

# **Research on the Path of Dynamic Inheritance and Integrated Development of Intangible Cultural Heritage: Taking Tianjin as an Example**

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**Abstract:** Intangible cultural heritage (hereinafter referred to as "ICH") carries the long-standing historical skills and living cultural genes of a nation, and is a profound manifestation of national wisdom and spiritual outlook. Tianjin, a city with a long history, has accumulated extremely rich Intangible cultural heritage resources. Currently, Tianjin has achieved certain results in the innovative protection and inheritance of Intangible cultural heritage, but it also faces many difficulties. To stimulate the driving force and vitality of Intangible cultural heritage innovative protection and inheritance in the process of integration and innovation, it is necessary to change the mindset at the cognitive level and enhance the importance attached to Intangible cultural heritage; strengthen the construction of talent teams at the organizational level; vigorously introduce digital means and innovate Intangible cultural heritage dissemination channels at the guarantee level; create characteristic Intangible cultural heritage brands and establish Intangible cultural heritage brand identities of Tianjin at the publicity level, so as to achieve Intangible cultural heritage inheritance and write a new chapter in the development of Tianjin's culture. This paper studies the innovative protection and inheritance paths of Intangible cultural heritage in Tianjin, which not only helps to improve the theoretical system of Intangible cultural heritage protection, but also provides practical guidance for local cultural revitalization and the development of cultural tourism industry.

**Keywords:** Intangible Cultural Heritage; Innovation; Protection; Inheritance; Path; Tianjin

## **1. The Significant Importance of Innovative Protection and Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage**

Intangible cultural heritage is an important component of China's outstanding traditional culture, embodying Chinese wisdom and experience, and endowing different regions of our country with unique charm and character. As a vital living cultural resource, intangible cultural heritage not only carries a profound history but also connects with people's daily lives, permeating their clothing, food, housing, and transportation. The integration and development of intangible cultural heritage and tourism have a natural convergence point. On the one hand, intangible cultural heritage is an important tourism resource, greatly enriching the cultural connotation of the tourism industry and better meeting the spiritual and cultural needs of tourists. On the other hand, tourism, as a cultural-level life experience, not only provides diversified practical and application scenarios for intangible cultural heritage but also builds an important channel for its protection and inheritance[1].

Owing to the Grand Canal, the confluence of river and maritime systems, its historical role as a commercial port and gateway city, and the legacy of nine foreign concessions, Tianjin's intangible cultural heritage has evolved a distinctive cultural identity marked by the integration of northern and southern traditions and an appeal that bridges elite and folk aesthetics. This heritage is characterized by broad accessibility, cultural uniqueness, and intrinsic artistic charm. From Duliu Town's aged vinegar and Laomeihua's handcrafted fabric buttons to gourd carving techniques and the traditional pharmaceutical practices of (Tianjin Darentang), most forms of Tianjin intangible cultural heritage are deeply rooted in urban neighborhoods, interwoven with everyday life,

and reflect a synthesis of popular appeal and artisanal excellence. For ICH practitioners, preservation means more than replication—it demands sincerity, mastery of authentic techniques, and commitment to genuine materials, all of which underscore the creativity and individuality inherent in their craftsmanship. A prime example is “Clay Figurine Zhang” (Niren Zhang), which fuses sculpting with polychrome painting through realistic artistic expression. Continuously innovating across material selection, pigmentation, and technical execution, the inheritors strive for a harmonious balance between form and spirit, producing iconic works such as “Jiang Men Shen,” “Zhong Kui,” and “Meng Wa.”

At present, new forms of cultural and tourism industries are emerging in Tianjin. The integration of business, culture and tourism, agriculture, culture and tourism, and sports, culture and tourism is deepening continuously, presenting a trend of adapting to local conditions, combining dynamic and static elements, cross-border integration, and technological innovation. This has attracted a large number of tourists. According to the statistics of the Tianjin Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism, during the three-day Qingming Festival holiday in 2024, the city's cultural and tourism market remained booming, receiving a total of 7.1021 million tourists and generating a tourism revenue of 6.063 billion yuan. Each district in Tianjin is constantly exploring historical and cultural resources, leveraging the advantages of intangible cultural heritage within their jurisdiction, and creating a synergy with other tourism resources. This has led to the formation of various new business models such as “intangible cultural heritage + cultural and creative products”, “intangible cultural heritage + homestays”, “intangible cultural heritage + study tours”, “intangible cultural heritage + performances”, and “intangible cultural heritage + festivals”. They have enriched the practice methods of intangible cultural heritage tourism from three dimensions: tourism subjects, tourism media, and tourism objects, and blazed a new trail of integrated development and mutual prosperity of intangible cultural heritage tourism, cultural consumption, rural revitalization, and urban cultural and artistic undertakings. This not only enhances tourists' cultural experience but also opens up a new path for the three-dimensional protection of intangible

