

# *Research on the Living Heritage and Contemporary Development of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Anhui Province*

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**Abstract:** The cognizance of the current perpetuation of non-material cultural heritage manifests an indispensable concern in the evolution of modern society, and the resurgence of intangible cultural heritage constitutes a pivotal course of perpetuation and novelty that assembles the exigencies of the era. Under the premise of maintaining and inheriting intangible cultural heritage in Anhui Province, the economic resources should be developed in a reasonable way and its economic value should be scientifically and reasonably utilized in order to promote the flourishing of cultural industry. More specifically, we should take advantage of the rich cultural resources left behind by the predecessors, make full use of their real economic and cultural creativity potential, and improve the economic benefits through active creative transformation and innovative development. Through these suggestions, the aim is to integrate the traditional culture in the protection of ICH with the real needs, so that it can be creatively transformed and innovatively developed, thus becoming a new economic growth point in Anhui, and injecting new vitality and power for revitalizing the leapfrog development of Anhui economy.

## **1. Introduction**

Intangible cultural heritage is embedded in the outstanding traditional Chinese culture and is an important part of it and carries unique spiritual connotations and expressions, which should be enriched and developed continuously with the passage of time. As a country that has diligently passed down ancient civilizations. Amid an assortment of intangible cultural heritage in China lie traditional skills of exceptional merit. The nation boasts of a plenitude of such resources, warranting pivotal import of fortifying cultural heritage cultivation through accentuating the worth of these intangible cultural assets. Consequently, an unyielding, profound foray into the study and appreciation of the intangible cultural heritage of traditional skills holds paramount importance, for it enables the forging of stronger cultural bonds and fosters enhanced cultural self-assurance. Anhui Province attaches great importance to cultural construction and has clearly put forward the strategic goal of rapidly transforming from a large cultural province to a strong cultural province. With

regard to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, it must be noted that while Anhui Province has yet to establish itself as a formidable player in this realm, its repertoire of intangible cultural heritage is far from negligible. In particular, its performing arts offerings, infused with a distinct local flavor, possess an inherent value worthy of preservation.

## 2. Overview of the Development of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Anhui Province

### 2.1 Regional cultural characteristics of Anhui Province

Regional culture, an embodiment of specific customs and beliefs originating from the longstanding daily production and life experiences of a certain region's inhabitants, is characterized by its regional, historical, and evolutionary nature. Anhui, deemed one of the cradles of early human civilization in China, boasts an extensive and profound inheritance of regional traditional culture, which is distinguished by its diverse range and distinctive nuances, and serves as a critical component of the overall tapestry of Chinese civilization [1].

Through the passage of time and the trajectory of historical events, the regional culture of Anhui has undergone the phases of sprouting, blossoming, preserving, and assimilating, thus culminating in the exceptional formation of the inimitable Anhui regional culture that exudes from its superior geographical placement and affluent cultural resources. The systematic accumulation of historical and cultural artifacts provides an invaluable pool of resources to fuel artistic creation, while the idiosyncratic regional milieu and cultural tenets serve as a treasured reservoir of inspiration for the curation of thematic motifs, the conception of design paradigms, and the articulation of evocative expressions that foster the flourishing of culturally informed and inventive products.

### 2.2 Current situation of the development of intangible cultural heritage in Anhui Province

Table 1: Distribution of National Intangible Cultural Heritage List in Anhui Province

Number	Category	Quantity	Weighting (%)
1	Traditional Theatre	25	25
2	Folk Art	2	2
3	Traditional skills	25	25
4	Traditional Art	9	9
5	Traditional Medicine	3	3
6	Folklore	7	7
7	Folklore	5	5
8	Traditional Music	9	9
9	Traditional sports, amusement and acrobatics	4	4
10	Traditional Dance	10	10
11	Total	99	100

The catalogue of non-performing loans (NPLs) in China encompasses a comprehensive assortment of ten distinctive classifications of items, specifically, the conventional dramaturgy, the operatic arts, the customary crafts, the ancient fortes medicinails, the folklore traditions, the indigenous literary expression, the archaic melodies, the customary pastimes, the diversions and the customary routines of the thespian craft. In 2006, 2008, 2011, 2014 and 2021, the State Council announced five batches of national ICH representative projects with a total of 1,557 items and 3,610 sub-projects, and Anhui Province was selected for 72 items and 99 sub-projects, with a full range of project types, including 25 items of traditional arts, tied for the first place with traditional drama

ICH projects. Anhui Provincial People's Government announced five batches of representative provincial-level ICH projects in 2006, 2008, 2010, 2014 and 2017, with a total of 539 projects, including 174 ICH projects in the category of traditional skills, most of which belong to the categories of traditional skills, traditional drama, traditional art and traditional medicine, all of which have good genes of living transmission, as shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 2: Distribution of Provincial Intangible Cultural Heritage List in Anhui Province

