

## **Research on the Integrity Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Its Cultural Space - Take Paper-Cutting Art as an Example**

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**Abstract:** Paper cutting art represents a significant aspect of China's traditional folk culture. Particularly noteworthy is the paper cutting carving tradition in Mianyang, Hubei, which synthesizes artistic styles from both northern and southern regions while also embodying the cultural heritage of Chu. This amalgamation has cultivated distinctive artistic traits, elucidating the unique beauty inherent in Mianyang's paper cutting carving. With a rich historical lineage and profound artistic merit, Mianyang's paper cutting tradition dates back to the late Ming and early Qing dynasties and has earned recognition on the United Nations Cultural Heritage List. Paper cutting serves as a vibrant expression of life, rooted in and reflective of diverse human experiences across different locales. Its distinct characteristics offer insights into regional customs, environments, and livelihoods, thereby underscoring the rich tapestry of folk traditions and geographic disparities. This paper delineates the humanistic narrative behind Yang carving paper cuttings, delves into its technical intricacies, patterns, and artistic nuances, while also outlining its applications and prospects for preservation and development as an intangible cultural heritage. By exploring the cultural resonance and artistic evolution of traditional paper cutting, which encompasses both Yang carving and contemporary expressions, this study underscores the imperative of inheritance and innovation within the realm of intangible cultural heritage. The synthesis of these elements carries profound significance in elucidating the cultural connotations and artistic attributes that define this enduring tradition.

**Keywords:** Intangible Cultural Heritage; Mianyang Carved Paper Cutting; Inheritance and Innovation; Folk Craft

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Paper-cutting is deeply rooted in the extensive history of Chinese national folk art, representing one of its earliest forms. Serving not only as

a decorative medium but also as a cherished cultural conduit, paper-cutting embodies the collective wisdom and cultural essence of the populace, reflecting the diverse tapestry of folk customs, emotions, and beliefs. With its distribution spanning both northern and southern regions of China, Chinese paper-cut art bears the imprint of varied local customs and cultures, making it the nation's foremost intangible cultural heritage.

Given its significance, the study of Mianyang carving paper cutting, born in Mianyang City, Hubei Province, is both urgent and essential for preserving this vital facet of folk art (Fu, 2019; Heping & Xuchen, 2019). The tradition of Mianyang carving paper cutting stands as a highly representative element within the realm of Xiantao's traditional folk cultures, holding profound significance for scholarly investigation. Beyond its rich cultural underpinnings, Mianyang carved paper-cutting underscores a deliberate emphasis on both ethos and craftsmanship, embodying a distinctly human-centred cultural heritage.

In contemporary society, characterized by rapid development and multifaceted natural and cultural diversity, the preservation and evolution of such traditions emerge as paramount imperatives for fostering natural and social harmony. Strengthening the inheritance and innovation of national culture has thus emerged as a primary agenda within the broader framework of enhancing China's soft power through cultural construction.

The dual nature of being both a crisis and an opportunity underscores the evolving dynamics within the landscape of intangible cultural heritage protection, where traditional folk crafts like Mianyang carving paper cutting increasingly garner attention and recognition (ARAL, 2018; Shuwen, 2023). Consequently, prioritizing the development, inheritance, and preservation of intangible cultural heritage, particularly Mianyang carving paper-cut, is crucial. Emphasizing problem-solving and enhancing the inheritance and development of Mianyang carving paper-cut art should be the focal point.

Due to the pervasive influence of science and technology, numerous venerable traditional cultures have receded from public attention. Presently, there is a diminished focus on the advancement of paper-cut art, with many manual artistic practices facing obsolescence due to a confluence of factors such as technological progress and enhanced living standards. Consequently, manual paper-cutting has gradually waned from societal relevance, yielding to increased mechanization and industrial production. The enduring traditional culture of the Chinese nation, forged through the trials of time, demands conscientious preservation.

Only through effective safeguarding can these cultural legacies continue to enrich the vast expanse of this land. Integrating paper-cutting into daily

life and fostering wider participation in this art form is imperative for its sustained development and integration into contemporary culture (Lennon, 2016; Némethy et al., 2016).

This investigation pertains to the examination of paper-cut creation and related phenomena, encompassing the developmental trajectory, evolution, and utilitarian applications of paper-cut art. The study aims to delineate the artistic value inherent in paper-cut art, with a focus on its expansive and profound representation within traditional art innovation and development. Drawing inspiration from folk art, particularly within the context of paper-cutting, serves as a transformative catalyst, contributing significantly to the enrichment of local cultural development and engendering a heightened artistic connotation.

The contemporary landscape presents formidable challenges to traditional handicrafts, navigating through a milieu characterized by complexity and numerous opportunities. In this dynamic milieu, adaptation becomes imperative as circumstances evolve, reflecting the inherent dynamism and adaptability in response to prevailing conditions (Hufford, 2016). Delving into the artistic merits of Mianyang carved paper-cutting not only holds intrinsic value but also bears relevance as a point of reference for innovation in other traditional handicrafts. Popularizing Mianyang carving paper-cut contributes to the sustainable preservation of intangible cultural heritage.

This study aims to scrutinize the current state of protection, inheritance, and viability of Mianyang carved paper cutting, examining its modes of inheritance and proposing thoughtful suggestions. The objective is to address challenges faced by Mianyang carving paper cutting and deliberate on its prospective developmental trajectory, thereby fostering the enhanced cultivation of this esteemed traditional cultural practice.

