

Research on the Development Challenges and Countermeasures of Qilu Martial Arts Culture from the Perspective of Cultural Confidence

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Abstract: Qilu martial arts culture is a unique regional martial arts culture. The article uses research methods such as literature review, field research, and expert interviews to explore the development dilemma of Qilu martial arts culture, which is reflected in the increasing loss of Qilu martial arts resources, the lack of successors for rare boxing styles, the lack of cultural consciousness in Qilu martial arts, the emphasis on "physical" over "cultural" in Qilu martial arts cultural education, and the alienation of Qilu martial arts cultural dissemination and industrial development. From the perspective of cultural confidence, it is proposed to explore the cultural value of Qilu martial arts, extract the spiritual identity of Qilu martial arts culture, enrich the essential connotation of Qilu martial arts culture, innovate the content and form of Qilu martial arts cultural education, strengthen the protection of traditional martial arts inheritors, achieve the digital transformation of Qilu martial arts cultural heritage, promote the integration of martial arts industry and multiple industries, enhance the identity and appeal of Qilu martial arts culture, and other strategies, aiming to better inherit and innovate the development of Qilu martial arts culture, and enhance the cultural soft power of Shandong Province.

Keywords: Cultural Confidence; Qilu Martial Arts Culture; Dilemma; Development Strategy

1. Introduction

Cultural confidence is the most fundamental, profound, and enduring force in the development of a country or a nation. It is a collective and relatively stable positive cultural mentality exhibited by a nation towards its own cultural issues. Since the 18th National Congress of China, based on the new historical position of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, with a strong sense of cultural mission, we have paid close attention to the issue of cultural confidence and elevated it to an important strategic level. Chinese martial arts is the most representative traditional sports in China. It is rooted in the fertile soil of Chinese traditional culture and integrates various traditional Chinese cultural contents and ideas such as Chinese philosophy, traditional medicine, ethics, health preservation, military science, aesthetics, etc., forming a martial arts cultural system that combines martial arts with Chinese traditional culture. Qilu martial arts is a unique regional martial arts culture that deeply understands the ideological connotations of Qilu culture. It not only showcases the wisdom of Qilu people, but also carries the image of Shandong. It is an important component of China's excellent traditional culture and a major driving force for the development of traditional culture. This project explores the development dilemma and innovative development strategies of Qilu martial arts culture from the perspective of cultural confidence, aiming to enhance the cultural soft power of Shandong Province in the new era.

2. The realistic dilemma of inheriting and developing Qilu martial arts culture

2.1 The loss of Qilu martial arts resources and the lack of successors for rare boxing styles

Throughout the land of Qilu, there are fewer and fewer places for the transmission of traditional martial arts, and folk activities that carry many martial arts elements are gradually disappearing. In the process of communicating with experts and scholars, it was found that initially there were many martial arts training places in Shandong region, and each region had some martial arts gyms to varying degrees,

providing people who love martial arts with an additional place to practice and communicate. With the transformation of society and the reduction of people's needs, some martial arts schools have gradually closed, and some martial arts schools have begun to transform into one of the means to obtain economic benefits. During the transformation of these venues, some foreign sports such as Taekwondo gradually began to develop, leading to a sharp decrease in the number of traditional martial arts training venues. Furthermore, the folk activities that carry the culture of martial arts are constantly disappearing. With the acceleration of the pace of life and the psychological drive of blindly following the crowd, some original sacrificial activities, festival celebrations, etc. have gradually changed, especially with the integration of many high-tech means, making traditional martial arts,^[1] gradually marginalized and forgotten by people. In the investigation of the current situation of the development of martial arts, it was found that with the arrival of the economic era, people's pursuit of interests has greatly increased. Due to the lack of real economic value in the development of traditional martial arts, some inheritors of traditional martial arts have had to start looking for other jobs that can bring economic benefits, resulting in a decreasing number of practitioners and almost the lowest number of practitioners of martial arts.

