered intangible cultural heritage. This effectively addresses the vulnerability of traditional “oral transmission and heart-to-heart teaching” methods. **Internalized Motivation:** Emotional engagement in content dissemination strengthens value recognition. Comments sections under intangible cultural heritage videos increasingly express homage and a desire to carry on traditions. Enrollment in specialized intangible cultural heritage programs nationwide also surged significantly in 2024, with inheritance increasingly shifting from a “responsibility” to a “pursuit”.

### 4.3. Industrial Dimension: Unlocking Market Value and Building a Positive Feedback Loop

Short videos bridge cultural dissemination and consumer markets, establishing a closed-loop ecosystem of “discovery-inspiration-purchase”. Direct Consumer Conversion: The integration of short videos and e-commerce has opened new sales channels for intangible cultural heritage (ICH) products. From 2024 to 2025, TikTok’s ICH merchandise sales exceeded 6.5 billion orders, with daily transaction volume growing by 26% year-over-year. Notably, 63% of this transaction volume originated from short video live streams [12]. Industrial Integration & Upgrading: By integrating into modern life through cross-industry collaborations, intangible cultural heritage has spawned new consumption trends. For instance, the Fuzhou Three-Pronged Hairpin intangible cultural heritage project has driven annual sales of over 100,000 travel photography packages, boosting group purchase orders in related regions by 356%. Effective Entrepreneurial Support: Platforms provided assistance through initiatives like the “Intangible Cultural Heritage Treasures Support Program”. In 2024, the number of offline ICH merchants on platforms grew by 187% year-on-year, with lightweight cultural and creative products becoming a popular choice for young entrepreneurs.

### 4.4. Cultural Dimension: Strengthening Identity and Fostering Global Cultural Exchange

Short videos have profoundly enhanced cultural identity and helped ICH become a globally shared cultural resource. Domestically, the “intangible cultural heritage + festival/region” content strategy awakened collective memories and emotional resonance. During the Spring Festival, TikTok videos showcasing intangible cultural heritage traditions garnered over 5 billion views. 13.79 million netizens actively shared intangible cultural heritage from their hometowns. Internationally, short videos’ visual appeal transcended language barriers, becoming a vanguard for Chinese culture going global. On TikTok, annual views of intangible cultural heritage content grew by over 150%, driving a 180% increase in exports of related goods compared to 2020. Arts embodying Eastern aesthetics—such as embroidery, pottery, and traditional opera—are gaining global appreciation and popularity [13].

In summary, short videos exert a systematic and multidimensional positive impact on intangible cultural heritage dissemination. They break through temporal and spatial boundaries, reshape participatory inheritance models, bridge cultural traditions with consumer markets, and solidify cultural identity from local to global scales. Data and practice demonstrate that short videos have become an indispensable “core engine” for the contemporary transmission of intangible cultural heritage. At its core, this phenomenon represents the creative empowerment of cultural transmission through digital technology, providing a vibrant practical pathway for the revitalization and development of China’s outstanding traditional culture in the modern era.

## 5. Challenges and Countermeasures in Short Video-Based Intangible Cultural Heritage Dissemination

The rapid rise of short videos has brought unprecedented exposure to intangible cultural heritage (ICH), yet this medium itself carries profound internal contradictions. Examining the successful case of “Jiang Xunqian” reveals that as ICH adapts to the short-video ecosystem, it faces the risk of its cultural depth being eroded by the logic of traffic. In pursuit of dissemination efficiency, intricate craft processes are often compressed into visual spectacles, while rich historical significance is easily simplified into emotional labels. While algorithmic recommendations precisely target audiences, they also inadvertently construct information silos, hindering ICH dissemination from breaking through established circles to achieve genuine nationwide coverage. More fundamentally, when inheritors must devote substantial energy to content creation and fan engagement, their core identity as cultural custodians risks alienation. The traditional essence of transmission—“heart-to-heart, hand-to-hand”—faces the latent danger of distortion through digital translation.

At the industrial level, while short videos have revitalized the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) market, they have also accelerated homogenized competition and intellectual property disputes. A successful “intangible cultural heritage + short video” model rapidly spawns numerous imitators, leading to creative devaluation and market stagnation. The easily replicable nature of short video content exposes original craft demonstrations or product designs to the risk of plagiarism. Given the difficulty in defining intangible cultural heritage skills within the current intellectual property framework, creators often find themselves without recourse for rights protection. Without regulation, this market environment may stifle innovation, trapping industry development in low-level repetition. Worse, creators may sacrifice cultural authenticity to chase short-term traffic, causing “productive preservation” to slide into “destructive exploitation”.

To address these structural challenges, it is essential to establish a governance framework and development ecosystem that transcends single entities and fosters multi-stakeholder collaboration. Short-video platforms should assume greater cultural responsibility by optimizing algorithmic mechanisms to prioritize recommendations for intangible cultural heritage content with cultural depth and educational value, while establishing effective mechanisms to protect original creations. Governments, academia, and platforms can join forces to provide creators with academic support, resource connections, and policy safeguards, fostering a virtuous cycle of “cultural core - academic support - innovative expression - platform dissemination”. Simultaneously, creators should be encouraged to maintain cultural depth while pursuing broad reach, guiding the public from superficial consumption toward deeper understanding and value recognition.

In short, the dissemination of intangible cultural heritage in the era of short videos has entered uncharted waters, presenting both opportunities and challenges. The practices exemplified by creators like Jiang Xunqian demonstrate the

immense potential of technology-enabled innovation while also reflecting the common predicaments faced by cultural preservation during digital transformation. The path forward lies in striking a balance: fully embracing the dissemination power of new media while honoring the cultural roots of intangible heritage; activating market momentum while establishing standardized protection systems; encouraging innovative expression while ensuring authentic transmission. This requires concerted efforts from platforms, creators, inheritors, academia, and the public. Ultimately, short videos should not only serve as the “engine of dissemination” for intangible heritage but also become the “digital fertile ground” that nourishes its contemporary vitality.

### Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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