Number	Category	Quantity	Weighting (%)
1	Traditional Theatre	45	8.3
2	Folk Art	32	5.9
3	Traditional skills	174	32.8
4	Traditional Art	51	9.5
5	Traditional Medicine	21	3.8
6	Folklore	67	12.3
7	Folklore	31	5.6
8	Traditional Music	40	7.4
9	Traditional sports, amusement and acrobatics	22	4.1
10	Traditional Dance	56	10.3
11	Total	539	100

The inheritance and development of intangible cultural heritage does not only mean innovating and injecting creativity into the works themselves, but also requires innovation and development of dynamic processes, cultural connotations, inheritance methods and ways of intangible heritage protection [2]. Within the index denoting emblematic entities of intangible cultural heritage in Anhui Province, the classification of customary craftsmanship assumes a considerable percentage, encompassing primitives of traditional arts and methodologies. Hence, customary crafts may be harnessed as a conduit and conduit of guidance towards unveiling the inventive metamorphosis and pioneering advancement of intangible cultural heritage. Such a praxis trumps the dual purpose of galvanizing the cultural marketplace of intangible cultural heritage whilst bequeathing pertinent perspicacity towards safeguarding intangible cultural heritage by means of productive conservation efforts.

They have the innate advantage of transmitting the know-how of their skills from generation to generation through their words and teachings, forming intergenerational inheritance relationships, forming specific behavior patterns and social and cultural norms in the interaction between people and nature, society and themselves, and gradually forming a specific community environment, thus building cultural symbolic identity, cultural identity and cultural value identity.

### 2.3 Project overview of intangible cultural heritage in Anhui Province

Anhui Province has a diverse range of cultural resources that are notable for their distinctive features and variety. Traditional dances, traditional plays, traditional sports and entertainment, and acrobatic events are all integrated into local tourism activities [3]. Among them, cultural elements such as flower-drum lanterns, Huangmei opera, Yuexi Gaoxiang and Wuliao opera are important components. Intangible cultural heritage skills such as Funan willow weaving, Huizhou bamboo weaving and paper-cutting have become popular cultural products by combining with industrial poverty alleviation and cultural tourism. In addition, interactive intangible cultural heritage items such as Huizhou Four Sculptures and Xuan paper making have been promoted and marketed experientially through stores and workshops with the ICH industrial park as the core business

model. Huangshan City in Anhui Province and the Palace Museum in Beijing have joined hands to jointly create the Huangshan Huizhou Traditional Craft Workstation, and jointly embarked on the research and development of cultural and creative products such as the Palace Tribute Tea and the 12 Chinese zodiac wood carvings. The workstation's research and development program seeks to perfectly integrate the non-heritage traditional culture into modern products.

### **3. Analysis of the development status of intangible cultural industry in Anhui Province**

#### **3.1 Homogenization dilemma is highlighted and brand awareness is weak**

The essential component which serves to differentiate cultural and creative commodities from their counterparts is their distinct cultural ingenuity, which is bolstered in large part by regional cultural exemplars that are paramount in defining Chinese culture relative to other global cultures [4]. In present times, owing to the proliferation of themes that are cultural and creative in nature, it is not uncommon to come across products that appear indistinguishable from one another, irrespective of the locale from which they hail. Products of this nature, replete with rudimentary cultural transplants, are characterized by a pervasive superficiality that lacks originality and individuality. Furthermore, such products, burdened as they are by the pro forma contrivances of their material constituents, are of shallow quality, and their parochial and rudimentary aesthetic appeal falls well short of the expectations of contemporary consumers.

Although some NRMs in Anhui Province have economic value and market development potential, they still bear the deep imprint of traditional agricultural society and are influenced by the traditional agricultural economic environment, making it difficult for them to gain vitality in the modern market economy. How to integrate NRMs into cultural industries and how to use the operation mode of cultural industries to promote the vitality of NRMs in the contemporary market economy and realize creative transformation and innovative development is a common concern in the field of cultural industries and NRM protection. We should break the traditional concept and backward thinking, and establish a new concept of industrial development, so as to promote the benign interaction between the development of local cultural industry and the protection of NRM in Anhui Province, and realize the double-wheel drive of economy and culture.