2.2 The Loss of the Original Culture of Qilu Martial Arts in the Process of Inheritance and Development

In recent years, guided by the strategic goals of "globalization of martial arts" and "internationalization of martial arts", Qilu martial arts culture, like traditional Chinese martial arts culture, has achieved significant development achievements but also encountered some misunderstandings. It has detached itself from the cultural essence of core values, ideological and spiritual systems, and traditional cultural elements. Traditional martial arts have been rigidly divided into "traditional martial arts" and "competitive martial arts", and in terms of inheritance form, it has shifted from "both physical and practical" to "training and scoring", pursuing a development direction of "high, difficult, beautiful, and new". Competitive martial arts are divided into two categories: routines and Sanda. Traditional martial arts have gradually evolved into a single technique display that is simply practiced through boxing routines. This excessive imitation of the Olympic competition mode and methods, while neglecting the cultural and spiritual essence of martial arts, ultimately did not achieve true development in Chinese martial arts, while traditional martial arts representing traditional culture became the "flower of the backyard". In contrast, Karate, Taekwondo, Kendo and other sports from outside the country have attracted a large number of young people due to their rich and unique cultural connotations, becoming popular fashion sports. This has led to an unprecedented cultural security crisis of nihilism and marginalization in Qilu martial arts culture.

2.3 Lack of self-awareness of Qilu martial arts culture in the process of cultural globalization

The dissemination of martial arts culture requires the formation of a "cultural consciousness of martial arts", which is both a behavior and a consciousness, and an extension of the recognition of martial arts.^[2] The dissemination of Chinese martial arts culture can be traced back to Zhang Qian's mission to the Western Regions in the Western Han Dynasty, and it was not until the Qing Dynasty that martial arts were widely spread in the West with the concept of "kung fu". Ancient martial arts, as a model of Chinese culture, embody the philosophical views of Chinese culture, greatly establishing a sense of national identity and occupying a dominant position. However, after the Opium War, the invasion of western powers raised doubts about the military value of Chinese martial arts. With the introduction of the Westernization Movement, the Reform Movement of 1898 and missionary schools to western sports, Chinese martial arts gradually moved from the center to the periphery. In particular, the introduction of the Western Olympic spirit gradually assimilated the martial arts culture. In order to cater to the Western competitive sports, martial arts gradually changed from traditional martial arts to sports martial arts, and changed to western sports, and blindly pursued martial arts competitiveness. As a result, the national traditional martial arts culture lost the core of spiritual connotation, presenting a cultural rootless state. This has led to a crisis of identity in martial arts culture.

2.4 The inheritance of Qilu martial arts culture tends to be biased, with education emphasizing "physical fitness" over "culture"

Martial arts should play an important role in shaping the soul and educating people in the aspects of "using martial arts to transform people and using martial arts to become adults". However, influenced by Western education, martial arts teaching began to rely on Western sports concepts, and a sports

oriented educational model quietly emerged. After martial arts education was narrowed down to "sports classes", standardized skill learning in martial arts gradually became mainstream, and the education of both internal and external cultivation gradually weakened. The spiritual education of martial arts and the integration of civil and martial arts gradually drifted away. ^[3]This development model that emphasizes "physical fitness" over "culture" is undoubtedly a bias and weakening of the educational value of traditional martial arts, and a waste of traditional martial arts as an educational resource that combines morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor.

2.5 Cultural dissemination and industrial development alienation of Qilu martial arts

With the acceleration of urbanization, the socio-economic environment for the survival and development of martial arts has changed, bringing many "discomforts" to the Qilu martial arts culture. The inheritance of Qilu martial arts is still mainly carried out through family inheritance, master apprentice inheritance, or martial arts school inheritance, and the inheritance methods are relatively single. In the process of inheritance, due to the lack of modern inheritance work, many boxing techniques were not organized and preserved. However, there is a phenomenon in the inheritance that only focuses on the display of martial arts techniques and movements, but neglects their connotations and culture, leading to misunderstandings among the audience about traditional martial arts culture, believing that martial arts only includes technical movements and body language, and is a simple sports event. In today's era of rampant new media, the media has not given sufficient attention to the dissemination of folk martial arts. On the internet, the promotion of new media martial arts mainly focuses on martial arts competitions, making it difficult to collect content on folk martial arts culture. The dissemination of folk martial arts is not sufficient, the popularity of folk martial arts is not high, and static displays are the main obstacles to the development of Qilu martial arts. ^[4] Similarly, in the field of Qilu martial arts cultural industry, although brand competitions that integrate Shandong elements and Shandong symbols have been launched successively, such as Yantai International Martial Arts Festival, Heze Cross Strait Martial Arts Exchange Conference, Binzhou Traditional Martial Arts Conference, "Shandong Hero" Fighting League and other well-known high-quality martial arts brands at home and abroad, they have become landmark achievements in the innovation of Qilu martial arts cultural industry. However, overall, the martial arts industry in Qilu has just started, and its development has not yet satisfied the martial arts consumption of the people. There are problems such as a lack of creative products, a single industrial structure, and low integration of cultural and technological industries, which urgently need further development.