To enhance public understanding of Mianyang carving and paper cutting as prominent folk handicrafts in Hubei province, a deeper exploration is imperative, particularly elucidating their form and conceptual underpinnings amid scientific and technological advancements. The multifaceted dissemination of knowledge pertaining to intangible cultural heritage and traditional folk culture is crucial for revitalizing these traditional folk handicrafts.

The theoretical framework of Mianyang carved paper-cutting, encompassing its development and inheritance, offers a nuanced foundation for future advancements. The unique allure of Mianyang carved paper-cutting, representing a convergence of northern and southern paper-cutting traditions, necessitates concerted efforts in safeguarding and

promoting its inheritance and development. However, the challenge lies in the scarcity of artisans who truly grasp the essence of this folk traditional culture. The oral transmission of knowledge serves as the predominant teaching method, presenting a noteworthy aspect to be addressed in the context of inheritance-related issues (Liang, 2019; Vecco, 2020), so the handicraft is likely to be lost.

In the context of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, due consideration must be given to the protection of its inheritors, and there is a pressing need to expedite the cultivation of new successors. This study focuses on the research object of the inheritance, protection, and development of carved paper cutting in Hubei Province (da Silva, 2018; Djimantoro et al., 2020). This study employs field investigations to acquire data, conducting analyses on the artistic attributes, cultural significance, development, and conservation aspects of paper cutting.

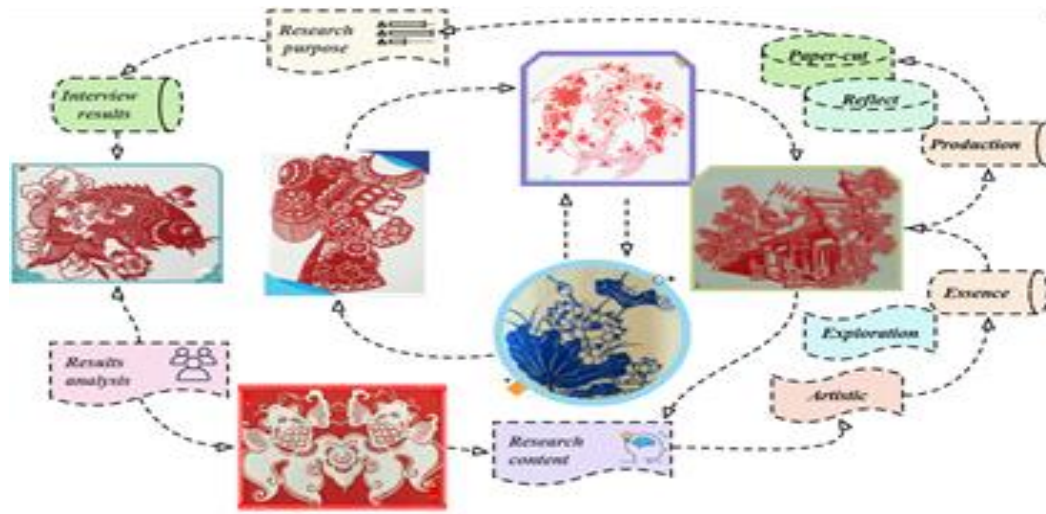
It delineates the distinctive emotional and regional features inherent in this intangible cultural heritage. Furthermore, it serves as a guiding reference for the preservation and advancement of analogous handmade intangible cultural heritage. The aim is to ascertain a viable pathway for the integration of intangible cultural heritage into contemporary life, fostering sustainable development within modern society (Bodle et al., 2018; Lin & Qiqi, 2019).

## 2. INHERITANCE AND PROTECTION OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

### 2.1 Survival Status of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Despite China's wealth of intangible cultural heritage, the protection efforts have commenced later than in some other countries, resulting in relative weaknesses. Intangible cultural heritage holds not only economic and historical value but also social significance, particularly in traditional craftsmanship. Despite the challenges posed by mechanization and industrialization, there is a growing realization of the importance of traditional crafts in cultural identity and national spirit. While late to intangible cultural heritage protection, there is a notable emphasis on safeguarding it. Folk paper-cutting has gained academic recognition with regular competitions, publications of inheritors' works, and increased research output. However, challenges and issues persist, reflecting a nuanced view of the ongoing efforts in intangible cultural heritage protection. Figure 1 illustrates various forms of paper-cutting and their

interrelations (Mao, 2023; Zhang et al., 2023).



