

Between Belief and Doubt: Changing Forms of Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage Transmission in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

Tianchan Chen, PhD¹, Prof. Chuan Wang^{1*}

¹Institution: Central Academy of Fine Arts

*Corresponding author: Prof. Chuan Wang, Institution: Central Academy of Fine Arts. Email: wangchuan@cafa.edu.cn; Tel.: 010-64771018

First author: Tianchan Chen, PhD, Address: No. 8 Huajiadi South Street, Chaoyang District, Beijing, China. Email: tc29@alfred.edu; Tel.: +86 18811 049523

Citation: Chen T and Wang C (2026) Between Belief and Doubt: Changing Forms of Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage Transmission in the Age of Artificial Intelligence. American J Sci Edu Re: AJSER-330.

Received Date: 18 May, 2026; Accepted Date: 26 May, 2026; Published Date: 01 June, 2026

Abstract

Against the backdrop of rapid social transformation, the transmission of Chinese intangible cultural heritage (ICH) is confronting new conditions and challenges. With the development of digital technologies, especially the widespread application of artificial intelligence in image generation, motion simulation, interactive display, and learning assistance, ICH has gradually entered a new context of dissemination and participation. Although artificial intelligence does not directly intervene in the cultural meanings of ICH itself, it has profoundly reshaped the ways in which people engage with ICH by transforming modes of documentation, pathways of learning, and thresholds of access. As a result, increasing numbers of individuals are no longer entering ICH practices as “inheritors” in the traditional sense, but are instead participating in a looser, more experience-oriented manner. This shift raises the question of whether the forms of ICH transmission are themselves undergoing transformation.

Existing studies on intangible cultural heritage have largely approached the issue from the perspectives of preservation and transmission, emphasizing the central role of apprenticeship, embodied practice, and long-term commitment in the continuation of ICH. Within this framework, technology is often regarded either as an auxiliary tool or as a potential risk that may weaken ICH as Living Heritage. However, in the contemporary context in which artificial intelligence is increasingly involved in the dissemination, display, and learning of ICH, transmission does not always presuppose the complete inheritance of skills or value systems; rather, it is increasingly manifested in diverse forms characterized by experience, contact, and repeated participation. In light of this shift, this article examines the changing forms of Chinese ICH transmission by focusing on the emergence of the “experienter” as a new type of participant, and further considers the extent to which AI-mediated engagement challenges or supplements the traditional logic of ICH transmission.

Keywords: intangible cultural heritage, artificial intelligence, heritage transmission, cultural communication.

Chapter 1. The Traditional Logic of Intangible Cultural Heritage Transmission

1.1 The Basic Meaning of “Transmission” in Intangible Cultural Heritage

In the field of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) studies, “transmission” is not equivalent to the general dissemination of knowledge or the replication of skills. Rather, it is a long-term process centered on human agents and grounded in practice [1]. Unlike material culture, which is primarily carried by texts and objects, ICH is often sustained through the continuous practice of specific communities. Its core lies in how it is enacted, rather than in what form it is preserved.

The most typical form of traditional ICH transmission is the apprenticeship system. Within this structure, skills, experience, and values are not conveyed through standardized written manuals, but are gradually internalized through long-term co-presence, repeated demonstration, and sustained practice. The master-apprentice relationship is not merely technical; it is also ethical and embedded in everyday life. Learners are often required to gradually understand and acquire relevant skills through the rhythms of daily labor and living.

Closely associated with the apprenticeship system is the mode of transmission often described as oral instruction and intuitive teaching. Many ICH practices cannot be fully verbalized or visually codified; their crucial elements often depend on experiential judgment, bodily perception, and immediate response [2]. This mode of transmission does not emphasize precise theoretical explanation. Instead, it foregrounds “watching, listening, doing, and sensing” in practice, enabling learners to develop a holistic grasp of the craft through long-term participation [3].