3. From the perspective of cultural confidence, the inheritance and innovative development strategies of Qilu martial arts culture

3.1 Explore the cultural value connotation of Qilu martial arts and extract the spiritual identity of Qilu martial arts culture

The martial arts culture of Qilu is rooted in the land of Qilu and deeply influenced by Confucianism. Firstly, practitioners of martial arts emphasize the importance of "putting morality first" and advocate for "dual cultivation of morality and art", which standardizes what is good and what is evil; Established what is right and what is wrong. From the perspective of interpersonal communication, it can be summarized as a spirit of "tolerance, benevolence, sincerity, and respect towards others", which regulates and constrains the social life of martial artists, promotes harmonious coexistence between people, and ensures the harmonious development of society. Secondly, there is the patriotic spirit of Qilu martial arts culture, which advocates sacrificing one's life for righteousness, and only following righteousness. Thirdly, the martial arts culture of Qilu also embodies the ethical and moral standards of filial piety. The unique way of master disciple inheritance in martial arts is "a blood lineage inheritance with a tendency towards kinship but not completely complete, based on the mechanism of simulating blood relationships" ^[5]. The teacher-student relationship has been ethically transformed into a 'father son' relationship, and there has been a saying since ancient times that 'one day as a teacher, lifelong as a father'. It has also expanded to the entire martial arts community and extended to the daily lives of martial artists, forming the ethical spirit of "filial piety and respect for teachers, respect for the elderly and care for the young".

In the new era, the spirit of Chinese martial arts can start from "putting people first", and in the new era, the spirit of Chinese martial arts can start from the principle of "putting people first" and, through the function of moral education, aim to "establish people with morality and cultivate people with

morality.” In this way, it can guide individuals in society to “pursue goodness” and “follow goodness,” foster moral consciousness and self-discipline, and promote the cultivation of moral behavior habits. The patriotic spirit and social spirit contained therein are closely aligned with the socialist core values of "patriotism," "integrity," "friendliness," and "equality" advocated by contemporary Chinese society. Based on this, the ideas, ideals, and beliefs contained in the "spirit of Chinese martial arts" can cultivate people's "goodness", guide every individual in society to regulate their words and deeds with "goodness" and "seeking goodness" in social life, and thus achieve the improvement of moral qualities, thus "building a socialist harmonious society".

3.2 Enrich the essential connotation of Qilu martial arts culture and strengthen cultural confidence

Guided by the ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, we will strengthen the connotation construction of traditional Chinese martial arts culture, deeply explore the ideological concepts, humanistic spirit, and moral norms contained in the excellent traditional Chinese martial arts culture, and combine them with the requirements of the times to inherit and innovate, so that Chinese martial arts culture can display permanent charm and contemporary style. Cultural confidence refers to a nation, a country, and a country's full affirmation and active practice of their own cultural values, as well as their firm confidence in the vitality of their culture. Through solid and effective connotation construction, enriching the traditional cultural connotation of excellent Chinese martial arts, injecting the concept and elements of cultural confidence in the new era, is the fundamental work to promote cultural confidence. The new era endows Chinese martial arts culture with the historical responsibility and commitment to promote cultural confidence. It is necessary to recondense and position the functions of traditional Chinese martial arts culture in accordance with the theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics, inject patriotism, collectivism, and socialist ideals and beliefs, and endow the functions with correct historical, ethnic, national, and cultural perspectives. It is also necessary to give full play to the external cultural dissemination and exchange function of Chinese martial arts culture, and promote the international dissemination of excellent traditional Chinese culture. By using internationally accepted forms of martial arts such as Tai Chi and Shaolin Kung Fu as carriers, highlighting excellent Chinese cultural elements, injecting socialist core values, integrating Chinese characteristics of socialism and the promotion and education of the Chinese Dream, and expanding effective forms and channels for the exchange and dissemination of martial arts culture—with the government as the guide and martial arts associations, mass organizations, schools, and individuals as supplements—it is possible to build a new pattern of all-round, multi-level, and wide-ranging dissemination of Chinese culture centered on the dissemination of martial arts culture, promoting national spirit and era spirit, promoting cultural confidence, and enhancing the country's cultural soft power.

