

# THE INHERITANCE DILEMMA AND DEVELOPMENT PATH OF WUSHU INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN ANHUI PROVINCE

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**Abstract:** Anhui Wushu intangible cultural heritage is an important part of the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation, carrying important values such as physical fitness and cultural inheritance. The article uses literature method and logical analysis method to study the inheritance and development of Anhui Wushu intangible cultural heritage. The study shows that Anhui Wushu intangible cultural heritage is facing the dilemma of aging population, the impact of extraterritorial competitive sports, insufficient publicity and promotion, and weak basic theoretical research, etc. The article puts forward the following development path: improve the basic theory of Wushu, and improve the quality of Wushu. The article proposes the following development paths: improve basic theoretical research; improve the inheritance mechanism and establish an incentive system; increase publicity; and play the leading role of local administrations.

**Keywords:** Martial arts; Intangible cultural heritage; Inheritance; Development paths

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Anhui is one of the important birthplaces of China's prehistoric civilization, and is culturally compatible with the north and the south, consisting of Huizhou culture, the Huaihe River Culture and Anhui River Culture. Anhui River Culture Luzhou Culture Anhui has a long history and is one of the cradles and birthplaces of martial arts in China. Anhui has a long history and a profound cultural heritage, and is one of the cradles and birthplaces of martial arts in China. Wushu is a treasure of Chinese culture, containing rich philosophical thoughts, moral concepts and aesthetic values. Through the promotion of Wushu, more people can understand and recognize Chinese culture. Anhui Traditional Wushu is one of the most important representatives of Chinese Wushu, which is a form of sports expression created and accumulated by the forefathers of the Chinese nation in the long-term production and labor, and is closely related to the life of human beings, playing the roles of fitness, competition, cultural inheritance and economic promotion, etc., and it is an item of great value for protection and inheritance. In 2011, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress voted to adopt the Intangible Cultural Heritage Law of the People's Republic of China[1], which laid a solid foundation of the rule of law for the sustainable development of China's intangible cultural heritage. The promulgation of the policy and the implementation of related measures have provided new opportunities for the inheritance and development of Anhui Wushu Intangible Cultural Heritage. However, with the impact of extra-territorial competitive sports and the acceleration of economic globalization, the intangible cultural heritage of wushu in China has been affected to a certain extent, and the environment for its survival has changed dramatically, and it is facing the danger of being destroyed, replaced, or even extinguished[2]. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the inheritance dilemmas and development paths faced by the Wushu intangible cultural heritage in Anhui Province, relying on how to rely on the state's supportive policies. It also helps to provide an innovative protection model for the development of intangible cultural heritage, so as to promote the excellent traditional culture of Anhui and enhance the sense of national pride.

## 2 OVERVIEW OF ANHUI WUSHU INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Chinese Wushu, like a bright pearl, has accompanied the development of China's history and civilization through thousands of years of wind and rain, and has become the spine that sustains the survival and development of this nation. Anhui Wushu intangible cultural heritage has a long history, its origin can be traced back to the ancient Warring States period, and its development has been thousands of years of history. In the long process of development, Anhui Wushu Intangible Cultural Heritage has absorbed the rich cultural elements and local characteristics of the region, forming a unique style and characteristics. Anhui Wushu Intangible Cultural Heritage is not only an inheritance of skills and techniques, but also carries profound philosophical thoughts and moral concepts. Its routines and stances are not only a display of martial arts skills, but also contain an understanding of the life force and the laws of nature.

Anhui Province actively implements the relevant requirements of the state, and has published six batches of provincial intangible cultural heritage lists, totaling more than 600 items, among which, there are more than 20 items of martial arts intangible cultural heritage. From the point of view of the regional distribution of the items, there are distributions in southern Anhui, central Anhui, northern Anhui and other regions, with a wide regional distribution. From the point of view of the types of projects, the types of Anhui martial arts intangible cultural heritage are mainly concentrated in the

fist and palm categories, and a small number of acrobatics and other acrobatics with local characteristics. The fist and palm types of wushu not only have profound accumulation in technology and theory, but also carry rich cultural connotation and historical background. As an important part of the intangible cultural heritage of Anhui, they are not only the transmission of martial arts skills, but also the transmitter of cultural identity and value system.