In addition, ICH transmission is marked by strong embodied and temporal dimensions. The body is not merely an instrument of execution, but also a carrier of memory and experience. Time, meanwhile, is not a compressible variable, but a necessary condition for transmission to take place. It is precisely through repeated practice and long-term accumulation that ICH skills can be stably sustained.

1.2 “Understanding” and “Practice” in Transmission

In ICH studies, there is often a tendency to regard “understanding” as a prerequisite for transmission, that is, to assume that ICH practices become legitimate only when their cultural meanings, symbolic systems, or historical backgrounds

are adequately understood. In the actual operation of folk culture, however, transmission is not always founded upon complete understanding.

Many participants in ICH practices, especially in the initial stages, do not possess a systematic understanding of the cultural logic underlying such practices. Instead, they gradually enter into practice through repetition, imitation, and participation. This condition of “doing before understanding,” or even “doing without necessarily fully understanding,” is by no means uncommon in folk culture. Practice itself often precedes understanding, while understanding gradually emerges through long-term participation (Ong, 2008).

Repetition and imitation are of fundamental importance in ICH transmission. Through repeated bodily training and everyday operations, participants gradually develop stable patterns of movement and perceptual experience. Such experience cannot always be fully articulated in language, yet it exists concretely in bodily memory. It is precisely through this process that ICH is transmitted from one generation to the next without relying on highly abstract theoretical explanation [4]. ICH transmission is therefore not merely a cognitive process, but a cultural activity centered on practice and premised upon participation. Understanding is certainly important, but not all transmission requires clear or complete understanding; practice itself likewise constitutes a crucial foundation for transmission.

1.3 The Significance of Living Heritage

“Living Heritage” is an important concept in the study of intangible cultural heritage. Its core emphasis lies in the fact that ICH is not an object to be statically preserved, but a form of cultural practice that continues to unfold in the present. The value of ICH does not lie solely in its historical origins or symbolic meanings, but also in the ways it is used, practiced, and experienced in contemporary life.

If ICH is treated only as an object of museum display or as research material in written texts, its transmission will inevitably tend toward stagnation, precisely because heritage depends on ongoing cultural enactment rather than mere preservation [5]. By contrast, only through ongoing practice and participation can ICH sustain its social existence as a form of living culture. Such vitality does not require all participants to become professional inheritors; rather, it allows for the coexistence of different levels and forms of participation.

From this perspective, the key to ICH transmission lies not in whether it is completely replicated, but in whether it continues to enter everyday life. As long as practice continues and participation endures, ICH exists in society in a dynamic form. This understanding also provides an important theoretical foundation for the following discussion of the changes brought about by the intervention of artificial intelligence in ICH transmission.

Chapter 2. “Anxiety of Understanding” and the Ambiguous Condition of Chinese Folk Culture

2.1. The Impulse to Understand in Western Anthropology

In modern anthropology, especially within the Western academic tradition, the study of folk culture has often been accompanied by a strong “impulse to understand.” This impulse is manifested in attempts to incorporate seemingly irrational folk practices into intelligible and interpretable systems of knowledge through rationalized, functional, or symbolic frameworks of explanation. In this process, scholars have often

sought to demonstrate that certain cultural behaviors commonly regarded as “superstitious” or “backward” in fact possess intelligible functions, such as social integration, psychological regulation, or symbolic expression. This research orientation is most clearly reflected in anthropological traditions centered on the interpretation of meaning, where the analysis of symbols and systems of signification is used to render cultural practices coherent and explicable [6].

This research orientation has its own legitimacy in intellectual history. On the one hand, it helps to challenge simplistic forms of evaluative denigration and to resist treating non-Western cultures as remnants of the “uncivilized.” On the other hand, it has also secured a degree of academic and social legitimacy for folk practices. However, when applied to Chinese folk culture, this interpretive approach, which takes “making things fully explicable” as its central goal, inevitably reveals certain limitations. When scholars place excessive emphasis on clarifying meaning and demonstrating rationality, the ambiguity, uncertainty, and contradictions originally present in folk culture are often intentionally or unintentionally weakened, or even erased. Folk practices are thus translated into cultural systems that can be made intelligible, while the ambiguity and instability that characterize their actual existence in everyday life are treated as problems to be corrected or explained away.