3.3 Building a Qilu Martial Arts Culture Education Platform and Innovating Educational Content and Forms

The project should strengthen the construction and development of the Qilu martial arts culture platform and facilities, establish and improve various public places and online public spaces, and popularize Qilu martial arts education. It should build a Qilu martial arts theme park, establish a Qilu martial arts museum, create a Qilu martial arts cultural corridor, set up a Qilu martial arts characteristic education base, and develop performance centers, research centers, health centers, martial arts halls, innovation and entrepreneurship experimental centers, and other modules to serve grassroots people, give full play to the social effectiveness of martial arts culture popularization, and achieve the physical expression of Qilu martial arts culture. The promotion of Qilu martial arts culture should also be combined with community cultural construction, integrating Qilu martial arts culture into community infrastructure such as cultural walls and cultural activity centers and incorporating it into community education and training activities, thereby promoting the formation of a good atmosphere for the conscious inheritance and development of martial arts culture in the community. Local martial arts project exhibitions and performances should be utilized, parent-child martial arts experience activities and martial arts knowledge competitions should be regularly organized in each community, and martial arts culture enthusiasts in each street (town) should be encouraged to enter the community to carry out activities such as Qilu martial arts culture excavation, protection, inheritance, and preaching. In addition, media broadcasting networks should be used to create distinctive programs of Qilu martial arts, distribute Qilu martial arts culture series and CDs, and produce a series of Qilu martial arts documentaries to share and popularize Qilu martial arts culture, thereby promoting the overall martial arts cultural literacy of the people.^[6]

In order to vigorously explore and promote the culture of Qilu martial arts and accelerate the pace of cultural construction in Shandong Province, the "Six Entries Project" of Qilu martial arts culture is organized and carried out throughout the province, which includes activities such as Qilu martial arts culture entering schools, government agencies, communities, villages, enterprises, and families. This project aims to build a multi-level and all-round education system to strengthen the education of Qilu martial arts culture for the people. Through conscious Qilu martial arts cultural activities or by using environmental factors to subtly educate the public—such as the influence of family education—this project seeks to strengthen the educational role of national education, social education, and other forms of learning, and to fully play the role of martial arts in educating people.

3.4 Strengthen the protection of traditional martial arts inheritors and achieve the digital transformation of Qilu martial arts cultural heritage

In May 2022, the General Office of the State Council issued the "Opinions on Promoting the Implementation of the National Cultural Digitalization Strategy", which clearly proposed to accelerate the digital transformation of culture and establish a database of Chinese culture. In this context, digital technology empowers the inheritance and protection of martial arts culture, becoming a key way to promote the development of traditional martial arts. Traditional martial arts have a long history, including rich techniques, routines, and theoretical systems. Through digital technology, traditional martial arts can break through the limitations of traditional inheritance methods, allowing more groups with opportunities to learn and interact with traditional martial arts to actively participate. For example, by using online teaching platforms and application software tools, the skills and culture of traditional martial arts can be spread to a wider audience. This digital inheritance method not only expands the influence of traditional martial arts, but also helps to protect and inherit traditional culture. The integration of digital technology and cultural preservation provides new opportunities and possibilities for the modern transformation of traditional martial arts. Currently, through technologies such as high-definition cameras and 3D scanning, the movements, routines, theories, and cultural background information of traditional martial arts are digitized and preserved. These digital archives not only provide valuable resources for the learning and research of martial arts, but also ensure the long-term preservation and inheritance of martial arts cultural heritage. In addition, using virtual reality technology to create a martial arts culture experience hall can allow audiences to personally experience the charm and culture of martial arts in a virtual environment, enhancing public awareness and interest in traditional martial arts. The integration of digital technology and cultural preservation has brought new opportunities and possibilities for the modern transformation of traditional martial arts, which helps to achieve wider inheritance, protection, research, more vivid experience, and dissemination. Therefore, the combination of digital technology and cultural protection will become an important path for traditional martial arts to modernize, which will contribute to the inheritance and innovation of traditional culture. [7]

3.5 Building a new form of Qilu martial arts industry and promoting the integration and development of martial arts industry and multiple industries