cultural heritage and the dynamic inheritance of the market genes of intangible cultural heritage.

In conclusion, the integration of culture and tourism is an important way to promote the prosperity of urban culture and economic development. Intangible cultural heritage is an essential part of human civilization, containing rich historical, cultural and artistic values, and providing unique appeal and cultural connotation for the tourism industry. The protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage is an important guarantee for cultural diversity[2]. Through intangible cultural heritage tourism, more people can be attracted to pay attention to and participate in the protection work of intangible cultural heritage, thus achieving the dual goals of cultural inheritance and protection. To achieve cultural industry development through cultural means and the integration of culture and tourism, we should continuously strive to create a distinctive cultural and tourism brand for Tianjin, promote the diversified integration of the cultural and tourism industry, and develop new quality productivity, so as to promote the high-quality development of Tianjin's cultural and tourism industry[3].

## **2. Analysis of the Current Dilemmas and Causes of the Innovative Protection and Inheritance of Tianjin's Intangible Cultural Heritage**

### **2.1 Conceptual Dilemma**

There is a lack of strong awareness and insufficient attention paid to the development of intangible cultural heritage (ICH). ICH often adheres to traditional content and forms, lacking innovative elements and a contemporary touch. On the one hand, for the government, ICH projects require significant investment, have a slow return on investment, and a long payback period, leading to more policy support than financial backing. On the other hand, for ICH inheritors, although ICH represents the essence of rural culture, due to the diverse employment opportunities for young people, few pay attention to the protection and dynamic inheritance of ICH.

### **2.2 Innovation Dilemma**

The development concept of ICH is outdated, and the innovation capacity is insufficient. The inheritance of ICH lacks compound talents who are proficient in ICH skills and possess modern

innovative thinking and business operation knowledge[4]. This makes it difficult for ICH to proactively innovate in content and form, incorporate new cultural elements, and discover new value points in the face of the rapid changes in modern society, thereby limiting its competitiveness in the modern cultural market and hindering its popularity.

### **2.3 Organizational Dilemma**

There is an insufficient reserve of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) talents, and a shortage of high-quality personnel. Currently, the aging problem of ICH inheritors is becoming increasingly serious, posing a risk of the loss of traditional skills[5]. According to statistics, among national-level ICH representative inheritors, 71.5% are over 70 years old, while only 1.0% are under 50. In Tianjin, ICH inheritors are mainly middle-aged and elderly, with a relatively small number of young and middle-aged inheritors.

### **2.4 Efficiency Dilemma**

The mechanism for the protection and inheritance of ICH is not well established, and social participation is low. In Henan Province, there is a lack of a long-term management mechanism for ICH protection, and social participation is not high. Especially, local enterprises lack the motivation to participate, and there is no certain reward and support mechanism.

### **2.5 Process Dilemma**

The marketing efforts for ICH are insufficient, and the level of branding is low. First, the awareness is low, many ICH projects lack popularity, and the public's understanding is limited. Second, the market positioning is ambiguous, ICH products often lack a clear market positioning, making it difficult to attract specific consumer groups. Third, the marketing channels are limited, mainly relying on traditional channels, and modern marketing methods and social media, e-commerce platforms, etc. are underutilized. Fourth, brand building is lagging behind, many ICH projects lack brand awareness and have not formed a unique brand image and story.

