

# Comparative study on intangible cultural heritage in East Asia

**Zihan Yang**

Hangzhou Foreign Languages School, Hangzhou, China  
Email: yzh030033@163.com

**How to cite this paper:** Yang, Z. H. (2025). Comparative study on intangible cultural heritage in East Asia. *Social Sciences and Humanities*, 1(3), 82-97. ISSN Print: 3104-4328; ISSN Online: 3104-4336.  
<https://doi.org/10.63313/SSH.9029>

**Published: 2025-09-30**

Copyright © 2025 by author(s) and Erytis Publishing Limited.  
This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).  
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



## Abstract

This study examines the formation background, classification systems, conservation practices, and contemporary challenges of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in East Asia, revealing its cultural diversity and inherent commonalities. It provides new perspectives and strategic recommendations for the preservation, inheritance, and cultural exchange of ICH. The research methodology involves analyzing geographical, historical, and socio-cultural contexts of ICH backgrounds, comparing ICH classification systems and conservation mechanisms across East Asian countries, conducting in-depth comparisons of representative ICH projects, exploring shared challenges and national-level response strategies, and mapping the interactions between ICH in historical and modern societies. The findings indicate that East Asia's ICH formation is profoundly influenced by geographical environments, historical-cultural origins, and socio-cultural concepts, with shared patterns yet distinct variations in classification systems. Representative projects demonstrate unique characteristics in performing arts, traditional crafts, and folk customs. Meanwhile, ICH faces challenges such as globalization impacts, talent shortages, and funding/technological gaps, prompting diverse national responses. This study offers innovative perspectives and practical approaches for the preservation, inheritance, and cultural exchange of ICH in East Asia.

## Keywords

East Asia; Intangible cultural heritage; Comparative studies; Preservation and inheritance; Cultural exchange

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background of intangible cultural heritage research in East Asia

The unique geographical environment, profound historical accumulation, and diverse cultural traditions of East Asia have laid a solid foundation for the formation and development of intangible cultural heritage (hereinafter referred to as "ICH"). Geographically, the region encompasses diverse landforms including mountains, plains, and oceans. This geographical configuration not only nurtured culturally dis-

tinctive regional forms but also facilitated cultural exchanges and integration within the region. Historically, East Asian countries have established close cultural connections through prolonged historical evolution. The dissemination of Confucian thought, the spread of Buddhism, and cross-regional exchanges such as the Silk Road provided crucial foundations for the trans-regional transmission of ICH. For instance, events like the Confucius Sacrificial Ceremony in Qufu, China; the Gangneung Danoje Festival in South Korea; and shrine rituals in Japan not only demonstrate the revival momentum of traditional culture under globalization but also reflect cultural consensus and specific protection strategies achieved by various countries in ICH preservation. As a core component of the East Asian cultural system, ICH serves both as an important carrier of historical memory across nations and a vital medium for maintaining contemporary social and cultural identity. In-depth research on it helps profoundly understand the diversity and inherent unity inherent in East Asian culture.

### **1.2. The significance of comparative studies on intangible heritage**

Comparative studies on East Asian intangible cultural heritage (ICH) provide crucial insights into the dynamic interplay between cultural diversity and shared values, offering both theoretical foundations and practical references for heritage preservation. The research reveals the formation mechanisms and evolutionary patterns of ICH, expanding academic perspectives. Taking China, Japan, and South Korea as case studies, these nations have demonstrated a distinctive "selective development of cultural identity" during globalization. Practically, it establishes a framework for formulating heritage protection policies that balance modernization with cultural preservation. Furthermore, this interdisciplinary field fosters cross-border cultural exchanges, enhances regional collaboration mechanisms, and creates favorable conditions for shared cultural resources and coordinated development.