#### **3.2 Heritage presents vulnerability and low economic benefits**

The necessary prerequisite for the sustainable development of intangible cultural heritage is the continuation of its transmission work. For intangible cultural heritage items influenced by traditional skills, the inheritance and transmission of skills is their vitality. Only by actively carrying out inheritance work can the survival and development of ICH items be protected; otherwise, even if ICH is protected, it will eventually die out if it is only protected but not inherited [5]. It can be said that the inheritor is the important person who carries the non-heritage, without the inheritor, then the intangible cultural heritage is also desolate. In Anhui Province, the basic principle of people-oriented and living heritage is adhered to in the inheritance of intangible heritage skills, and various channels and levels are used to train inheritors and talent teams of intangible heritage skills. In addition to the traditional inheritance methods of teachers and apprentices and within families, institutions such as professional schools, training courses, training bases and workshops for intangible heritage skills have been established. At the same time, the province has opened up a new way to cultivate the talent team of non-heritage skills in a vocational education way, especially through the schools specializing in non-heritage skills created by relying on colleges and universities.

## **4. Suggestions for the living inheritance and innovative development of intangible cultural industry in Anhui Province**

### **4.1 Promote contemporary and innovative expressions and integrate into trendy fashions**

We can make full use of the rich resources of the glittering traditional art heritage and combine them closely with the excellent Chinese traditional culture when designing industrial products. By modernizing the symbols embedded in traditional decorative patterns, we can better meet the changing needs of the times and society with constant innovative expressions. The definition of Guochao culture and creativity covers the revitalization and utilization of Chinese traditional cultural accumulation. Its rich historical and cultural elements of China are imported into the design of decorative art and the essence of the wisdom of the sages is adopted. Through the choice of color palette and picture themes, Guochao Wenchuang not only differs in artistic perception, but also successfully demonstrates the effect of decorative design with changing emotions.

To have a comprehensive apprehension of intangible cultural heritage, an immediate mode of knowing is to keenly observe and sincerely experience it. The substance and configuration of avant-garde displays are efficacious in fostering the cultural bequest and progression of the intangible cultural heritage, thus enabling a superior and more profound cultural communication repercussion. As one of the traditional Chinese costumes, Hanfu has a long history and unique charm, and the long cultural heritage of China has left the praise of "the country of clothes and etiquette". When the general public feels the beauty of Chinese costumes, they can not only deeply appreciate the inner meaning of "the beauty of the costume is called Hua, and the greatness of the etiquette is called Xia", but also further appreciate and feel the essence of "costume etiquette" in the scenes by participating in activities such as handmade Chinese costumes.

### **4.2 Improve the value chain of NRM and innovate the development of related derivatives**

Enriched with multifarious attributes and distinctive features, Anhui Province harbors copious assets of intangible cultural heritage. By virtue of this, fresh ecological reserves of intangible cultural heritage can be instated through the synchronization and amalgamation of resources. Nevertheless, the utilization of modern technology renders it possible to emulate and reinstate the intangible cultural heritage's fabrication and production procedures, consequently imparting the credibility and genuineness of the intangible cultural heritage demonstration streets [6]. Establishing these exemplars of ecological reserves and presentation zones will enable the visitors to grasp an improved understanding of the intangible cultural heritage and fathom the heritage's worth throughout the course of their visitation and expedition. Eminently, it will also enhance their ability to value and cherish the assiduously garnished collection and irenic involvement embodied in the traditional craft products. In order to improve the ecological protection of intangible cultural heritage, the setting up of ICH shopping areas in the ICH ecological protection zones will provide a way for traditional crafts to have a wider living space, and also help transform traditional "intangible culture" into "tangible industry" better. The establishment of the NRM ecological reserve will provide a way for traditional crafts to have a wider space for survival, and also help transform traditional "intangible culture" into "tangible industry".

## **5. Conclusion**

Upon analysis of the intangible cultural heritage industry in Anhui Province, it can be observed that the harmonious amalgamation of heritage and its economic value can be attained through the proliferation of efforts towards safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Such efforts, in turn, can

pave the way for an equitable distribution of the fruits of economic and social success. For those intangible cultural heritage items with potential for development, we should be brave enough to build a sense of productive conservation, adopt an industrial development idea, and implement a branded intangible cultural heritage resource management strategy to turn the advantages of intangible cultural heritage cultural resources into advantages of economic development. In order to foster the growth of cultural enterprises pertaining to intangible cultural patrimony, an extensive comprehension of market dynamics, social psychology, and consumption attributes is ineluctable.

It is important to guide Anhui's intangible cultural heritage to adapt to the new development concept and to integrate into the innovation-driven strategy, which has important implications for the guidance of the "double creation" policy. In other words, on the basis of maintaining regional cultural characteristics, we can improve the intangible cultural heritage that has old expressions but still has valuable connotations, introduce traditional wisdom, use traditional elements, and expand traditional skills, so as to stimulate innovative consciousness and innovation ability, and finally realize the creative transformation and innovative development of intangible cultural heritage protection and transmission methods in Anhui Province by combining tradition and reality.

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