## **3. Optimal Paths for the Innovative Protection and Inheritance of Tianjin's Jinpai Culture Intangible Heritage**

The construction of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) tourism projects in Tianjin is in full swing. However, when developing tourism by leveraging ICH resources, there are common problems such as obvious homogenization, insufficient exploration of ICH connotations, weak interactivity and experience, lack of cultural creativity, insufficient depth of participation from the public and ICH inheritors, incomplete guarantee mechanisms, shortage of innovative talents, and ineffective integration of culture and tourism[6]. The combination of ICH and tourism should fully follow the basic principles: protecting ICH resources is the prerequisite, exploring cultural connotations is the key, innovation and transformation are the driving force, and deep integration and development are the fundamental. Identifying the connection points between ICH resources and tourism development, integrating ICH protection into people's daily life, and combining it with urban construction, beautiful rural construction, and industrial development are the key ways to promote the high-quality development of ICH tourism.

### **3.1 Cognitive Level: Transforming Thinking and Enhancing the Importance of Intangible Cultural Heritage**

#### **3.1.1 Strengthening the understanding of intangible cultural heritage**

To effectively protect and pass on intangible cultural heritage, it is essential to enhance the understanding of it, change our mindset, and increase its importance. On one hand, we can popularize knowledge about intangible cultural heritage. Government departments, social groups, and public welfare organizations can regularly carry out intangible cultural heritage education, such as holding lectures, exhibitions, and other activities to regularly inform the public about the basic concepts, historical background, and cultural value of intangible cultural heritage[7]. At the same time, we can also use media platforms such as television, radio, newspapers, and the Internet to release news, special reports, documentaries, and other content related to intangible cultural heritage to increase public attention. On the other hand, we can strengthen the experience of intangible cultural heritage. First, we can organize intangible cultural heritage experience activities and encourage the public to participate in such activities, such as learning to make traditional handicrafts and

participating in traditional folk performances, to deepen their understanding and recognition through personal experience. Second, we can set up intangible cultural heritage exhibition halls in museums, cultural centers, and other places, displaying physical objects, pictures, videos, and other materials of intangible cultural heritage projects, providing a platform for the public to directly experience the charm of intangible cultural heritage. Third, each district in Tianjin should rely on its own intangible cultural heritage resources to gradually establish a number of intangible cultural heritage exhibition and transmission venues and carry out intangible cultural heritage exhibition activities. Fourth, new tourism protection exhibition areas based on intangible cultural heritage transmission culture should be built to attract domestic and foreign tourists as "new tourist attractions", thus gradually activating many precious heritages that have been dormant in the folk and allowing them to shine again with brilliant luster.

### 3.1.2 Promoting the cultural export of intangible cultural heritage projects

Culture itself is a dynamic, open and constantly evolving social form, which starts from the past, accumulates in the present and influences the future. Promoting the "going global" of intangible cultural heritage projects is an important way to enhance the international community's recognition and understanding of China's excellent traditional culture and showcase the profound heritage and unique charm of Chinese civilization. First, strengthen international cooperation and exchanges, utilize the platforms of international institutions such as UNESCO, enhance exchanges and cooperation among intangible cultural heritage projects of various countries, regularly hold international intangible cultural heritage exhibitions and forums, combine Tianjin's excellent cultural concepts with the reasonable factors of the world economic system, showcase the characteristics of its own culture, expand the platforms for exchanges and cooperation, gain more support and recognition, which can not only add color and charm to the diversity of world culture, but also ensure the exchange between Tianjin's intangible cultural heritage and other excellent cultures, thus achieving a win-win situation of the common development of Tianjin's intangible cultural heritage protection and economic construction. Second, build platforms, strengthen exchanges with other countries' intangible

cultural heritage protection institutions and organizations, try to communicate with foreign official and folk museums, support a number of capable and high-level intangible cultural heritage projects such as Ni Ren Zhang and Goubuli Baozi to go abroad through Confucius Institutes overseas, and obtain considerable market and social benefits. Third, continue to integrate resources, promote the "culture +", "tourism +" and "cultural tourism +" projects, hold the Tianjin Haihe Culture Festival, Huo Yuanjia and other festival activities with new creativity and ideas; and take advantage of traditional festivals to successively launch a series of characteristic activities that attract audiences of all ages, gradually expand the influence of Tianjin's city card, and continuously enhance the cultural influence of Tianjin.