### **1.3. Research Objectives and Methods**

This study systematically compares the commonalities and differences in intangible cultural heritage across East Asia across dimensions including historical formation, classification systems, conservation practices, project characteristics, contemporary challenges, and cross-cultural interactions. To achieve this, the research adopts a combined approach of literature review, case studies, and field investigations. The literature review systematically organizes the latest domestic and international research on East Asian intangible cultural heritage, with particular focus on core publications from the past five years to track academic developments. Case studies select representative heritage projects such as Noh theater in Japan, Taekwondo in South Korea, and Peking Opera in China. By analyzing their cultural essence and transmission mechanisms, the study reveals unique value systems of these heritage traditions. Field investigations will be conducted across multiple East Asian coun-

tries using participatory observation and in-depth interviews to collect first-hand data, ensuring scientific rigor throughout the research process. The integrated application of these methodologies provides solid theoretical support and empirical foundation for comparative studies of East Asian intangible cultural heritage, thereby advancing its academic development.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. Theoretical basis for the study of intangible heritage**

The core theoretical framework of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) research is primarily established upon cultural diversity theory and cultural transmission theory. Cultural diversity theory emphasizes the uniqueness of different cultures and their significance to human civilization as a whole. It posits that ICH, as a crucial carrier of cultural diversity, not only embodies the historical memory and identity of specific communities but also provides abundant resources for the sustainable development of global culture [2]. Meanwhile, cultural transmission theory focuses on the dynamic inheritance process of ICH, highlighting its adaptability and innovativeness in intergenerational transmission. This theory suggests that ICH is not static cultural heritage but rather living cultural practices, whose vitality lies in interaction and integration with contemporary society [4]. Additionally, the theory of cultural identity in a globalized context offers significant perspectives for ICH research, particularly regarding how ICH responds to external cultural impacts and achieves modernization transformation. These theories collectively form the academic foundation of ICH studies and provide guidance for subsequent empirical analyses.

### **2.2. Current status of intangible cultural heritage research in East Asia**

In recent years, East Asian countries have made significant progress in intangible cultural heritage (ICH) research, particularly accumulating rich achievements in ICH classification, protection systems, and inheritance models. In China, ICH research has gradually shifted from conceptual introduction to practical exploration, forming a policy support system represented by the "China Traditional Craft Revitalization Plan," and promoting the inheritance and development of ICH through initiatives such as university research and training programs [3]. Japan's ICH research places greater emphasis on preserving traditional skills and folk activities, with inheritance models like Noh theater and lacquerware production becoming classic cases in international ICH protection [5]. South Korea has excelled in the industrialization of ICH, successfully achieving market-oriented operations for some projects by combining traditional techniques with modern design, exemplified by the cultural branding strategy of the Gangneung Danoje Festival [1]. However, existing research still has certain limitations, particularly in cross-regional comparative studies. Although scholars have attempted to extract "East Asian experiences" from the ICH

protection practices of China, Japan, and South Korea, most related studies focus on micro-level analyses of individual countries or projects, lacking systematic comparisons at the macro level [7].

### **2.3. Research gaps and innovations**

A review of existing literature reveals significant gaps in the depth, breadth, and research methodologies of East Asian intangible cultural heritage (ICH) comparative studies. First, most research focuses on specific countries or particular types of ICH projects, failing to comprehensively reflect the diverse characteristics of East Asia [4]. Second, current studies predominantly rely on qualitative analysis without systematic quantitative comparisons, limiting the universality and scientific validity of conclusions [6]. Furthermore, existing research on preservation strategies remains policy-oriented, lacking in-depth evaluation of practical implementation outcomes. To address these gaps, this study employs multidimensional comparative analysis through literature review, case studies, and field investigations. The research systematically examines ICH formation contexts, classification frameworks, distinctive features of representative projects, and emerging challenges. Additionally, incorporating cultural ecology theory, it explores the dynamic relationship between ICH and its environmental context, providing new theoretical perspectives and practical approaches for East Asian ICH conservation and transmission.

## **3. Background of formation of intangible heritage in East Asia**

### **3.1. Geographical environmental impacts**

The diversity of East Asia's geographical environment has a profound impact on the formation and characteristic shaping of intangible cultural heritage. In mountainous regions such as southwestern China, complex high-altitude topography and steep landforms have facilitated the development of traditional crafts and folk activities, with typical examples including traditional textile craftsmanship and mountain worship rituals. In vast alluvial plains, fertile soil conditions supported the development of agricultural civilization, giving rise to systematic farming festivals and regional folk dance forms. In areas dominated by marine environments (such as Japan's coastal regions), maritime culture profoundly influenced traditional artistic expressions and festival ceremonies, specifically manifested through sea deity belief systems and fishing celebration traditions. The diversity of geographical spaces constitutes a key determinant of the diversity and local characteristics of intangible cultural heritage.