2.2. Another Cultural Condition Revealed in Burning Money

In *Burning Money: The Material Spirit of the Chinese Lifeworld*, C. Fred Blake continues the anthropological tradition of interpreting and explaining folk practices through a detailed classification, description, and analysis of the practice of burning paper money. By distinguishing among different contexts, recipients, and motivations, Blake seeks to show that burning paper money is not merely a singular form of “superstitious behavior,” but rather a cultural practice embedded in the everyday structure of Chinese life [7].

In this sense, *Burning Money* does not entirely depart from the interpretive path oriented toward explanation. Instead, it responds, in a more ethnographic and experience-based manner, to questions such as why this practice persists and how it operates. However, unlike many interpretive models that attempt to construct a highly self-consistent system of meanings, the ethnographic materials in *Burning Money* also reveal a practical condition that resists complete integration. In many concrete cases, participants are not entirely convinced of the actual efficacy of burning paper money, nor are they always able to clearly articulate the logic behind it, yet they continue to participate in the practice at specific moments. Such participation is grounded neither in firm belief nor in outright negation, but rather takes the form of a practical attitude situated between belief and disbelief.

It is precisely at this point that the materials presented in *Burning Money* expose the tension between understanding and practice. Although the researcher attempts to classify and interpret the practice of burning paper money, the practice itself does not always operate according to a clear or stable structure of meaning. More often, it depends on repetition, habit, and situational participation, rather than on the participant’s full understanding of its symbolic system. This tension, formed between interpretive efforts and the ambiguity of practice itself, enables burning paper money to persist in a condition marked by contradiction, ambiguity, and even a slight sense of absurdity, while remaining embedded in everyday life.

2.3. “Between Belief and Doubt” as a Mechanism of Cultural Stability

From this perspective, it becomes clear that being “between belief and doubt” should not be understood as a defect within Chinese folk culture, but rather as an important mechanism through which culture operates and sustains itself. In many folk practices, participation does not presuppose clear cognition or firm belief; instead, it is maintained through low-intensity yet sustainable forms of involvement. Such a mode of participation allows individuals to continue practicing even without full identification or conviction, thereby lowering the psychological and cognitive thresholds of cultural transmission.

This mechanism gives folk culture a considerable degree of elasticity. When social environments, value systems, or structures of knowledge undergo change, folk practices do not necessarily need to reconstruct their meaning systems in a thorough or systematic way in order to adapt. Rather, they may continue and adjust within an already existing space of ambiguity. It is precisely within this ambiguous and open condition that folk culture is able to endure in modern society.

Introducing this perspective into the study of intangible cultural heritage makes it possible to reconsider the place of “understanding” in transmission. ICH does not always depend on highly explicit interpretations of meaning in order to exist. On the contrary, its vitality often derives from sustained practice and continued participation. Understanding may be gradual, fragmented, or even incomplete, yet this does not necessarily diminish the cultural value of ICH.

This perspective also provides an important theoretical foundation for the following discussion of AI intervention in ICH transmission. If ICH itself already allows for practice and experience to take place in a state between belief and doubt, then when new technological conditions reshape the ways in which people engage with ICH, their impact must likewise be understood within this cultural logic, rather than being evaluated simply in terms of “destruction” or “distortion”.

Chapter 3. The Practical Mechanisms of AI Intervention in the Transmission of Intangible Cultural Heritage

The impact of artificial intelligence on Chinese intangible cultural heritage (ICH) is not primarily manifested in the direct replacement of the “essence” of any particular craft or practice. Rather, it is more concentrated in the pathways through which ICH enters public visibility, becomes intelligible, and is put to use. Unlike traditional forms of transmission, which have relied largely on textbooks, exhibition spaces, and oral instruction, generative artificial intelligence and short-video platforms together constitute a new cultural infrastructure through which ICH can rapidly circulate in forms that are searchable, viewable, and explainable. Under current conditions, the influence of artificial intelligence on the changing forms of ICH transmission is mainly reflected in three dimensions: the databased inclusion and retrieval of cultural materials, the enhancement and diffusion of modes of dissemination, and low-threshold forms of explanation and learning directed toward the general public.