**Figure 1:** Traditional Arts and Crafts Drawings

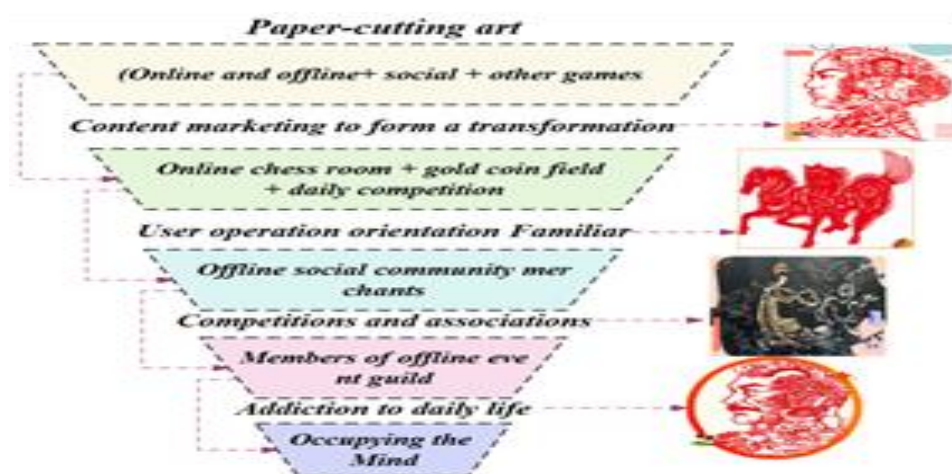
"Traditional arts and crafts exhibit notable historical, regional, and inheritance characteristics. The evolution and refinement of China's traditional arts and crafts have been continual, necessitating both autonomous skill development and adaptation to the prevailing social milieu. Despite the ongoing progress of Mianyang carved paper cutting, it confronts challenges that warrant careful consideration. Historically, paper cutting endured perceptions of obsolescence, with contemporary decorative preferences favouring fresh flowers and alternative materials. The practice of affixing flowers to windows during the New Year persisted among a limited number of rural inhabitants." (Jinglan & De, 2018; Yuan-Yuan et al., 2017). Presently, the influence of Mianyang carving and paper-cutting has progressively waned, posing a critical challenge for the succession of Mianyang carved paper-cut and the authentic preservation and transmission of its cultural heritage. Table 1 delineates the multifaceted developmental trajectory of Mianyang paper-cut from diverse perspectives. The existing developmental patterns underscore the exigency of identifying a fitting and judicious path for both inheritance and innovative progress. To devise a scientifically grounded and rational solution, a comprehensive comprehension of the intricate manifestations within this fluctuating trend becomes imperative. Protection of intangible cultural heritage necessitates not only external safeguards but also the preservation of its cultural connotations (Di et al., 2018; Dong et al., 2016), that is, the protection of the inheritors. In the course of the investigation, a noteworthy observation was made concerning the pronounced issue of inadequate inheritance among the designated inheritors, highlighting the imperative need for emphasis in the ensuing protection endeavours.

Table 1: Intangible Cultural Heritage Classification Table

<b>Performing Art</b>	<b>Social Practice and Customs</b>	<b>Knowledge and Practice</b>	<b>Traditional Handicraft</b>	<b>Words and Literature</b>
Drama	Festival celebration	Agricultural practice	Embroidery	Traditional stories
Dance	Community solidarity activities	Medical knowledge	Ceramic production	Poems and songs
Music	Ritual and custom	Celestial observation	Wood carving	Oral tradition
Traditional Opera	Wedding custom	Digital skills	Spinning and weaving	Proverbs and slang
Acrobatics	Funeral ceremony	Password and encoding	Metal casting	Traditional lyrics and songs

Throughout the visit, it was discerned that a predominant demographic among the practitioners of Mianyang carving and paper-cutting art comprises individuals in the elderly age bracket (Chengzhou, 2017; Zheng-Wei, 2017). The current physical condition exhibits improvement compared to the past; however, artisans contend with inherent limitations, significantly impacting the seamless transmission of their craft to successive generations. This predicament, if addressed, could potentially enhance the enduring trajectory of folk handicrafts. The initial practitioners of carved paper cutting were predominantly individuals from rural backgrounds, primarily farmers and women with comparatively lower educational attainment. Rooted in the robust folk life characteristic of the Chu style, their understanding of Mianyang carved paper cutting's artistic value and profound significance was constrained by the absence of appropriate avenues for comprehensive comprehension (Bing-Kui, 2019; Xinxian, 2016). Traditional folk handicrafts, constrained by certain traditional notions, embody people's spiritual perspectives and life pursuits, representing ancestral technical skills. The transmission of technologies and production conveniences is hindered, limiting communication scope. Non-heritage crafts pose greater difficulty in learning, especially those involving intricate traditional processes. This extended and challenging learning process, coupled with limited communication scope, contributes to incomplete teaching to the next generation and poses a risk to the craft's continuation. In the contemporary industrial era, traditional handicrafts yield modest economic returns, prompting many craftsmen to shift to other industries for livelihood. The younger generation shows a preference for modern careers, displaying limited interest in appreciating and inheriting traditional crafts (Némethy et al., 2016; Psychogyios & Poulakis,

2018). In recent times, the Mianyang Carving Flowers and Paper-cutting Research Institute has proactively engaged in exploration initiatives. Concurrently, regional middle schools have sought the expertise of paper-cutting artists, inviting them to instruct courses and conduct various paper-cutting interest training programs (Goemaere et al., 2021; Karakul, 2016). Nevertheless, these endeavours primarily focus on cultivating interest, with a relatively brief study duration. Consequently, the majority of participants lack the opportunity to delve deeply into the history and culture of Mianyang carving paper cutting, hindering a comprehensive understanding. The limited exposure also poses challenges for students to fully grasp the essence of the skills and culture, precluding them from attaining the status of a proficient paper-cutting artist. While these initiatives contribute to an enhanced awareness of Mianyang carving paper cutting, they do not substantially elevate its inheritance rate. Regrettably, successive generations of Mianyang carving and paper-cutting inheritors have gradually diminished, leading to the erosion of the people's most sincere and primitive artistic spirit (Hua, 2019; Jimura & Wise, 2020). Presently, there is a notable aging trend among folk paper-cut artists. Traditional artisans, facing advanced age, encounter challenges in cultivating genuinely qualified inheritors for the art of folk paper-cut within their lifetime. Figure 2 illustrates exemplary works by traditional craftsmen.