### **3.2. Historical and cultural origins**

The historical development of East Asia has laid the cultural foundation for intangible cultural heritage. Ancient trade routes, such as the Silk Road, facilitated interac-

tions among East Asian countries in technology, art, and religion, thereby promoting the dissemination and innovation of intangible cultural heritage. The spread of Confucian thought in East Asia exerted profound influence on China, Japan, and South Korea, as evidenced by cultural practices like Noh theater in Japan, tea ceremony, and the Gangneung Danoje Festival in South Korea. The dissemination of Buddhism infused new vitality into intangible cultural heritage and led to the formation of regionally distinctive forms during localization processes, such as the Dunhuang murals in China, Nara sculptures in Japan, and Gyeongju Grottoes in South Korea. Cultural exchanges not only enriched the connotations of intangible cultural heritage but also laid a solid foundation for its subsequent development.

### **3.3. Socio-cultural perspectives**

Traditional social and cultural concepts in East Asia, particularly Confucian thought and religious beliefs, have profoundly shaped the essence and forms of intangible cultural heritage. The Confucian emphasis on "li" (ritual propriety) permeates East Asia's intangible cultural heritage: Chinese Peking Opera conveys Confucian ethics through stylized performances; Japanese archery embodies the "truth, goodness, beauty" ethos, blending Confucian cultivation with Shinto ritual traditions; Korean traditional bowing emphasizes ceremonial protocols, reflecting the fusion of Confucian rituals and shamanic practices. Additionally, religious practices like Taoist philosophy, shrine rituals, and shamanistic beliefs further enrich the forms and cultural significance of intangible heritage. Social and cultural concepts form the core driving force behind the creation of East Asian intangible cultural heritage, fundamentally determining its intrinsic spiritual qualities and external expressions.[9]

## **4. Comparison of representative items of intangible cultural heritage in East Asia**

### **4.1. Performing arts category of intangible cultural heritage**

#### **4.1.1. Noh**

Noh, a crown jewel of Japan's traditional performing arts, originated in the late 14th century through the creative fusion of Kanamichi and Shi Ami, father and son, building upon traditional monkey dance (yūgaku). Characterized by highly stylized dance movements, elaborate mask designs, and minimalist musical accompaniment, this art form emphasizes conveying profound emotions and philosophical depth through symbolic gestures and symbolic settings. Its costumes and props feature distinctive features: actors wear masks that not only conceal expressions but also indicate gender, age, and psychological states through specific designs; elaborate theatrical attire embodies the ultimate pursuit of traditional Japanese aesthetics. Culturally, Noh is deeply influenced by Buddhist philosophy and Shinto beliefs, with themes often focusing on the cycle of life and death and spiritual redemption, re-

flecting the Japanese people's unique contemplation of life's meaning [8]. In terms of transmission mechanisms, Noh primarily relies on a hereditary family system where professional "Noh musicians" teach the craft. While this model preserves artistic authenticity, it faces challenges of limited inheritance scope in contemporary society.



**Figure 1.** Noh

#### 4.1.2. Korean Taekwondo

Taekwondo, originating from the traditional martial arts system of the Korean Peninsula, has undergone a paradigm shift from ancient Hwarangdo to modern competitive sports. Its technical characteristics are defined by rapid and fierce kicking techniques complemented by agile hand defense skills, embodying the dialectical unity of power and agility. Competition rules emphasize fair combat principles, ensuring safety and entertainment through a quantitative scoring system and protective gear. As an intangible cultural heritage, taekwondo not only represents physical skills but also carries core values of Korean culture, including etiquette norms, hierarchical awareness, and moral self-discipline. These cultural elements are concretely manifested in ceremonial bowing rituals during competitions and ethical education during daily practice. In terms of inheritance systems, taekwondo relies on school education, professional dojos, and international organizations to form a global dissemination network, though this process risks diluting local cultural characteristics.