3.1 Database Inclusion: From Scarce Materials to Readily Accessible Cultural Resources

The operation of generative artificial intelligence relies heavily on the integration and training of large-scale image and textual data, and its generative capacity is itself built upon the continuous incorporation and retrieval of existing cultural

materials [8]. Because AI models depend on vast quantities of data and visual materials, large numbers of ICH-related images, patterns, forms, process diagrams, and photographs of works are continuously collected, organized, and incorporated into database systems during the processes of training and data integration. For ICH, this process means that its visual materials are shifting from a condition in which they were once dispersed across exhibition spaces, books, local chronicles, or limited folk archives to a more concentrated and readily searchable form of “datafied existence.”

Such databasing is not equivalent to a complete understanding or systematic preservation of ICH, but it does alter the point of access through which people first encounter it. In the past, ordinary individuals often needed specific channels and considerable time to view the representative forms of a particular item of ICH. Once artificial intelligence became an everyday tool, however, users could quickly obtain large numbers of related images and stylistic references simply by entering keywords. In this way, ICH has shifted from being something that first had to be located to something that can be accessed on demand, with its visibility and accessibility significantly enhanced.

3.2 Enhanced Modes of Dissemination: The Increased “Watchability” Brought by Short Videos and Generative Technologies

If databasing addresses the question of whether ICH can be found quickly, then the enhancement of dissemination addresses whether people are willing to watch it and whether they are able to understand it. On short-video platforms, ICH content is more likely to enter public view in forms that are fragmented, visually striking, and easy to grasp. Under the combined influence of short-video platforms and algorithmic distribution mechanisms, the visibility and watchability of cultural content have been significantly amplified, gradually giving rise to a communicative environment characterized by visual attraction and fragmented understanding [9]. In this process, artificial intelligence further enhances the “watchability” of ICH and strengthens engagement and storytelling in heritage dissemination [10].

For example, traditional paper-cutting, shadow puppetry, New Year prints, and decorative patterns were originally presented largely in static form. Artificial intelligence and video effects, however, can make paper-cut motifs quickly “come alive,” enable patterns to unfold, transform, and circulate in space, and present the procedures of traditional crafts in more intuitive and dynamic ways. For many viewers, such visual enhancement does not constitute a complete explanation of the meaning of ICH, yet it significantly increases its interest and appeal, making it more likely to capture attention, be shared, and become the subject of discussion.

Changes in dissemination also further facilitate the everyday incorporation of ICH elements. As popular aesthetics and consumer environments are increasingly shaped by short-video content, ICH elements are more readily transformed into visual languages for clothing, packaging, cultural and creative products, and everyday commodities. The efficiency advantages of artificial intelligence in pattern generation, style transfer, and rapid design iteration reduce the cost and accelerate the speed with which ICH elements enter product design, thereby promoting a shift from ICH as an object of viewing to ICH as a symbol in everyday use. Such a change does not necessarily

mean that ICH is being diluted; it may also indicate that ICH is acquiring a renewed and sustainable social space in new ways.

3.3 Low-Threshold Explanation: From Knowledge Barriers to Understandable Everyday Narratives

The transmission of ICH knowledge has traditionally relied on textbook-style narratives, museum or exhibition explanations, and specialized research texts. While these forms carry authority, they may also create barriers to understanding for general audiences, resulting in a gap between simply knowing that ICH exists and being willing to engage with it more deeply. The capacities of artificial intelligence in language generation and knowledge organization have opened up a new pathway for explaining ICH: the rapid production of explanatory texts that are concise, accessible, and adaptable to individual needs. More recently, generative AI and customized chatbots have also begun to be used in cultural heritage contexts to enhance public understanding and interactive experience [11].