**Figure 2:** Economic Chart of Traditional Handicrafts

## 2.2 Strategies for the Protection and Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage

The safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, specifically in the realm of Mianyang carving and paper cutting, is achieved through diverse modalities. The exploration of future developmental trajectories for intangible cultural heritage is integral. Record preservation, involving the



systematic storage of visual information in traditional graphic and digital media archives, serves as an effective means of conservation. The curation of a comprehensive archive, comprising sorted and collected Mianyang carved paper-cut works, alongside further interviews for enhanced understanding, facilitates the publication of pertinent literature and video records. This resource archive contributes to a thorough documentation of the cultural tradition of Mianyang carved paper cutting, bolstering local influence and garnering increased attention and recognition. Display protection, manifested through exclusive exhibition halls showcasing the unique features of Xiantao and folk culture in carving and paper cutting, allows for closer appreciation of the art. Visitors gain a nuanced understanding, fostering greater social attention and comprehension, thereby cultivating potential inheritors. Table 2 demonstrates that multimedia enables more extensive browsing and viewing experiences. For instance, during a visit to Ma Youpu, a paper-cutting master, scanning a QR code provides access to a collection of works, transcending offline digital media and expanding the repertoire of diversified and interactive display methods.

Table 2: Intangible Culture Protection Strategy Table

<b>Formulate Protection Laws and Policies</b>	<b>Organize Cultural Festivals and Activities</b>	<b>Training and Education Programs</b>	<b>Financial Support and Donations</b>	<b>International Cooperation and Exchanges</b>
Establish a Legal Framework Promulgate Protection Policies	Cultural exhibitions and performances Traditional craft workshop	Training of inheritors and craftsmen School and community education	Government funding  Private and corporate contributions	Share your experience with other countries Transnational cultural exchange project
Establish Cultural Institutions	Teen activities and camps	Study and data collection	The establishment of a cultural fund	Participate in international organization activities
Formulate Industry Standards Protect Intangible Cultural Heritage Skills	Artists communicate with inheritors Music and dance competitions	Network and the online resources Establish an intangible cultural heritage protection database	Crowdfundin g for cultural projects Local government funding	Cross-cultural dialogue and cooperation In collaboration with UNESCO



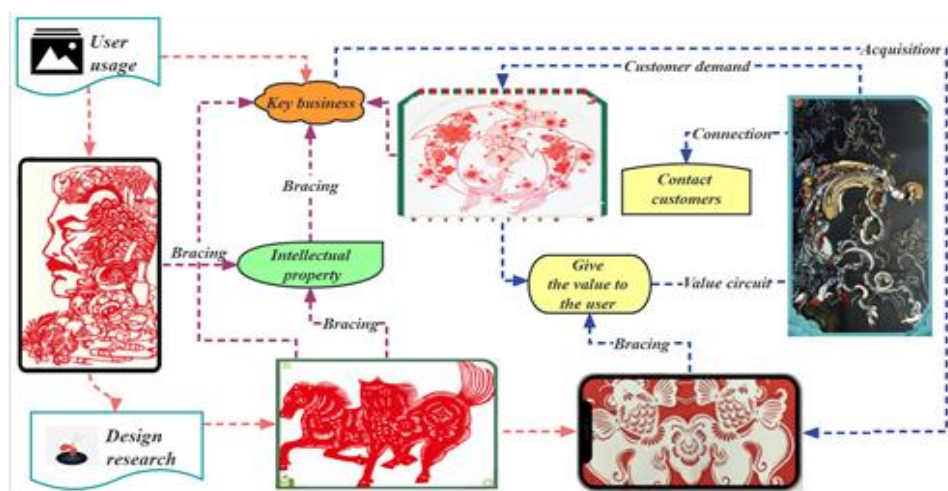
The exhibition and preservation of Mianyang carved paper-cut encompass more than static collections, dynamically fostering the promotion and inheritance of paper-cutting cultural heritage. Interactive community events, featuring paper-cutting art teachers, on-site displays, teaching sessions, floor visits, organized learning, community activities, paper-cutting lectures, and themed competitions, collectively cultivate active community engagement and participation. This approach results in a positive and effective inheritance and protection outcome. Regularly scheduled activities by community neighbourhood committees integrate Mianyang carving paper-cutting into street and community construction, facilitating its assimilation into everyday life. Drawing from Mumford's discussion of the "museum mission" in Chapter 7 of "The City in History," museums serve to preserve cultural essence, dissociating memories from the original culture and providing a means to confront the past. Table 3 illustrates the selective retention of cultural memories, allowing contemporary individuals to engage meaningfully with past eras and traditional life through the preservation of cultural artefacts. This form of selective display protection contributes to the safeguarding of traditional folk customs.