**Figure 2.** Korean Taekwondo

#### 4.1.3. Chinese Peking Opera

Peking Opera refers to the exemplary form of traditional Chinese opera, which took shape during the Qianlong period of the Qing Dynasty and organically integrated the artistic essence of diverse regional operas such as Kunqu, Qin Opera, and Han Tune. Its vocal system is primarily based on the Pi-Huang style, with melodies combining graceful elegance and robust vigor; the performance paradigm comprehensively presents character traits and narrative progression through the four core skills of "singing, reciting, acting, and martial arts." The art of facial makeup constitutes a distinctive symbol of Peking Opera, relying on color symbolism and stylized schematic systems to represent characters' social identities, personality traits, and life trajectories, having evolved into an important visual code in China's traditional culture. The cultural connotations of Peking Opera are deeply rooted in Confucian ethical systems, often drawing material from historical narratives and mythological legends to convey core values such as loyalty, filial piety, integrity, and righteousness. However, in the contemporary cultural ecosystem, Peking Opera faces structural challenges including an aging audience and shrinking market space, requiring systematic intervention for its inheritance. In recent years, the Chinese government has strengthened protection efforts through measures such as establishing intangible cultural heritage transmission bases and hosting Peking Opera festivals, yet it still needs to explore innovative development mechanisms that align with the new era's context.



**Figure 3.** Chinese Peking Opera

## **4.2. Traditional craft category of intangible heritage**

### **4.2.1. Japanese traditional handicrafts**

Japanese traditional handicrafts have earned international acclaim for their exquisite craftsmanship and unique aesthetic philosophy, with lacquerware and kimono-making standing out as the most representative traditions. Japanese lacquerware boasts a long history, primarily crafted from natural raw lacquer through dozens of intricate processes. The finished products exhibit a delicate luster and varied textural effects [5]. Their material selection is exceptionally meticulous, often incorporating wood, metal, and shell for decorative inlays, profoundly reflecting the Japanese tradition's reverence for the authentic beauty of natural materials. Kimono-making emphasizes fabric selection and pattern design, achieving perfect harmony between human form and garment structure through precise three-dimensional cutting and elaborate hand-sewing techniques. From an aesthetic perspective, Japanese traditional crafts champion simplicity and understated elegance, embodying the "wabi-sabi" philosophy that celebrates life's essence in imperfection. In terms of skill transmission, the apprenticeship system allows experienced artisans to directly teach their craft to successors. While this model ensures continuity of core techniques, it also faces challenges such as declining interest among younger practitioners.

### **4.2.2. Traditional Korean papermaking**

Korean traditional papermaking originated from ancient Chinese papermaking techniques and has evolved over time to form a unique process. Its raw materials primarily consist of natural plant fibers such as paper mulberry bark and bamboo, which are processed through core procedures including soaking, steaming, pounding, and papermaking to produce paper with characteristics like flexibility and excellent water absorption. The product features of this craft are reflected in its natural and eco-friendly attributes, making it widely used in calligraphy and painting creation, ancient book restoration, and related fields. However, with the widespread adoption of modern industrial papermaking technologies, Korean traditional pa-

permaking now faces severe challenges such as shrinking market demand and a shortage of skilled inheritors. To address these difficulties, the South Korean government has implemented multiple conservation measures, including establishing a special cultural heritage fund and organizing traditional craft training programs, aiming to effectively preserve this precious cultural heritage during the modernization process.

#### **4.2.3. China Traditional Paper Cutting**

Chinese traditional paper-cutting is widely distributed across multiple ethnic groups and regions, featuring diverse styles and rich thematic expressions. Geographically, northern paper-cutting is characterized by bold and unrestrained styles, often using red paper to convey festive themes; southern paper-cutting exhibits delicate and refined artistic features, particularly excelling in depicting intricate details such as figures and flowers [10]. In terms of craftsmanship, its techniques encompass monochrome paper-cutting, multi-color paper-cutting, and both positive and negative carving methods, fully demonstrating the creativity of traditional Chinese folk art. The themes of paper-cutting are closely tied to folk culture, such as the window decorations posted during Spring Festival and the "happiness" characters used in weddings, embodying people's aspirations for a better life. In terms of inheritance and development, Chinese traditional paper-cutting has gained widespread attention in recent years. Governments at all levels have promoted its preservation, inheritance, and innovation through establishing intangible cultural heritage protection bases and organizing community-based inheritance activities. Meanwhile, paper-cutting art has gradually been integrated into modern design fields, rejuvenating with new vitality.

### **4.3. Intangible cultural heritage of folk customs**

#### **4.3.1. Japanese Shrine Rituals**

Shrine rituals in Japan form an essential component of traditional culture, characterized by rigorous procedures and rich symbolic meanings. Core rituals like hand purification, wine offering, and prayer aim to express devotion to deities and seek blessings[1]. From a cultural symbolism perspective, these ceremonies profoundly embody the essence of Shinto beliefs which are worship of nature deities and reverence for ancestral spirits. Functionally, they serve not only as religious practices but also as vital bonds that strengthen community cohesion through collective participation, significantly enhancing social identity. During modernization, while some rituals have been simplified to adapt to fast-paced lifestyles, the core cultural values they carry remain effectively preserved.