Because AI models are trained on large amounts of relevant material, they are able to answer common public questions about ICH in relatively low-threshold ways, such as how a particular craft is made, why it is practiced in a certain way, or how it relates to a specific region or festival. They can also adjust their mode of expression according to the knowledge level of the questioner. Compared with traditional textbook-style explanations, such responses are often shorter, more direct, and closer to everyday language, thereby reducing the obstacles that prevent ICH knowledge from entering public life.

More importantly, this explanatory capacity reshapes the ways in which people relate to ICH. In the past, learning about ICH often presupposed entry into specific cultural settings, such as apprenticing under a master, participating in rituals, or entering workshops or classrooms. Once explanations and introductory knowledge become readily available at any time, however, the public is more likely to establish connections with ICH in a state of first understanding a little and first trying a little. For the dissemination of ICH, this low-threshold mode of explanation significantly improves communicative efficiency and allows more people, especially younger generations, to learn about and discuss their own ICH traditions with greater ease, thereby creating the conditions for more sustained forms of participation.

Chapter 4. From “Inheritor” to “Experiencer”: Changes in the Subjects of Transmission

4.1. The Requirements of Transmission under the Logic of the “Inheritor”

Within traditional systems of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) transmission, the “inheritor” has always been regarded as the central subject of transmission. This subject position typically presupposes long-term and stable commitment, emphasizing sustained participation in a particular craft or practice over a considerable period of time. Whether in handicrafts, performing arts, or ritual activities, inheritors must engage in repeated practice over the long term and gradually accumulate experience before they can truly enter the inner structure of the transmission system.

This logic of transmission relies heavily on bodily training. The crucial forms of experience involved in ICH practices are often difficult to convey fully through language or text; instead, they are formed through bodily sensation, rhythm, and judgment.

Inheritors must adjust the details of their movements through repeated operations and develop stable bodily memory through long-term practice. Such embodiment cannot be acquired in a short period of time, but requires sustained temporal investment. In this sense, the “inheritor” is not only a learner of technique, but also a bearer of a particular cultural order. This identity implies a deep commitment to a given practice, as well as a willingness to bind one’s personal rhythm of life to the long-term practice of ICH. Historically, this model of transmission has constituted an important foundation for the continuation of ICH, but it has also imposed relatively high thresholds on participants.

4.2. The Emergence and Characteristics of the “Experiencer”

In contrast to the logic of the “inheritor” described above, a new type of participant characterized as the “experiencer” has gradually emerged within the communicative environment shaped jointly by artificial intelligence and short-video platforms. This subject does not aim to enter a complete system of transmission; rather, it is primarily defined by short-term participation and immediate perception. Viewers of short-video content constitute the broadest group of ICH experiencers at present. Through algorithmic recommendation, visual enhancement, and simplified narration, large amounts of ICH content enter everyday information flows in fragmented and easily understandable forms. Viewers often complete a single act of watching or interaction within a very short period of time, forming only a preliminary impression of a given item of ICH without assuming responsibility for further learning or long-term practice.

The emphasis of this mode of participation lies not in mastering the craft itself, but in acquiring affective impressions and generating interest. Viewers may be drawn to the beauty of a particular gesture, the transformation of a specific pattern, or the atmosphere of a ritual, thereby producing forms of emotional or aesthetic resonance. Such resonance does not necessarily lead to systematic learning, yet it nevertheless constitutes a real form of cultural contact. In terms of intensity of participation, the “experiencer” is clearly not comparable to the “inheritor.” However, in terms of scale and breadth of dissemination, experiencers have already become the most influential type of subject in the contemporary communication of ICH. This change is not an isolated phenomenon, but the result of the combined shaping effects of media technologies and communicative conditions.