Table 3: Characteristics Table of Paper-Cutting

<b>Fine and Meticulous</b>	<b>Rich in Colour</b>	<b>Meaning and Symbol</b>	<b>The Fusion of Tradition and Modernity</b>	<b>Area and Style</b>
High Manual Skills	Use coloured paper	Express the culture and the faith	Combined with computer design	North and south
Unique Creativity	The colour contrast is distinct	Pass on blessings and hope	Innovative materials and technologies	The East and the West
A Variety of Patterns	Red and gold are common	Holiday and celebration decorations	3D paper cutting art	Historical development and change
Tradition and Modernity	Natural element	Home and gifts	Art exhibitions and competitions	Religion and folk beliefs
Manual Inheritance	Technical innovation	Wedding celebrations and commemorative activities	Paper cutting artist training	Cultural exchange and cooperation

Tradition imbues the present moment with nuances, implications, and significance that were absent in its historical context. The gradual decline of vitality in intangible cultural heritage results from influences such as historical circumstances and geographical factors. In China, revitalizing

intangible cultural heritage involves its reintroduction into contemporary life, necessitating a heightened awareness of the impact of traditional culture on present-day existence. Among various modes of inheritance and protection, life-oriented approaches are particularly emblematic. Through collaborative efforts, intangible cultural heritage can seamlessly integrate into contemporary life, ensuring its continued presence in real-life contexts. The contemporary urban landscape reflects the integration of leisure and entertainment projects as public cultural elements, with paper-cut exhibitions and competitions serving as prevalent cultural entertainment activities. The ubiquity of paper-cut elements in Xiantao, woven into the fabric of daily life through familiarity, inheritance, and sustained practice, underscores their status as an integral facet of traditional culture. Xiantao Forest Park employs the hollow principal device to incorporate paper-cut elements into urban public spaces, creating a distinctive cultural symbol that captivates attention. Although the materials differ from traditional forms, they manifest as unique cityscape features, leaving a lasting impression on passers-by and enhancing the festive ambiance while transmitting traditional culture. Figure 3 depicts Mianyang carved paper-cut, emphasizing its living form as a means of bringing folk paper-cut to the broader populace, thereby providing emotional sustenance in daily life.



**Figure 3:** Folk Custom and Folk Paper-Cut Picture

### 3. CULTURAL CONNOTATION AND ARTISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MIANYANG PAPER CUTTING

#### 3.1 Technological Features of Mianyang Carving and Paper Cutting

Mianyang paper cutting is characterized by its meticulous craftsmanship, featuring smooth lines and lifelike shapes. The primary material employed is rice paper, and the cutting tool is a precision paper-cutting knife. The

production process involves the initial design of the flower's appearance, followed by the meticulous carving of hollow patterns onto rice paper, employing refined techniques for adjustment. Positioned within the spectrum of various paper-cutting schools, Mianyang carved paper-cut distinguishes itself by utilizing a sharp knife on rice paper, in contrast to the more common scissor-based paper-cutting techniques. This distinction underscores the precision that a knife imparts, offering greater freedom in shaping lines and patterns than scissors. Mianyang carving paper-cut places considerable emphasis on achieving smooth lines and a balanced relationship between foreground and background, creating a sense of tranquillity within dynamic and moving artistic elements. The interplay between internal line structures and modelling elements contributes to an overall harmonious composition. The technological characteristics of Mianyang carving paper cutting are categorized into Yin carving and Yang carving. Primarily focusing on portraiture, Mianyang carving paper cutting employs both Yin and Yang engraving techniques, where large works prioritize Yin carving while Yang carving aids in detailing the external outlines. Table 4 illustrates the interdependence prevalent in most paper-cut cultures, in contrast to the distinctive interrelationship between Yin and Yang carving techniques, where Yang carving predominantly encompasses the internal areas, prioritizing outlining and establishing interconnected relationships between lines.

Table 4: Features of Mianyang Carving and Paper Cutting

<b>Exquisite Skills</b>	<b>Careful Carving</b>	<b>Traditional Pattern Elements</b>	<b>Colour and Contrast</b>	<b>Cultural Implication and Symbol</b>
Craftsman Inheritance	Fine to millimetre	Dragon, phoenix, fish	Red, gold, and black are very common	Prosperity, auspiciousness, wealth and honour
Ancient Historical Roots	Complex pattern design	Flowers and birds, leaves,	Colour hierarchy	Longevity, health, and happiness
Local Cultural Representatives	A clever combination of creative ideas	Traditional festival elements	Cold and warm colour collocation	The embodiment of traditional values
Unique Creative Ideas	Well-designed tools	Traditional architecture, landscape	Contrast with distinct colours	Etiquette and ritual expression
Handwork and Modern Technology	Unique creative process	Wedding, souvenirs	Contrast with distinct colours	Family inheritance and emotion

In preceding traditional paper-cutting practices, the predominant colour choices were predominantly pure, with limited instances of dyeing in specific areas. A distinctive technological characteristic of Mianyang carving paper-cutting lies in the synergistic application of Yin and Yang carving, incorporating Yang within Yin and vice versa, resulting in a pronounced artistic effect characterized by a conspicuous black-and-white contrast. This technique is particularly evident in the depiction of facial features, animal attributes, scales, or plant stamens, enhancing the vividness of the imagery. The utilization of small carving knives further refines the artistic execution.

