

# Research on The Functions of Local Government in The Protection and Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage

-- Take Taijiquan As an Example

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**Abstract:** Intangible cultural heritage is not only the historical memory of a nation and a region, but also the cultural link connecting the feelings of a nation and a region. With the development of the times, the protection of intangible cultural heritage is facing many problems, such as lack of non genetic inheritance and single traditional means of communication. The local government is one of the main bodies of the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage. How to play the role of local government in the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage is a problem worthy of our serious consideration. Taijiquan, originated from Chenjiagou, Jiaozuo City, is one of the first batch of intangible cultural heritage in China. On December 17, 2020, it was listed in the representative list of human intangible cultural heritage of UNESCO. Taijiquan has an important position in China's intangible cultural heritage. Taking Taijiquan as an example, this paper analyzes the current situation and existing problems of the development of Taijiquan, and discusses the functions of local government in the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

**Keywords:** Intangible Cultural Heritage, Government Functions, Taijiquan, Inheritance And Protection.

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## 1. Theoretical Basis

### 1.1. Tntangible Cultural Heritage

For intangible cultural heritage, the Japanese government was the first to put forward and attach importance to it. As early as 1950, the Japanese government first proposed the concept of "intangible cultural property". In the Convention on the protection of the intangible cultural heritage adopted by UNESCO in 2003, intangible cultural heritage refers to "various social practices, concept expressions, forms of expression, knowledge, skills and related tools, objects, handicrafts and cultural sites that are regarded by communities, groups and sometimes individuals as part of their cultural heritage". In addition to defining the concept content, the Convention also makes clear the characteristics of intangible cultural heritage that distinguish it from other heritage, that is, "this intangible cultural heritage is handed down from generation to generation, and is constantly recreated in the process of adaptation of communities and groups to the surrounding environment and interaction with nature and history, so as to provide these communities and groups with a sense of identity and continuity, thus enhancing respect for cultural diversity and human creativity" [1]. In the notice on strengthening the protection of cultural heritage, the State Council defined the concept of intangible cultural heritage, which refers to all kinds of traditional cultural expressions closely related to the people's lives and inherited from generation to generation in intangible form, including oral traditions, traditional performing arts, folk activities and rituals and festivals, folk traditional knowledge and practice related to nature and the universe Traditional handicraft skills, and cultural space related to the above-mentioned traditional cultural expressions [2]. On February 25, 2011, the 19th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 11th National

People's Congress adopted the intangible cultural heritage law of the people's Republic of China, Article 2 of Chapter 1 stipulates: "For the purposes of this law, intangible cultural heritage refers to various traditional cultural expressions handed down from generation to generation by the people of all ethnic groups and regarded as an integral part of their cultural heritage, as well as physical objects and places related to traditional cultural expressions. It includes: traditional oral literature and language as its carrier; traditional fine arts, calligraphy, music, dance, drama, quyi and acrobatics; traditional skills, medicine and calendars; traditional etiquette, festivals and other folk customs; and tradition Sports and recreation; Other intangible cultural heritage "[3].

### 1.2. Government Functions

Government function refers to the behavior direction, basic tasks and scope of responsibilities of public organizations with the government as the core, which are determined according to the needs of social and economic development in a certain period of time. Among them, the procedural functions of the government refer to the general or universal management functions of government organizations in the process of managing public affairs, government affairs and the government's own affairs, reflecting the commonness of management activities and the most basic and universal functions in all management activities, including planning functions, organization functions, leadership functions and control functions; The mission function of government organizations is the mission that the government must undertake in the process of social public affairs management according to the public's authorization and concern for the government, mainly including four aspects of economy, politics, culture and social functions [4].

### 1.3. Local Government

The full name of local government is "local people's government", which refers to the general name of government organizations that manage the affairs of a national administrative region. In China, it is the people's government at all levels relative to the Central People's government. Article 95 of the Constitution stipulates that "provinces, municipalities directly under the central government, cities, counties and townships shall establish people's congresses and people's governments". In addition to special administrative regions, local governments in China are divided into four levels: "province, city, county and township". The local government corresponding to this article refers to "municipal government". As the general name of government organizations that manage the affairs of a municipal administrative region, municipal government links the central government and provincial government upward, and county (District) government and township government downward. It is an indispensable intermediate link of the state power and the basic administrative region for the whole national economic and social development [5].

## 2. Necessity of Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection and Inheritance

At present, in the world, in addition to the competition of "hard power" such as economy, science and technology, military, etc., the competition of cultural soft power is becoming more and more intense. Cultural soft power has increasingly become the core factor determining the comprehensive national strength. As an important part of traditional culture, intangible cultural heritage is an indispensable part of improving China's cultural soft power. However, with the acceleration of economic globalization and social modernization, China's intangible cultural heritage is being increasingly affected. Consciously or unconsciously, we have destroyed and buried many valuable intangible cultural heritage around us, and many excellent traditional cultures are on the verge of extinction. Professor Tian Qing, an expert on the protection of China's intangible cultural heritage, once pointed out that "ancient traditions, including our folk customs, are weak cultures in the face of modernization. If you don't protect them and promote them, they will disappear, and the rate of disappearance is as fast as our economic development" [6]. Xie Chensheng, an expert on cultural relics protection, also said: "for a nation, history is the root and culture is the soul. If the root is broken and the soul is lost, the nation will not exist. What more can we talk about national rejuvenation" [7]. How to get rid of the predicament and protect the intangible cultural heritage is an urgent and important issue.