**Figure 4.** Japanese Shrine Rituals

#### **4.3.2. Gangneung Danoje Festival, South Korea**

The Gangneung Danoje Festival in South Korea originated from the ancient Danoje customs of China, evolving through localization into a unique folk cultural system. Its activities encompass diverse forms such as sacrificial rituals, folk dances, and traditional games, attracting numerous tourists and local residents to participate. Culturally, this festival not only commemorates ancestors but also serves as an important vehicle for inheriting and promoting traditional Korean culture, profoundly reflecting the Korean nation's philosophical understanding of natural rhythms and life cycles. In terms of inheritance mechanisms, the South Korean government has promoted the sustainable transmission of Danoje through legislative safeguards and financial support measures, elevating it to a core component of Korean cultural symbols. However, how to maintain its cultural authenticity in a globalized context remains a critical issue that urgently needs addressing.



**Figure 5.** Gangneung Danoje Festival

### 4.3.3. China Spring Festival customs

As the most representative folk practices in the traditional cultural lineage, China's Spring Festival customs encompass diverse rituals such as pasting spring couplets, setting off firecrackers, and having the New Year's Eve dinner, embodying cultural metaphors of bidding farewell to the old and welcoming the new, as well as family reunions [2]. Their cultural essence reflects the profound emotional attachment of the Chinese people to family ethics, while also containing reverence for nature and aspirations for life's blessings. Influenced by vast geographical differences, Spring Festival customs exhibit distinct regional variations: northern regions emphasize dumpling feasts and ice lantern displays, whereas southern regions predominantly feature rice cake-making and dragon/lion dance performances. In terms of inheritance and innovation, contemporary Spring Festival customs retain traditional elements while integrating digital expressions like online greetings and electronic red envelopes, highlighting the evolving trend of cultural integration with modern technology.

## 5. Classification system and protection system of intangible cultural heritage in East Asia

### 5.1. Comparison of the classifications of intangible cultural heritage

The classification systems of intangible cultural heritage in East Asian countries exhibit significant differences due to variations in their cultural backgrounds and policy orientations. China, based on the Intangible Cultural Heritage Law of the People's Republic of China, categorizes it into ten major types including folk literature and traditional music, with a system design emphasizing comprehensiveness. Japan's Cultural Properties Protection Act defines intangible cultural heritage as three categories including intangible cultural properties, featuring a highly abstract classification framework. South Korea's classification system encompasses performing arts and other categories, combining holistic and specialized characteristics. Although all countries adhere to the basic principles of cultural heritage protection, their operational practices diverge due to traditional differences, resulting in distinct approaches.

### 5.2. Inventory of intangible cultural heritage protection systems

East Asian countries have established a multi-level safeguard system through legislative, administrative mechanisms, and financial guarantees. China promulgated the Intangible Cultural Heritage Law in 2011, establishing a four-tier catalog system at national, provincial, municipal, and county levels, while implementing systematic revitalization plans. Japan has enforced the Cultural Properties Protection Law since 1950, adopting a government-led model supplemented by special funding support and an inheritor identification mechanism. South Korea established a dedicated

Cultural Properties Agency through the Cultural Properties Protection Law, focusing on promoting the dynamic inheritance and industrial integration of intangible cultural heritage.

### **5.3. Analysis of similarities and differences in protection regimes**

In terms of conservation philosophy, China emphasizes the balance between inheritance and development, Japan focuses on authentic preservation, while South Korea strives for a dynamic equilibrium between preservation and development. In terms of implementation strength, China demonstrates the characteristic of extensive coverage, Japan exhibits the refined nature of management mechanisms, and South Korea highlights the flexibility and innovation of measures. Regarding social participation, China prioritizes the coordination of social forces, Japan practices a multi-stakeholder co-governance model, and South Korea focuses on enhancing public awareness and participation. These differences essentially stem from the deep interaction between national cultural traditions and modern development strategies.