The lines within the artwork exhibit variations in length and density, exemplified notably in the iconic "Eight Immortals of Mianyang." In this Mianyang paper-cut masterpiece, the intertwining of Yin and Yang carving techniques, coupled with judicious hollow design, yields a harmonious comparison between Yin and Yang. The pursuit of dynamic balance is evident, employing a scattered perspective in composition to convey three-dimensional qualities in the portrayal of planar characters. This technique results in a comprehensive and vivid depiction of characters, characterized by strong contrasts.

The integration of realistic freehand brushwork contributes to an ineffable artistic conception. Each character within the composition maintains relative independence and completeness, ensuring the continuity and elegance of the entire work. This intricate interplay between separation and unity stands as a prominent technological feature of Mianyang carving and paper-cutting.

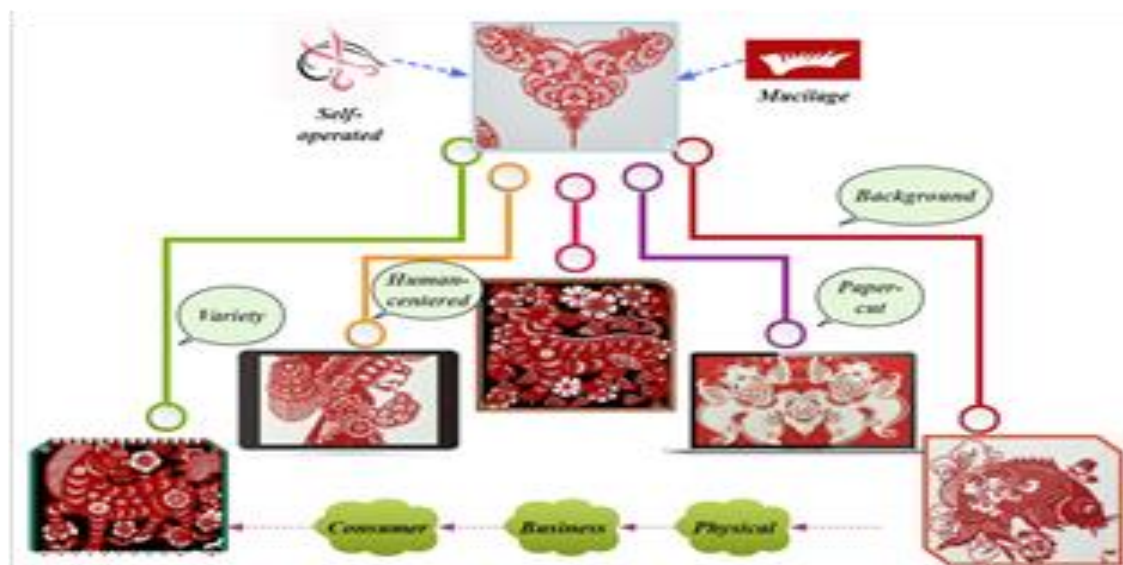
### 3.2 Regional Characteristics of Mianyang Carving and Paper-Cutting

In culturally rich China, each region's folk handicrafts, including paper-cut art, are distinctly influenced by local culture development, showcasing unique characteristics. The diverse styles of paper-cut art aim to accentuate regional cultural connotations, distinctly reflecting each area's national spirit. Mianyang Yang carved paper-cut, situated in a unique geographical location, differs from the delicate paper cuts of the south and the bold, coarse paper cuts of the north. Striking a balance between northern and southern influences, Mianyang carving emphasizes vivid compositions, knife precision, line quality, and a strong decorative freehand brushwork. This approach results in a prominent cultural connotation and artistic style, epitomizing a unique fusion of northern and southern influences with a touch of Chu culture.

Due to its distinctive geographical location, Mianyang features a variety

of carved paper-cuttings during festivals like the Spring Festival, Lantern Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, and Mid-Autumn Festival. Over thousands of years, these festivals have evolved and become integral to Mianyang's traditional folk celebrations, reflecting the city's unique topography and local customs.

Mianyang carved paper-cutting seamlessly merges with these local festivals, showcasing a distinctive fusion. The flower-like designs in Xiantao's local paper-cutting are intricately linked to traditional folk customs, drawing inspiration from the daily lives of local residents, the simple desires of farmers, mythical narratives, and common animal scenes. Figure 4 illustrates how different paper-cut designs skilfully employ exaggerated deformations to enhance artistic expression. These depictions subtly influence local perspectives, stemming from the humble visions and expectations of farmers. Consequently, the works of art crafted by folk artisans bear a simplicity that resonates with the region's unique characteristics.



**Figure 4:** Monochrome Paper-Cut Diagram

The colour scheme employed in Mianyang carved paper-cutting departs from the vibrant colour contrasts characteristic of Weixian paper cutting, predominantly utilizing monochrome cuts followed by carving. Colour choices are unrestricted, with red, black, or various other colours being prevalent. Red, specifically, is employed to evoke a festive ambiance, emanating warmth and providing a visually impactful hue. This aligns with Taoist and traditional Chinese aesthetics, emphasizing a bright and lively temperament that reflects the manual artist's straightforward and optimistic approach. The extensive use of red in Mianyang carved paper-cutting,

particularly in monochrome compositions, demands elevated modelling precision, enabling intricate carving to generate a more nuanced artistic image. This approach harmoniously integrates line characteristics with cohesive decorative elements.