Because of its immateriality and publicity, intangible cultural heritage determines the leading position of the government in the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, and it has an unshirkable responsibility. In recent years, both the central and local governments have taken the protection of intangible cultural heritage as a key work to improve the country's cultural soft power, implemented it step by step, and promulgated relevant laws and policies. However, as specific protection measures, local governments still have some responsibility problems, and have not really become the backbone in the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

## 3. Development Status and Existing Problems of Taijiquan

### 3.1. Development Status

According to historical records, Chen Wangting, the "originator of Tai Chi" in the late Ming Dynasty and the early Qing Dynasty, absorbed the essence of boxing from various schools on the basis of his family's martial arts and compiled a new kind of boxing called Chen's Tai Chi. Chen's boxing, which combines the principles of Tai Chi Yin and Yang in the book of changes, the meridian theory of traditional Chinese medicine, and the guiding and breathing skills. Later, it evolved into five schools, namely Chen's, Yang's, Wu's, Wu's and Sun's. Taijiquan originated in Chenjiagou, Wen County, Jiaozuo City, Henan Province, and has a history of nearly 400 years. After the founding of new China, China established special research and promotion institutions. In 1984, the successor of Chen's Taijiquan broke the rules of the ancestral training of "passing on the inside without passing on the outside, and passing on the male without passing on the female". Taijiquan developed rapidly [8]. In 2005, the Chinese Wushu Association awarded Jiaozuo the title of "Taiji Holy Land". In 2006, the State Council announced Chen Style Taijiquan as the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage. In 2007, the Chinese Folk Writers and Artists Association and the Chinese Martial Arts Association named Wen County as the "birthplace of Chinese Taijiquan" and the "birthplace of Chinese martial arts Taijiquan". In 2008, Taijiquan was officially recommended by the former Ministry of Culture as a representative work of human intangible cultural heritage. In 2012, the Chinese Wushu Association and Henan Wushu management center set up the Chinese Wushu Duan examination and evaluation center and Henan Wushu Duan system Taijiquan evaluation center in Jiaozuo. On the evening of December 17, 2020, at the 15th UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the protection of intangible cultural heritage, "Taijiquan" was included in the UNESCO representative list of human intangible cultural heritage.

As a cultural brand of the Chinese nation and a treasure of Chinese martial arts, Taijiquan is not only a valuable cultural resource of Jiaozuo City, but also a cultural card of Jiaozuo and even Henan Province. Taijiquan is widely accepted and recognized by the public under the vigorous promotion of Jiaozuo Municipal government, and has a high popularity. First, the Taijiquan cultural industry project has been steadily promoted. Tai Chi Sports Center, Tai Chi ancestral temple, Tai Chi ancestral forest, Tai Chi Culture Park, Tai Chi theme museum and other Tai Chi cultural industry projects have been completed one after another. Second, the protection of Taijiquan intangible cultural heritage projects has been strengthened. Since 2006, Chen Style Taijiquan has been included in the national intangible cultural heritage. Currently, Jiaozuo has 4 national Taijiquan inheritors, 4 provincial inheritors and 15 municipal inheritors. More than 8000 people have won the Taijiquan martial arts rank, more than 10000 Taijiquan instructors, nearly 10000 boxers have been taught outside the province for a long time, and more than 1000 boxers have been taught abroad, providing a solid talent support for the high-quality inheritance and protection of Taijiquan. Third, the promotion and popularization of Taijiquan has achieved remarkable results. The number of Taijiquan associations, martial arts schools, counseling stations, family martial arts schools and large-scale Taijiquan

training institutions in the city is increasing, and the number of students is also increasing. According to incomplete statistics, there are more than 800000 people practicing Taijiquan in Jiaozuo alone, more than 50 martial arts schools and schools, and more than 200 grass-roots associations. Fourth, the influence of Taijiquan competition is expanding. Jiaozuo vigorously holds various forms and scales of Taijiquan competitions, mainly including Jiaozuo Taijiquan exchange competition, Wen County Chenjiagou Taijiquan annual meeting, Chenjiagou martial arts college Taijiquan Invitational Competition, Konglong Wulin conference, etc. these competitions fully show the charm of Taijiquan [9]. At present, Taijiquan has spread to more than 150 countries and regions around the world, with nearly 400 million practitioners, of which more than 70 countries and regions have established Taijiquan practice organizations. As a symbol of Chinese traditional culture, Tai Chi has become a bridge and link for foreign cultural exchanges.