4.3. Can Experience Constitute a Form of Transmission?

With the emergence of the “experiencer,” an unavoidable question arises: can this mode of participation, centered on watching and sensing, be regarded as a form of ICH transmission? Judged by traditional standards, experience is clearly incomplete. Watching short videos cannot substitute for long-term training, visual perception cannot be equated with embodied experience, and fragmented contact can hardly assume responsibility for the continuation of a craft. Yet if transmission is defined solely as the complete inheritance of technique, many forms of cultural contact in contemporary society would be excluded from consideration. In fact, the continued social existence of ICH does not depend entirely on the cultivation of large numbers of professional inheritors in every generation, but also on whether it continues to be seen, discussed, and recognized.

From this perspective, although experience does not constitute complete transmission, it is by no means insignificant. The presence of short-video audiences allows ICH to remain within public visibility and prevents it from disappearing entirely from contemporary life. Through viewing, sharing, and discussion, experiencers participate in the social circulation of ICH and provide the conditions for maintaining its basic cultural presence. The value of this mode of participation lies not in depth, but in breadth; not in mastery, but in sustained contact. It cannot replace the inheritor, but it can coexist with it as another mode of cultural continuation.

4.4 Participation Between Belief and Doubt: From Legitimation to Habitual Practice

In discussing the participatory form represented by the “experiencer,” it is useful to return to the analysis of folk practice presented in *Burning Money: The Material Spirit of the Chinese Lifeworld*. Throughout the book, the author repeatedly attempts to free the practice of burning paper money from the charge of “superstition” by offering a careful account of its social functions, affective structure, and everyday contexts, thereby demonstrating that it is not a residue devoid of rationality, but a reasonable cultural practice embedded in the Chinese lifeworld. This mode of writing is of considerable significance at the academic level, as it provides a form of legitimating explanation for a folk practice that has long been stigmatized. Yet if one begins from the everyday experience of practitioners, the persistence of burning paper money does not depend entirely on its being fully understood or clearly justified in terms of such “rationality.”

In real life, many of those who participate in the burning of paper money do not actively reflect on its symbolic meanings or functional structure, and some are not even fully convinced of its actual efficacy. More often, burning paper money takes the form of a habit that has already been internalized, something that one simply ought to do at a particular moment in time. More importantly, this practice often carries social and affective functions that exceed the sphere of belief itself. For many participants, burning paper money is undertaken not out of strong conviction, but in order to accompany parents or other family members in completing a ritualized act. In such cases, the significance of participation lies not in a deep understanding of the act itself, but in the affective bond and familial order sustained through performing the ritual together. Even when practitioners remain reserved about its cultural logic, the ritual is still carried out.

A certain tension therefore exists between the effort at legitimation presented in *Burning Money* and the actual operation of folk practice. Folk culture does not persist only after it has been fully explained; on the contrary, it often continues precisely in a state between belief and doubt, through inertia, accompaniment, and repeated practice. This condition of not fully understanding and yet continuing to participate constitutes an important feature of Chinese folk culture.

When this observation is introduced into the context of ICH participation shaped by artificial intelligence and short-video platforms, a similar logic can be seen at work. A large number of short-video viewers do not take complete understanding of ICH as a precondition for participation, nor do they necessarily identify with all of its cultural meanings. Yet they are still willing to watch, share, and even circulate such content within familial or social settings. Although this mode of participation

does not amount to deep transmission, it nonetheless allows ICH to continue entering contemporary life in a low-intensity yet sustainable form. It is precisely within this ongoing condition between belief and doubt that the “experiencer” emerges as a subject that cannot be ignored in the changing forms of ICH transmission.

Conclusion: The Shift in Transmission in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

Today, an increasing number of forms of Chinese intangible cultural heritage (ICH) do not enter people’s lives through systematic learning or formal transmission, but instead repeatedly appear within everyday information flows through short videos, image generation, and algorithmic recommendation. For many people, the first encounter with a particular item of ICH does not arise from an understanding of its history or techniques, but from a moment of viewing, a brief pause, or a simple sense that it is somehow interesting. In this way, ICH is no longer merely a cultural object in need of protection, but is gradually becoming an everyday presence that can be viewed, sensed, and discussed.