## 3.2 Organizational Level: Strengthening the Construction of Talent Teams and Enhancing the Cultivation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritors

### 3.2.1 Strengthening the construction of intangible cultural heritage studies and cultivating and attracting professional talents

Intangible Cultural Heritage Studies, as an emerging discipline, has established its own disciplinary norms, including theoretical foundations, research methods, investigation methods, and value determination, among others. It is related to disciplines such as folklore, anthropology, history, and sociology, yet it cannot be fully encompassed by these fields[8]. Currently, only Nankai University in Tianjin has established a master's program in "Folklore and Intangible Cultural Heritage Studies," which leans more towards the disciplinary attributes of folklore. Given the current situation, Tianjin should support universities with the necessary foundation and capacity to actively apply for master's and doctoral programs in Intangible Cultural Heritage Studies, and strive to build a national key discipline in this field. It should also encourage universities with potential to offer undergraduate programs in Intangible Cultural Heritage Studies, aiming to cultivate a strong force of high-quality teaching and research personnel in a relatively short period of time.

At the same time, in the relevant institutions such as the Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Centers at all levels in Tianjin, given the importance and guiding nature of their work



responsibilities, it is necessary to quickly introduce a group of high-quality talents to avoid "protective destruction" caused by inappropriate working methods. It can be said that as the protection of intangible cultural heritage deepens, improper intervention from the government, academia, and business circles has also had a certain impact on intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, based on market research on talent demand, efforts should be made to increase the introduction of experts and scholars, as well as doctoral students in the field of intangible cultural heritage, and ensure the protection of talents.

### 3.2.2 Expand the scale of the intangible cultural heritage volunteer team

The protection and dynamic inheritance of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) not only rely on the strong support of the government and ICH workers but also require the assistance of ICH volunteers. ICH volunteers are individuals who understand Tianjin's Jinchuan culture, truly love ICH, and are willing to serve the inheritance and development of Tianjin's ICH. These volunteers come from the general public. Attracting volunteers to join the protection and inheritance of ICH can not only expand the dissemination and audience of Tianjin's ICH but also contribute more effective communication channels to the development of ICH in the new era[9]. "The protection of ICH is not only a process of cultural inheritance but also a driving force for the sustainable development of communities. On the other hand, government departments should strengthen collaboration with social organizations and communities, allowing ICH inheritors to "take root" in communities and making ICH flourish everywhere within them. Fully explore and gather a group of experts and enthusiasts in handicrafts, and build a professional and dynamic volunteer service team. Include unemployed and self-employed individuals, minors, etc., and provide them with free ICH skills training on a regular basis to continuously expand the scale and influence of the ICH volunteer team. On the other hand, it is necessary to collect folk volunteers by category, and based on the requirements of service positions, carry out ICH volunteer service activities irregularly, such as ICH training and lectures, exhibitions and performances, special exhibitions, study and experience, cultural and creative development, publicity and promotion,

and investigation and research, to spread ICH through multiple channels and dimensions.

### 3.3 Guarantee level: Vigorously Introduce Digital Means and Innovate the Channels for Intangible Cultural Heritage Dissemination

"The essence of intangible cultural heritage inheritance lies in spirit and ideology, which requires in-depth exploration. Utilizing the digital context to complete the exploration of ideology has significant advantages. Under multiple digital contexts, how to better rely on the Internet of Things and digital information technology for the protection and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage will be the focus of future intangible cultural heritage dissemination and development." Therefore, it is necessary to vigorously introduce digital technology and innovate the channels for intangible cultural heritage dissemination[10].

#### 3.3.1 Innovate the forms of intangible cultural heritage

The key to the development of local culture lies in its strong innovation ability. Without innovation, there will be no classics; without innovation, there will be no development. Therefore, it is necessary to innovate ideas and concepts, establish a new cultural development perspective, grasp the core of people-oriented, the soul of cultural innovation, and the trend of integrated development, so that cultural development serves the people, serves the current economy, and serves the enhancement of Henan's comprehensive competitiveness. At present, it is necessary to transform passivity into initiative, focus on innovating the forms and contents of intangible cultural heritage, strengthen the bridging role of traditional culture in the connection between mainstream culture and regional culture, retain the essence and spirit of traditional culture, and endow advanced culture with new forms and contents. This is the fundamental for the inheritance and innovation of intangible cultural heritage. In other words, it is necessary to constantly innovate in content, connect intangible cultural heritage protection with real life; and constantly innovate in form, inject modern elements, and increase the added value of intangible cultural heritage. For example, in recent years, the sales of intangible cultural heritage handicrafts on the Internet have increased sharply. The reason why these "old brands" such as Yixing purple clay teapots, Quyang stone carvings, Dongyang wood