### **3 THE DILEMMA OF INHERITING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF WUSHU IN ANHUI PROVINCE**

#### **3.1 Aging of the Inheritors**

With the growth of the aging population in China, the problem of the aging of the inheritors of the intangible cultural heritage of wushu is becoming more and more obvious, and a series of challenges related to it will also come. For example, during the teaching process, due to ageing, the physical functions of the older generation of Wushu inheritors are gradually declining, and they may not be able to teach Wushu skills well enough to demonstrate some high-intensity Wushu skills. The difficulty in teaching, demonstrating or practicing the techniques over a long period of time may lead to the risk of loss of some martial arts skills in the future[3]. The older generation of inheritors are aging and are not able to perform their skills as they age. As the older generation of inheritors grow older and pass away, if there are not enough younger inheritors to continue the lineage, it will be difficult to continue, resulting in a gap in the transmission of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Some niche, family-oriented martial arts schools may be left uninherited due to the death of the older inheritors. Elderly inheritors are usually the main repositories and disseminators of specific skills and traditional knowledge, which may be permanently lost with the death of the inheritor if they are not recorded and protected in a timely manner.

#### **3.2 Impact of Extra-Territorial Competitive Sports**

In recent years, with the carrier of the Olympic Games and modern new media platforms, extra-territorial competitive sports have been emerging in various forms, and the survival environment of traditional wushu programs has been damaged in a steady state. Traditional Wushu emphasizes internal cultivation and the unity of body and mind, while competitive sports focus more on athletic performance and practical skills. The commercialization and media promotion of extraterritorial competitive sports have put traditional Wushu under competitive pressure, with commercialization as the goal. In addition, extraterritorial competitive sports are usually dominated by competitive performance and rules, whereas traditional Wushu emphasizes cultural heritage and internal training. This different value orientation may lead to an identity crisis of traditional wushu in modern society, especially among the younger generation, and the further promotion of extraterritorial competitive sports may affect the younger generation's cultural identity and identity of traditional wushu. In the context of globalization and cultural diversification, traditional Wushu needs to better position and disseminate its unique cultural values in modern society.

#### **3.3 Weak Basic Theory Research**

Basic theory research has a very important role in the inheritance of Wushu intangible cultural heritage, through which the historical value, cultural value and artistic value of Wushu intangible cultural heritage can be understood in depth. The weak basic theory research problems existed by the current researchers are mainly reflected in four aspects. First, there is a lack of relevant professional researchers in the research team. The number of scholars engaged in this area is relatively small, and the existing scholars in the field of intangible cultural heritage research may have insufficient professional knowledge of wushu, making it difficult for them to carry out in-depth theoretical research on the intangible cultural heritage of wushu. Second, the research content is not specific enough. The historical origin of wushu intangible cultural heritage items is not well sorted out, the cultural connotation is not deeply excavated, and the technical system is not well organized. This makes the inheritance and development of Wushu intangible cultural heritage lack of scientific basis and standards, and is prone to the situation that Wushu intangible cultural heritage items are lost. Thirdly, the research method is insufficient. Currently, the basic theoretical research of martial arts intangible cultural heritage mainly adopts traditional research methods such as documentation method and field investigation method, which have certain value but still have certain limitations and are not comprehensive enough, resulting in the lagging behind of the theoretical research of martial arts intangible cultural heritage[4], restricting the development of martial arts intangible cultural heritage in Anhui Province. Fourth, the research results are less. Due to various aspects of the problem, resulting in martial arts intangible cultural heritage basic theory research of high-quality results are relatively few, many research results are only simple descriptive analysis, lack of depth and innovation, it is difficult to martial arts intangible cultural heritage inheritance and development to play a substantive role in guiding.

#### **3.4 Insufficient Publicity and Promotion**

Doing a good job in publicizing and promoting the intangible cultural heritage of wushu and other related work is crucial to the protection and inheritance of the intangible cultural heritage of wushu. The current inadequacy of publicity and promotion of the intangible cultural heritage of wushu mainly focuses on four aspects. First, the publicity channels are limited. Although some of the Wushu ICH programs occasionally appear on traditional media such as TV

and newspapers, the overall exposure rate is low. In addition, the use of new media is not flexible enough. New media platforms have the advantages of fast dissemination speed and wide coverage. However, many martial arts intangible cultural heritage programs have not been fully publicized on the new media platform. Second, the publicity content lacks attraction. When publicizing the intangible cultural heritage of wushu, people often see only some dry text part of the introduction and some basic movements, the form is relatively boring. Thirdly, there is a lack of professional publicity talents. Wushu intangible cultural heritage of publicity needs to understand the relevant professional knowledge of martial arts, but also has the publicity and promotion skills of the talents. However, such a composite talent is very scarce. In the publicity activities, if there is a lack of professional talent planning and implementation, the publicity effect will be unsatisfactory. Fourthly, public awareness is low. In school education, the content of the intangible cultural heritage of wushu is seldom included in the curriculum, and students seldom have the opportunity to come into contact with this aspect of the content. At the social level, there are fewer publicity activities for the intangible cultural heritage of wushu, and they lack systematicity and continuity. It is difficult for people to come into contact with information related to Wushu ICH in their daily lives, and naturally, it is difficult to generate interest and concern.