This shift suggests that ICH transmission is undergoing a structural adjustment. The traditional model of transmission, which relies heavily on master-apprentice relations and long-term commitment, undoubtedly retains irreplaceable value in terms of technical depth and the accumulation of experience. Yet its stability often depends upon the sustained participation of a very small number of individuals. Once key figures in the chain of transmission are interrupted, the craft itself may rapidly move toward rupture. By contrast, although the broad participation of experiencers may appear loose and diffuse, it constitutes another form of stability in terms of scale and distribution, allowing ICH to remain visible and memorable across a much wider social range.

It should be emphasized that this transformation does not mean that ICH is being simplified or replaced. Experience cannot substitute for long-term training, viewing cannot be equated with mastery, and artificial intelligence cannot generate genuine embodied experience. Yet just as many folk practices do not persist only after they have been fully understood, the existence of ICH does not necessarily require that every participant become an inheritor. Within a condition of participation that remains between belief and doubt, yet does not cease, culture instead acquires the possibility of continued circulation.

It may therefore be anticipated that future ICH transmission will no longer fully follow the past model of highly closed and strictly linear master-apprentice succession. Rather, it will gradually take the form of a composite structure in which deep inheritance and broad experience coexist. Such an apparently loose form of transmission does not necessarily weaken the cultural vitality of ICH. On the contrary, it may provide ICH with a more stable and enduring mode of existence in contemporary society.

Acknowledgement: The author would like to thank Dr. Yongjun Dong of the School of Humanities, Central Academy of Fine Arts, whose course on intangible cultural heritage provided important inspiration for this study. The author also gratefully acknowledges Professor Chuan Wang, the corresponding author and the author’s doctoral supervisor, for his valuable guidance and academic support.

Authors contribution: Tianchan Chen was responsible for the conception and design of the study, literature review, analysis and interpretation, manuscript drafting, and revision. Chuan Wang provided academic supervision, guidance, and final approval of the manuscript.

Funding support: This research received no external funding.

References

1. UNESCO. (2003). Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage.
2. Yanagi, M., & Leach, B. (1989). The unknown craftsman: A Japanese insight into beauty. Kodansha International.
3. Ingold, T. (2021). The perception of the environment: essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill. Routledge.
4. Kuriyama, S. (2023). The expressiveness of the body and the divergence of Greek and Chinese medicine. Princeton University Press.
5. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B. (2004). Intangible heritage as metacultural production. *Museum international*, 56(1-2), 52-65.
6. Geertz, C. (2017). The interpretation of cultures. Basic books.
7. Blake, C. F. (2011). Burning money: The material spirit of the Chinese lifeworld. University of Hawaii Press.
8. Achiam, J., Adler, S., Agarwal, S., Ahmad, L., Akkaya, I., Aleman, F. L., ... & McGrew, B. (2023). GPT-4 technical report. arXiv preprint arXiv:2303.08774.
9. Kaye, D. B. V., Chen, X., & Zeng, J. (2021). The co-evolution of two Chinese mobile short video apps: Parallel platformization of Douyin and TikTok. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 9(2), 229-253.
10. Fu, K., Wu, R., Tang, Y., Chen, Y., Liu, B., & Lc, R. (2024, July). " Being Eroded, Piece by Piece": Enhancing Engagement and Storytelling in Cultural Heritage Dissemination by Exhibiting GenAI Co-Creation Artifacts. In Proceedings of the 2024 ACM designing interactive systems conference (pp. 2833-2850).
11. Natale, S., Surace, B., Mensa, E., & Befera, L. (2025). ChatGPT for cultural heritage and the customization of generative AI: A talkthrough analysis of the Luigi Einaudi chatbot. *New Media & Society*, 14614448251384258.

Copyright: © 2026 Wang C. This Open Access Article is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.