carvings, Yangzhou folk music, and Xuancheng stationery have become "new internet celebrities" is that the cross-border cooperation between intangible cultural heritage inheritors and product designers has achieved a win-win situation. Intangible cultural heritage techniques inspire the design inspiration of cultural and creative products, and modern design endows intangible cultural heritage techniques with a fashionable temperament. On this basis, the intangible cultural heritage resources in Tianjin should also actively change their thinking, integrate new concepts, create new products, and explore new markets. They should constantly innovate in content, "combine traditional handicrafts with modern design to create intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative products with a sense of fashion; and in form, they should support new platforms, and actively explore new development models such as "intangible cultural heritage + cultural and creative products", "intangible cultural heritage + festivals", "intangible cultural heritage + tourism", "intangible cultural heritage + rural revitalization", and "intangible cultural heritage + finance", providing new stages for intangible cultural heritage.

### 3.3.2 Enhancing the dissemination of intangible cultural heritage through modern technology

Digital technology offers new opportunities for the continuation of the vitality of intangible cultural heritage. By integrating intangible cultural heritage with modern technological means, not only can it effectively record and preserve intangible cultural heritage, but also present these precious cultural assets in a more vivid and intuitive way to the public, promoting their inheritance and development. On the one hand, through digital technologies such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), audiences can experience the charm of intangible cultural heritage in an immersive way, increasing its appeal and expanding its reach. At the same time, by leveraging social media, short video platforms and other online channels, the popularity and influence of intangible cultural heritage can be rapidly expanded. On the other hand, the dynamic, three-dimensional and high-definition recording of the practice process of intangible cultural heritage can be achieved through digital technologies. Through methods such as digital exploration, digital restoration and digital integration, intangible cultural heritage projects with strong storylines can be

made into films, TV series, variety shows, etc., and transformed into cultural consumption products through digital entertainment products such as games, animations, online literature and short videos. In recent years, Tianjin Radio and Television Station has utilized new media technologies to make Tianjin's rich and diverse traditional cultural resources observable, tangible and interactive. This "intangible cultural heritage + variety show + live streaming" approach has a natural advantage in attracting young people, catering to their cultural consumption habits and media usage patterns, and building a bridge between intangible cultural heritage and young people, significantly enhancing the popularity of some intangible cultural heritage. The Tianjin Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism still needs to continuously deepen the integration of intangible cultural heritage and new media technologies, deeply explore the core value of intangible cultural heritage, attach importance to humanistic expression, and deepen the excavation and dissemination of local intangible cultural heritage stories, project origins, values, concepts and rituals.

### 3.4 Publicity Level: Strengthening the Promotion and Marketing of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Creating Characteristic Intangible Cultural Heritage Brands

#### 3.4.1 Deeply explore the cultural connotations of intangible cultural heritage

Uncovering the cultural connotations of intangible cultural heritage is the key to its protection and inheritance. The cultural connotations of intangible cultural heritage are rich and diverse, including historical skills, ethnic sentiments, aesthetic tastes, etc. Clarifying the value connotations of intangible cultural heritage is the prerequisite for realizing the value-added of its revitalization. Cultural value is a common value possessed by any intangible cultural heritage and is also the most distinctive value that distinguishes it from ordinary products. It mainly enhances national cultural confidence through the dissemination, inheritance, and innovation of excellent traditional culture, forms a common social recognition, and promotes the development of social economy and culture. Based on this, we should make full use of Tianjin's rich intangible cultural heritage resources, fully explore their

cultural connotations, and prioritize cultural development. We should enhance cultural confidence in practice and creation, and showcase cultural charm in creation. To adapt to marketization and internationalization, the inheritance and development of intangible cultural heritage can explore industrial agglomeration. Tianjin has many references in terms of industrial agglomeration in folk customs, handicrafts, and traditional culture. For example, a comprehensive intangible cultural heritage industrial agglomeration area integrating functions such as research and development, production, packaging, training, and observation, and integrating related industries such as tourism, film and television, exhibitions, and publishing can be built, ultimately achieving the goal of cultural inheritance and development.