## **4 DEVELOPMENT PATH OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF WUSHU IN ANHUI PROVINCE**

### **4.1 Improvement of Basic Theory Research**

The local administration should organize relevant departments to create a research base for the intangible cultural heritage of traditional wushu, and strengthen the research of basic theories. Regular academic exchanges and seminars should be organized, and a reward mechanism should be established to enhance the enthusiasm of academic researchers in their seminars, so as to explore more forms of existence, cultural connotations and contemporary values of traditional martial arts. Establish research institutions and projects, set up a special research institution or research center on the basic theories of traditional martial arts, focus resources on in-depth theoretical exploration and research, carry out systematic research projects on traditional martial arts techniques, historical origins, philosophical thoughts, etc., promote the accumulation and deepening of theoretical knowledge, and analyze the intrinsic value of the intangible cultural heritage of wushu in depth. At the same time, the traditional martial arts intangible cultural heritage of Anhui Province can also be introduced into the major universities in Anhui Province, the scientific interface between physical education and martial arts intangible cultural heritage in Anhui universities, which not only improves the depth of the basic theoretical research on martial arts intangible cultural heritage, but also further realizes the goal of promoting the reform of university sports.

### **4.2 Improve the Inheritance Mechanism and Establish an Incentive System**

Traditional martial arts as a culture not only need to be protected, but also need to be inherited. The inheritor is the transmitter of the wushu program, and the inheritor is always the main body of the inheritance. The inheritance of the intangible cultural heritage of wushu is mainly characterized by word and example, master and disciple inheritance, family inheritance, association inheritance and modern technology-assisted inheritance, etc., and the inheritor of wushu plays a vital role in the middle of this. In the long course of history, due to the infringement of the main body of the inheritors, countless traditional martial arts texts have been destroyed, resulting in the loss of countless skills and hindering the development of traditional martial arts. Therefore, there is an urgent need to innovate the mode of protection for the inheritors of wushu. We should break the original inheritance system, broaden the new development path and direction, and establish an innovative and effective inheritance system. In addition, an effective inheritance incentive system can be established. The local administration can improve the enthusiasm of the inheritors through financial support and honorary titles. Once the problem of the inheritors' immediate needs has been solved, a healthy ecosystem conducive to the inheritance of Anhui traditional wushu can be established to motivate more people to devote themselves to the study, teaching and promotion of traditional wushu, and ensure that it can be sustained in the modern society, so as to ensure its inheritance and development, and to enable the traditional wushu to stand firm and continue to flourish in the new era. Anhui traditional wushu can stand firmly in the new era, and then carry forward.

### **4.3 Increased Publicity**

As traditional martial arts programs are limited by geography, most of them are circulated in the folklore, and people's awareness of their main contents is low. For these problems, we can increase publicity by taking relevant measures. First, build a digital publicity platform. By building an online platform and developing a special website or application program, we can show the history, techniques and inheritance of Anhui Wushu intangible cultural heritage projects. And deliver detailed information and educational content to the public through illustrations and video demonstrations. Secondly, make good use of Internet marketing and social media to enrich the forms of publicity. The Internet has changed people's concept of time and space. With the help of the Internet, intangible cultural heritage of martial arts can get rid of the constraints of geography and natural environment, and then break through the restrictions of time and space, so as to win a broader space for the spread of intangible cultural heritage of martial arts[5]. Through social media such as Weibo, Tiktok, Xiaohongshu, WeChat short videos, etc., to produce exquisite promotional videos and short