## **6. Common challenges and response strategies for intangible cultural heritage in East Asia**

### **6.1. Common challenges**

#### **6.1.1. The Impact of Globalization**

The acceleration of globalization has significantly impacted East Asia's intangible cultural heritage (ICH). The widespread dissemination of Western culture has led to a shift in the aesthetic values of young people, diminishing the practical demand for traditional crafts. Specifically, traditional craft products such as Japanese lacquerware and kimono have been replaced by industrialized goods; South Korea's traditional papermaking technique faces challenges due to losing market competitiveness; while China's paper-cutting art confronts survival crises due to shrinking application fields. There is an urgent need to explore innovative pathways for effectively integrating ICH into modern life.

#### **6.1.2. Inheritance talent gap**

The widespread lack of interest in intangible cultural heritage among young people has caused a chain break in its transmission. Young practitioners tend to choose careers with higher economic returns, while the intangible cultural heritage sector lacks appeal due to relatively low economic benefits. As a result, Chinese Peking Opera and paper-cutting skills are on the verge of extinction; traditional Korean martial arts are declining; and the inheritance of Japanese Noh theater faces severe challenges. This talent gap poses a serious threat to regional cultural diversity.

#### **6.1.3. Funding shortfalls and technological backwardness**

Insufficient funding and lagging technological means constitute the key constraints in the protection of intangible cultural heritage. The digital documentation and preservation of intangible cultural heritage projects heavily rely on sustained financial investment, yet current funding falls far short of meeting demands. The application scope of advanced conservation technologies remains limited: systematic documentation is generally lacking for intangible cultural heritage projects in remote areas of China; the acquisition costs of high-end recording equipment are prohibitively expensive; and the absence of cross-sector collaboration mechanisms all pose obstacles to the long-term effective preservation of intangible cultural heritage.

## **6.2. Strategies for intangible cultural heritage protection in East Asia**

### **6.2.1. Japanese protection strategies**

Japan has established a comprehensive legal framework for intangible cultural heritage (ICH) protection through legislation, including the Cultural Properties Protection Act, which establishes a government-led system with active participation from civil society. The country places particular emphasis on educational inheritance pathways for ICH. By integrating ICH projects into national education systems (such as incorporating Noh theater instruction into classrooms) and implementing social practice programs, it cultivates cultural identity and practical skills among younger generations through multiple dimensions. These efforts have yielded remarkable conservation outcomes.

### **6.2.2. South Korean protection strategies**

South Korea is actively advancing the industrial development of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) by implementing targeted policies to facilitate its deep integration with modern cultural industries, such as transforming the Gangneung Danoje Festival into a distinctive cultural brand. The country has also innovated educational inheritance models by incorporating Taekwondo into school curricula and establishing international competition promotion mechanisms. However, challenges remain: excessive commercialization risks diluting the authentic cultural essence of ICH, while financial support in remote regions still falls short.

### **6.2.3. China Protection Strategy**

China has provided a legal basis for the protection of intangible cultural heritage by promulgating the "Intangible Cultural Heritage Law of the People's Republic of China," and implemented the "Traditional Craft Revitalization Plan" to systematically cultivate a succession of inheritors (such as promoting the integration of paper-cutting art with modern design concepts). Significant achievements have been made in digital preservation, establishing a nationwide database system for intangible cultural heritage and applying technologies like virtual reality for innovative exhibitions (such as the digital archiving project for Peking Opera art). Its conserva-

tion strategies combine innovation with practical effectiveness.

## **7. Exchange and interaction of intangible cultural heritage in East Asia**

### **7.1. Intangible cultural heritage exchange in the historical period**

East Asia, based on geographical proximity and cultural similarities, has historically formed a close network of intangible cultural heritage exchanges. In ancient times, through channels such as diplomatic missions, commercial activities, and religious dissemination, cultural forms like Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism were introduced to Japan and Korea, profoundly influencing local social customs and artistic practices; Japanese lacquerware craftsmanship was notably inspired by the techniques of China's Tang Dynasty; while the Gangneung Danoje Festival in South Korea shares deep historical roots with China's Dragon Boat Festival. Such historical exchanges effectively promoted the continuity and cross-regional dissemination of intangible cultural heritage, laying a historical foundation for contemporary conservation efforts.

### **7.2. Intergenerational transmission of intangible cultural heritage in modern society**

The globalization process has significantly enhanced the interaction of intangible cultural heritage in East Asia. International cultural exchange initiatives, such as the "China-Japan-Korea Intangible Cultural Heritage Comparative Studies Academic Symposium", have become crucial platforms for promoting regional cooperation declarations. Meanwhile, digital technologies represented by virtual reality and documentary production have effectively expanded the international influence of intangible cultural heritage. These innovations not only increased its visibility but also opened new possibilities for cross-border collaboration.