#### 3.4.2 Creating a breakthrough product of Tianjin intangible cultural heritage

Tianjin is rich in intangible cultural heritage resources, but currently lacks a unique and outstanding product that can represent it. Therefore, it is necessary to connect these resources with emerging cultural industries to create a breakthrough product of Tianjin's intangible cultural heritage. Both traditional and emerging cultural industries are based on cultural carriers, with culture being the intrinsic soul and the core element that determines their ability to win the market and grow. On one hand, the connection between intangible cultural heritage and the film and television industry. Intangible cultural heritage resources are a valuable cultural wealth bestowed upon Tianjin by history. Tianjin's folk literature contains many legends about famous people and historical events, which can provide a wealth of materials for film and television literature. In the new era, the film and television industry is booming and beloved by the public. Therefore, the breakthrough product of intangible cultural heritage should keep pace with the times, carefully select themes, write scripts, and produce a series of film and television works that recreate historical scenes, promote the national spirit, reflect the characteristics of Tianjin's Jipai culture, and have a nationwide influence. On the other hand, the combination of intangible cultural heritage and the animation industry. The huge success of "Ne Zha: The Devil Is Back" during the Spring Festival holiday shows that traditional culture can break

through and regain vitality in a new form. This combination not only enriches the creative materials for animation but also opens up new paths for the dissemination and popularization of intangible cultural heritage. Currently, modern animation technologies such as 3D printing and virtual reality can be utilized to visualize and three-dimensionalize intangible cultural heritage resources, vividly integrating them into daily life, enhancing their expressiveness, and creating a breakthrough product of intangible cultural heritage.

#### 3.4.3 Concentrate on advantageous resources to build intangible cultural heritage brands

Intangible cultural heritage brands not only possess cultural value but also economic value. "With the cultural connotation of intangible cultural heritage as the core, shape a unique brand cultural concept. Integrate the values and spiritual connotations advocated by intangible cultural heritage into the brand, making the brand rich in cultural heritage and unique in personality. Currently, most traditional skills in Tianjin are still in a state of "hidden in the deep alley, unknown to the public", only having a certain influence within Tianjin. In fact, many traditional skills in Tianjin are closely related to people's daily lives. If they are properly marketed, they have broad development space. Tianjin needs to concentrate its advantageous resources to establish intangible cultural heritage brands that are renowned in the Central Plains and even throughout the country, highlighting its distinctive competitiveness. Every place's intangible cultural heritage should emphasize its uniqueness, advantages, and highlights. Transform the unique advantages into development advantages, making traditional intangible cultural heritage resources contemporary, fashionable, and popular, integrating into people's daily lives and becoming indispensable elements. Build distinctive cultural brands with unique cultural connotations and forms, making the uniqueness more charming, penetrating, and attractive. For instance, Tianjin's crosstalk is well-known to all, but how to turn crosstalk into a city's calling card or even a brand, culture is the inevitable path. Brands with rich connotations have more market advantages.

## 4. Conclusion

Currently, the innovative protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage in

Tianjin still need to strike a balance between "upholding the essence" and "innovation". It is necessary to not only preserve the cultural roots but also respond to the demands of the times, closely integrating cultural inheritance with economic development, strengthening cultural promotion, expanding the popularity and audience base of intangible cultural heritage, and making the work of innovative protection and inheritance more in line with practical needs, so as to promote the sustainable inheritance and development of intangible cultural heritage. Only in this way can the ultimate goal of intangible cultural heritage protection, which is "seeing people, objects and life", and the thousand-year-old civilization continue to thrive in contemporary society.

### Acknowledgement

This work is funded by the "Pre-research Project of Major Projects in 2025 of Pearl River College, Tianjin University of Finance and Economics, *"Research on the Dynamic Inheritance and Integrated Development Path of Tianjin Intangible Cultural Heritage"*, Project Approval Number: ZJZD25-01".

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