films, fully demonstrate the charm and characteristics of Anhui Wushu intangible cultural heritage project, and attract young people and the general netizens to pay attention to and participate in the project. Furthermore, combining virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technology to create an immersive experience, utilizing VR and AR technology to provide learners with immersive experiences, such as virtual reality training sites, skill demonstrations, etc., enhances the publicity effect and learners' sense of participation, and facilitates the teaching of traditional martial arts. In addition, cooperation between schools and communities can be strengthened. Through the cooperation between schools and communities, education and training activities on the intangible cultural heritage programs of wushu can be vigorously carried out, so that more young people of the new generation can understand and learn these wushu skills and pass on the intangible cultural heritage. In the learning process can also organize martial arts intangible cultural heritage project tournaments, through the form of competition to enhance the recognition and influence of Anhui martial arts intangible cultural heritage project, so as to attract more people to participate in and pay attention to. Finally, do a solid job of cultural tourism route planning. Wushu intangible cultural heritage projects into the planning and promotion of cultural tourism, the design of special tourism routes and experience projects, to attract more tourists and cultural enthusiasts to visit and experience.

#### **4.4 Utilizing the Management Role of Local administrations**

The inheritance and development of Anhui wushu intangible cultural heritage always need the support of local administration, and many facts are enough to show that if the local intangible cultural heritage protection and development can be vigorously supported by the administration, it can be developed very well. Therefore, the administration and relevant departments should play a leading role, pay attention to the declaration and management of the intangible cultural heritage of wushu, and actively organize the list of intangible cultural heritage of wushu at all levels. To do a good job of declaration management, we can do it through four aspects. First, do a good job in the investigation and screening of martial arts intangible cultural heritage projects, and prepare a list of intangible cultural heritage. Conduct systematic investigation and screening of traditional martial arts programs in Anhui Province, develop a detailed list of intangible cultural heritage, and establish the history of each traditional martial arts program, the characteristics of the techniques and their inheritance status. Second, to determine the protection and inheritance program and formulate protection measures. According to the characteristics of traditional martial arts programs in Anhui Province and the threats they face, develop corresponding protection measures, including the support of laws and regulations, the investment of special funds and the establishment of protection institutions. In addition, do a good job of establishing the system of inheritance plan and training. We need to make a detailed inheritance plan, including training of inheritors, organizing skills transfer, holding traditional martial arts training courses, etc., to ensure that the skills can be passed on continuously. Thirdly, the administration needs to provide financial assistance to the inheritors and arrange venue facilities. We need to clarify the will of the inheritors, with the public as the core, and create a place for them to learn theoretical knowledge. Regularly hold martial arts intangible cultural heritage festivals to enhance the public's ideological awareness. The administration's financial rewards for the inheritors should mainly focus on spiritual support and supplemented by economic support to avoid the phenomenon of "supporting" the inheritors[6]. Fourth, establish a resource guarantee system. Establish a sound resource guarantee system, including the provision of venues and facilities, the guarantee of equipment and the construction of talent teams, to support the daily operation and development needs of traditional wushu. The declaration and management of the intangible cultural heritage of wushu is well done, which can make the rich and diversified intangible cultural heritage of traditional wushu in Anhui not only show the diversity and deep heritage of local culture, but also provide important resources and references for the cultural inheritance and innovation of contemporary society. By strengthening the protection, inheritance and publicity, the influence and sustainable development ability of these intangible cultural heritage programs can be further enhanced, so that they can show new vitality and value in modern society.

## **5 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Anhui Wushu has an important position in Chinese traditional martial arts and represents one of the rich martial arts cultures in China. The intangible cultural heritage of Anhui Wushu is not only a treasure of Chinese civilization, but also an important symbol and practice of cultural self-confidence of the Chinese nation. In addition, it plays an important social function in local communities and folk life. It is not only an inheritance of physical skills, but also promotes social cohesion and cultural identity through forms such as master-disciple inheritance and collective performance. Anhui Wushu Intangible Cultural Heritage has incorporated a large number of folk stories and local legends in the process of inheritance, which not only pass on skills, but also convey values and moral ethics, becoming an important part of local cultural traditions. In today's society, with the emphasis on cultural diversity and the continuous improvement of regulations for the protection of intangible cultural heritage, the protection and inheritance of Anhui Wushu is particularly important. By strengthening education, research and cultural exchanges, focusing on the declaration and management of the intangible cultural heritage of martial arts, etc., and promoting the dissemination and popularization of Anhui Wushu in the whole country and even internationally, it not only helps to carry forward the diversity and uniqueness of Chinese culture, but also provides an important way for the world to understand and respect the traditional Chinese culture. The inheritance and development of the intangible culture of Anhui Wushu cannot be separated from our efforts, and everyone should contribute his or her part to its inheritance and development, and jointly

guard and pass on this precious cultural heritage, and work hard for the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

### COMPETING INTERESTS

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