#### 4. HISTORICAL VALUE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF MIANYANG CARVED PAPER-CUT

##### 4.1 Pluralistic Value of Mianyang Carving and Paper-Cutting

In the contemporary era marked by rapid societal development and technological progress in the information age, an array of cultural and artistic forms has emerged, including those catering to fast-paced consumption trends to meet market demands. Over time, there has been a noticeable resurgence of interest in traditional culture. Mianyang carving and paper cutting, integral components of traditional folk handicrafts, have garnered increased attention within this context. It is essential to recognize that Mianyang carving paper-cut is not merely a singular art form but serves as a carrier of traditional culture, holding profound cultural value that contributes to the vitality of traditional heritage. Serving as a living record of traditional culture, the study of Mianyang carved paper-cut, as depicted in Figure 5, extends beyond an examination of its artistic form and production techniques. It involves a comprehensive exploration of Chinese folk culture. By delving into these cultural values, we enhance the understanding of our rich and exceptional traditional cultural heritage, allowing future generations to gain a deeper appreciation. Furthermore, such exploration enables other nations to develop a renewed perspective on traditional Chinese culture.

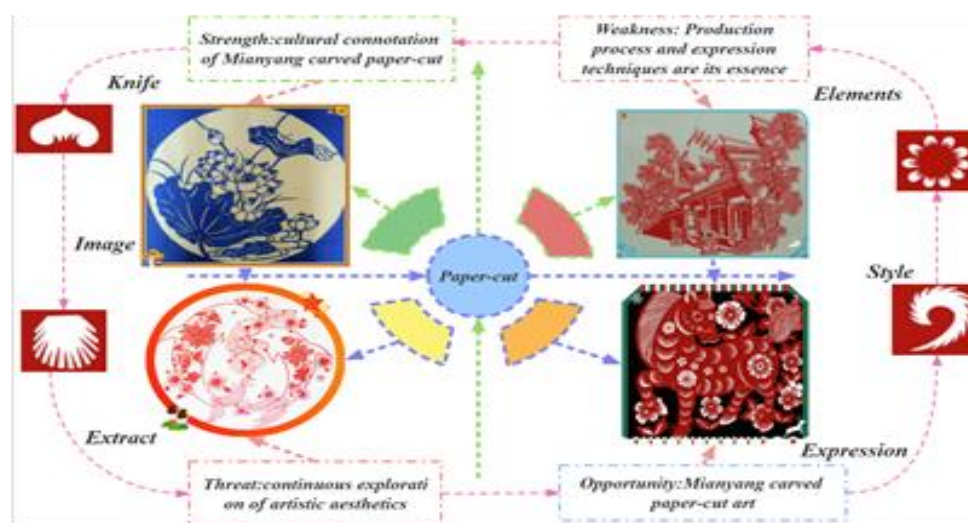


Figure 5: Paper-Cut Art Diagram



Paper-cut art holds not only collectible value but also serves as a means to disseminate traditional cultural values. Through simplified yet exaggerated depictions, folk paper-cut art achieves powerful expression, extracting elements from traditional folk-art styles to convey profound artistic expressions. The art form resonates deeply, inspiring a profound connection.

The value of carved paper-cutting extends beyond its tangible form, reflecting the rich cultural heritage of the Chinese nation and serving as an emotional cohesive force. Recognized as a symbol of China, as indicated in Table 5, paper-cutting enjoys global recognition. From the prosperity of the Tang Dynasty to the present day, the enduring significance lies in the continual inheritance, absorption, and, most importantly, the spiritual assimilation, forming distinctive cultural symbols that highlight the advantages and unique style of traditional Chinese culture.

Table 5: Diversified Value Table of Mianyang Carving and Paper Cutting

<b>Similar Cultural Attributes</b>	<b>Artistic Expression and Aesthetics</b>	<b>Economic Value and Entrepreneurship</b>	<b>Education and Training Value</b>	<b>Social and Psychological Values</b>
Inheritance of Traditional Skills	Art creation and display	Market sales potential	School and training centre	Community cohesion and identity
Cultural Symbols and Symbols	The artist's creative expression	Entrepreneurial opportunity	Traditional craft education	Psychological relaxation and emotional resonance
History and Local Characteristics	Excellent manual skills	The livelihood of the craftsman	Cultural activities and workshops	Social exchanges and cooperation
Ethnic Group and Identity	The value of the art market	Local economic promotion	Students learn from the young people	Group cohesion and emotional transmission
The Fusion of Tradition and Modernity	Protection of the cultural heritage	A collection of handmade products	Professional skills training	Cultural integration and cross-border cooperation

Daily life is intricately interwoven with folk art, with individuals contributing to the creation of new expressions within the harmonious atmosphere of their cultural milieu. This continual evolution of folk art and culture is vital for their inheritance and perpetuation. Numerous folk arts,



being closely intertwined with people's lives, serve as focal points for research objectives. In contemporary society, the perpetuation of folk art introduces novel spiritual dimensions to individuals' lives. The beauty and style of folk art are inherently tied to its historical context. While folk art may not encapsulate the entirety of traditional culture, it significantly influences the cultural framework of traditional folk art. Mianyang carving and paper-cut art exemplify a traditional folk art culture characterized by perceptual and aesthetic attributes.