One is to optimize the operation mechanism of the martial arts cultural industry in Qilu, reasonably divide departmental responsibilities, ensure effective cooperation, clarify responsible parties, steadily accelerate the marketization process of the martial arts industry, achieve a tripartite coordination mechanism of government decentralization, market driven, and social participation, and effectively endow the martial arts industry with more vitality. The second is to promote the cross-border integration and development of the martial arts cultural industry, broaden various support methods, and promote the transformation and upgrading of the martial arts industry. This project should develop a series of composite products with "martial arts+health, martial arts+training, martial arts+tourism, martial arts+medical" attributes, extend the martial arts industry chain to industries such as transportation, entertainment, culture, shopping, catering, and recuperation, and thereby improve the width and depth of the martial arts industry chain. The third is to use modern information technology to create a digital martial arts cultural industry, innovate and develop more creative martial arts cultural products and services, in order to effectively meet the personalized experience and consumption needs of market consumers. Fourthly, with brand building as the core, based on comprehensive and in-depth exploration of excellent traditional cultural elements in Qilu and even southwestern Shandong, a regional martial arts cultural brand confidence and brand cultural image with unique Qilu excellent traditional cultural characteristics and highlighting Qilu martial arts cultural characteristics as the core will be formed; Based on regional resource advantages, we aim to expand and strengthen the brand of

Qilu martial arts cultural industry.

3.6 Tell the stories of heroic figures in Qilu martial arts well, enhance the sense of identity and appeal of Qilu martial arts culture

One is to tell the stories of heroic figures in Qilu martial arts, so that the world can understand the land of Qilu and the Qilu martial arts culture that has been nurtured. From Confucius and Mencius in the Spring and Autumn Period and Warring States Period to Qi Jiguang, Yu Dayou and others in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, these famous martial artists have interpreted the connotation of Qilu martial arts culture through their practical actions. The land of Qilu is also the hometown of military strategists and famous generals. Not only does it have a strong emphasis on martial arts and righteousness, but it also boasts excellent skills and morals. Moreover, many skilled warriors have emerged from all over the world. Located in the southwest of Shandong Province, Shuibo Liangshan is renowned for its exquisite martial arts and legendary stories of 108 Liangshan heroes led by Song Jiang, which are recorded in the book "Water Margin" and are well-known both at home and abroad. These excellent qualities and humanistic spirit have had a tremendous impact on the civilization and progress of the Chinese nation. Secondly, it is necessary to inherit and promote the excellent martial arts culture of Qilu, which is the foundation of traditional martial arts cultural identity and an inevitable requirement for cultural confidence. For example, in the field of martial arts, Westerners can imitate the movements of traditional martial arts perfectly, but they find it difficult to grasp the inherent culture that has been accumulated over thousands of years in traditional martial arts. This internal culture happens to be the identity symbol given to us in the historical process, as well as the foundation of cultural identity and cultural confidence. Therefore, we must firmly inherit and promote China's excellent traditional culture. Thirdly, the media should shoulder the responsibility of disseminating excellent traditional martial arts culture to the public and consciously resist inferior and decadent forms of martial arts culture. [8] It should also work to deepen participants' cultural identity with traditional martial arts through positive energy, promote their formation of cultural confidence, and help build a positive cultural system.

4. Conclusion

Cultural confidence is a more fundamental, profound, and enduring force in the development of a country or a nation. Cultural confidence is reflected not only in people inheriting and developing a certain culture to adapt to social development, but also in maintaining their cultural advantages and confidence through communication and integration with other cultures, keeping up with the times and innovating. Only with the confidence to fully affirm and actively practice one's own culture can one obtain the lasting driving force for national rejuvenation and development. As a typical representative of Qilu traditional culture, the reconstruction of confidence in Qilu martial arts culture is also timely. Through the innovative development of Qilu martial arts culture, we need to reshape the trust mechanism of Qilu martial arts culture, enhance the recognition mechanism of Qilu martial arts culture, innovate the expression mechanism of Qilu martial arts culture, promote the integration and innovation of martial arts culture, and cultivate the consciousness of the whole nation; Build an inheritance system, enhance confidence in the inheritance of martial arts culture, and promote the inheritance and promotion of martial arts culture. This will contribute to the development strategy of Shandong as a "strong province in sports and culture".

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