### **7.3. The impact and significance of communication and interaction**

The cultural exchanges and interactions surrounding intangible heritage have enriched the cultural essence of participating nations, fostering cultural integration and identity-building. By incorporating foreign cultural elements to drive innovation (such as Japanese Noh theater's adaptation of Chinese opera techniques), these exchanges enhance regional understanding, mitigate homogenization trends, and significantly promote cultural diversity. They also strengthen people's sense of cultural belonging while promoting social harmony. These multifaceted effects hold vital importance for establishing a cohesive cultural community within East Asia.

## **8. Summary and outlook**

### **8.1. Research Summary**

This study systematically examines and compares intangible cultural heritage in East Asia, exploring their commonalities and differences across development contexts, conservation frameworks, project characteristics, challenges, and regional interactions. Representative examples like Noh theater from Japan, Taekwondo from South Korea, and Peking Opera from China exemplify profound cultural depth and artistic value. Traditional crafts such as lacquerware production, papermaking, and paper-cutting showcase exquisite craftsmanship and ethnic aesthetics. Key challenges include risks of cultural homogenization under globalization, generational gaps among inheritors, and insufficient funding for sustained preservation. Countries demonstrate markedly different response strategies. Regional exchanges have effectively promoted cultural integration and cross-cultural identity enhancement, laying the foundation for collaborative development mechanisms.

## 8.2. Research Outlook

Future research should prioritize the application of digital technologies in documenting, analyzing, and disseminating intangible cultural heritage. By integrating multidisciplinary theoretical perspectives to establish a comprehensive research framework, we can expand the scope and depth of cross-border comparative studies while enhancing practical integration mechanisms between intangible cultural heritage and rural revitalization initiatives, as well as cultural and creative industries. Advancing these research areas will provide crucial academic foundations and practical references for global efforts in protecting intangible cultural heritage.

## Reference

- [1] Lü Bin & Zhou Xiaohong. Revival and Transformation: Intangible Cultural Heritage and Its Modern Responses in China, Japan, and South Korea [J]. *Academician*, 2019(6):163-170.
- [2] Zhou Xing; Huang Jie. Anthropological Studies on China's Cultural Heritage (Part II) [J]. *China Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 2021, (6):27-40.
- [3] Liu Yu; Tan Jingjing; Liang Xiaofang. Reflections on the Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage Crafts in the Context of Rural Revitalization—— A Case Study of Shuikou Town, Kaiping City, Guangdong Province [J]. *Jin Gu Cultural Innovation*, 2021, (18):65-66.
- [4] Gao Yanfang. Retrial of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage Research for 20 Years [J]. *Theoretical Monthly*, 2024, (6):105-114.
- [5] Zhong Chaofang and Lu Jiaoyang. Comparative Study of Historical Preservation and Policy Frameworks for Handicraft Cultures in China and Japan [J]. *Cultural Heritage*, 2021(1):126-135.
- [6] Su Faxiang. A Preliminary Discussion on Research Methods in Intangible Cultural Heritage Studies [J]. *China Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 2024, (1):108-111.
- [7] Vice President Tan Hong led a delegation to attend the Symposium on Comparative Academic Research of Intangible Cultural Heritage among China, Japan, and South Korea and the Third Symposium on the Development of Cultural Heritage Studies in Chinese Universities [J]. *Journal of Chongqing University of Liberal Arts (Social Sciences Edition)*, 2011,30(5): F0002-F0002.
- [8] Wang Wei. "Nu" and "Xi" Connect with Subtle Wisdom, Exploring the Eastern World's Many Doubts—Review of "A Comparative Study on Chinese Nu Drama and Traditional

- East Asian Dramas" [J]. China Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2022, (5):122-128.
- [9] Hu Mi. The Inheritance and Innovation of Archery Art under the Perspective of Globalization —— A Comparative Study Based on Traditional Bow Culture in Three East Asian Countries [J]. Journal of Shanghai University of Sport, 2024,48(6):70-80.
- [10] Qiao Xiaoguang. Facts and Values: The Path of Intangible Cultural Heritage to Education —— New Discipline Construction of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Period of Civilizational Transformation [J]. China Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2024, (2):12-25.