#### 4.2 Significance of Inheriting and Protecting Mianyang Carved Paper-Cutting

Forgotten folk arts, now recognized in intangible cultural heritage protection, are receiving increased attention with the establishment of organizations and laws for their safeguarding. However, the protection primarily focuses on surface-level cultural aspects, impeding the overall pace of protection and development. Nations are actively exploring effective methods for heritage transfer, emphasizing heir protection, publicity, and other approaches. Education is a crucial component of intangible cultural heritage, and a conducive environment is paramount for its sustainable development. The concept of educational inheritance necessitates a more profound understanding, urging a reorganization of educational approaches for widespread public acceptance and comprehension. Table 6 illustrates strategies to convey the concept of educational inheritance to the public, aiming to enhance awareness of intangible cultural heritage protection through education across diverse groups.

Table 6(a): Significance Table of Inheriting and Protecting Carving and Paper Cutting

<b>Cultural Inheritance and Identity</b>	<b>Art History Preservation</b>	<b>Economic Development and Employment</b>	<b>Community Cohesion and Identity</b>	<b>Education and Training Opportunities</b>
Maintain Cultural Roots	Preserving traditional art techniques	Stimulate local economy	Strengthen local cultural identity	Provide learning opportunities for the next generation
Inheriting History and Tradition	Record the development process of art	Promote handicraft sales	Community events and celebrations	Impart the skills and the knowledge
Enhance Cultural Pride	Save art	Create jobs	Strengthen community alliances	Create intangible cultural heritage courses

Table 6(b): Significance Table of Inheriting and Protecting Carving and Paper Cutting

Cultural Inheritance and Identity	Art History Preservation	Economic Development and Employment	Community Cohesion and Identity	Education and Training Opportunities
Promote Cross-Cultural Exchanges	Ensure the inheritance of skills	Promote the development of tourism	Promote cultural exchanges	Carry out cultural activities and seminars
Strengthen National and Cultural Characteristics	Protect the intangible heritage	Increase local visibility	The fusion of tradition and modernity	Set up art exhibitions and exhibitions

For a comprehensive and scientific expansion of intangible cultural heritage, integration with education is imperative.

The cultural depth of Mianyang carving paper-cutting is exemplified in both its visual representation and the intricacies of its production process and expressive techniques.

Our distinctive style has evolved through persistent exploration of artistic aesthetics, ongoing refinement of handicraft techniques, and continuous enrichment of cultural connotations, as evident in the aesthetic allure of these carved paper cuts.

Figure 6 illustrates the influential craftsmanship spirit across various domains embraced by traditional artisans. As China's influence extends globally, traditional arts like Mianyang carving and paper-cutting are increasingly cherished worldwide, underscoring their substantial developmental potential and inherent value.

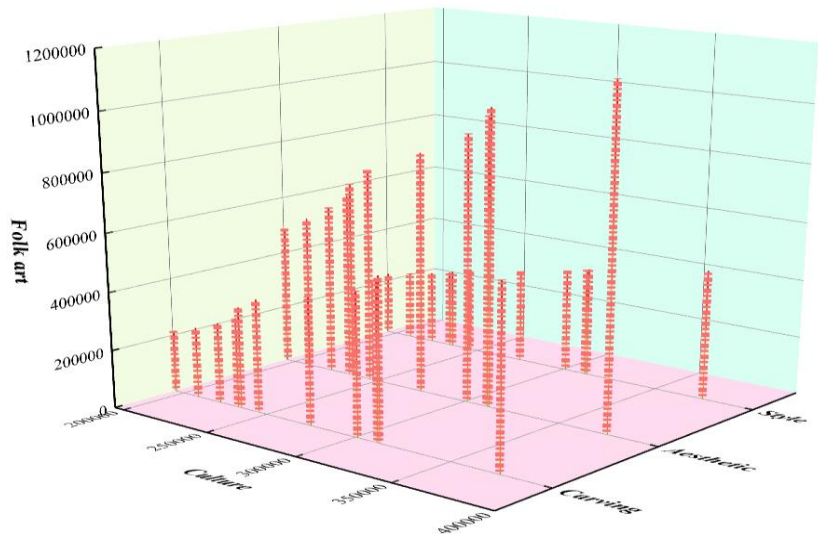


Figure 6: Development Potential and Value Map of Paper-Cutting

## 5. CONCLUSION

Mianyang's Paper Cuttings carving carries a profound historical legacy, and its preservation and protection are of significant importance to maintain its traditional allure. In the contemporary era, adapting to the current pace, Paper Cuttings carving in Mianyang must broaden its influence and enhance the direction of its inheritance. By integrating the distinctive features of Mianyang's sculpture art into modern society and fostering mutual promotion, a new phase of inheritance and expansion can be achieved. This paper analyses and synthesizes the developmental trajectory of Paper Cuttings carving in Mianyang, offering pertinent suggestions. Given the intricacy and meticulous patience required in Mianyang carved Paper Cuttings, an art form with limited productivity, there is a necessity for a novel developmental direction. In today's technologically advanced society, integrating contemporary technology with art holds practical significance for heritage preservation. While the knowledge and information collected for this research are finite, there remains room for refinement. This article aims to inspire further research in traditional handicrafts, facilitating the enhanced preservation and promotion of exceptional traditional crafts that are gradually fading from contemporary awareness.

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