After Taijiquan is listed in the UNESCO representative list of human intangible cultural heritage, Jiaozuo City will, under the guidance of the Ministry of culture and tourism, and with the cooperation of relevant communities, groups and individuals, support the Taijiquan protection coordination committee to complete the five-year protection plan of Taijiquan (2021-2025) in accordance with the spirit of the UNESCO Convention on the protection of intangible cultural heritage. In terms of evaluation and monitoring, we will do a good job in fulfilling the contract. As the birthplace of Taijiquan, Wen County will take advantage of the successful application for world heritage of Taijiquan, seize the strategic overlapping opportunities of ecological protection and high-quality development of the Yellow River Basin, the rise of the central region, the integration of Zhengzhou metropolitan area, and the "two mountains and two fists", build a new IP of Chenjiagou with high standards, hold non-cultural heritage publicity and promotion in various forms, let the world know Taijiquan, let Taijiquan go to the world, and further raise the world brand of Taijiquan [8].

## **3.2. Existing Problems**

### **3.2.1. Nonstandard Education Inheritance**

There are mainly the following problems: (1) there are many inheritors, and the training management is not in place. After the establishment of inheritors, there is no special organization to carry out follow-up management, and the management and evaluation of inheritors are relatively loose; (2) School education inherits and inherits independently, lacks unified standards, there are many Taijiquan halls, and the teaching quality is uneven. Some of the halls teach according to the characteristics of the boxers who opened them. The teaching management of Taijiquan in Colleges and universities is independent, and the teaching materials and teaching lack unified standards; (3) The inheritance products of social education are disorderly and the industrial chain is incomplete.

### **3.2.2. Lack of Resultant Effect**

The first is the lack of overall planning. There is Taiji everywhere, but it can not reflect the core value of Taiji Culture. Secondly, the existing Taijiquan related products in Chenjiagou are scattered and isolated, and the Taijiquan halls, training schools and Taijiquan product manufacturers of various schools are also fighting their own battles. Although Jiaozuo has abundant teachers and Taijiquan professionals, the development of Taijiquan industry has not formed a joint

force.

### **3.2.3. Propagation Path and Strength Need to Be Improved**

At present, only "one competition and one festival" and "two mountains and two boxing" have certain influence. Other competitions, seminars and cultural festivals related to Tai Chi are few in number and low in level. In the external communication, there is no formal or fixed communication channel similar to the "Confucius Institute". Basically, it is "free" learning, and there is no institutionalization or systematization.

## **4. Functions and Performance of The Government**

### **4.1. Planning Function**

#### **4.1.1. Do A Good Job In The Top-level Design And Long-term Planning of The Protection Work**

What is done in advance is done, and what is not done in advance is abandoned. The protection of intangible cultural heritage is not only a systematic project, but also a basic and arduous work that will benefit the present and the future. This requires the coordination, continuity and coherence of the protection of intangible cultural heritage, and the continuous efforts of departments at all levels and relevant staff. Therefore, the protection and inheritance of Taijiquan should be based on full and careful investigation, find out the real situation of the project and the inheritors, widely listen to the opinions and suggestions of all parties, and prepare the overall plan for the protection and development of Taijiquan, including special funds and the cultivation of inheritors, And determine the overall goal and the sub goals of each stage.

#### **4.1.2. Do A Good Job in The Training And Support Plan of Inheritors**

First, establish a special institution to carry out unified and standardized management on the research and related inheritance activities of Chen's Taijiquan; Secondly, set up a special team to conduct in-depth research on Chen Style Taijiquan and carry out special activities to educate and inherit Chen Style Taijiquan; Thirdly, the selection and assessment system of inheritors should be established to scientifically manage inheritors. We should establish a scientific management system to standardize the management of inheritors. In the determination of inheritors, we comprehensively consider and scientifically judge, and select the benchmark figure of "virtue and art" as the leader. A complete assessment system should be established to further cultivate, educate and standardize the management of the selected inheritors, with awards and penalties. Only in this way can the inheritance of Chen Style Taijiquan often have fresh blood and constantly burst into new vitality.

### **4.2. Organizational Functions**

#### **4.2.1. Encourage Social Organizations to Participate**

Non governmental organizations play an extremely important role in the "confirmation, filing, research and preservation" of intangible cultural heritage. The media, business, expert academia, colleges and universities, primary and secondary schools, industry associations, non-governmental organizations and inheritors' alliances are all forces that can not be underestimated in the protection of intangible cultural heritage. The government should create a good atmosphere to guide the development of third-party

institutions or organizations, We should modestly listen to and absorb the opinions and suggestions of various parties, and encourage more people to participate in it.

#### **4.2.2. Strengthen Publicity**

The news media, especially the emerging media, with its unique operation and communication mode, influence the public's understanding of something implicitly. The government can use the news media and other emerging media to publicize and popularize Taijiqian and related knowledge to the public, so that the grassroots can accept and understand it, and even take the initiative to learn and identify with it.

#### **4.2.3. Play the Role of School Inheritance**

Increase the investment in Taijiqian education and integrate the awareness of Taijiqian inheritance and protection into the awareness of young people. For example, add relevant majors and courses in local or local colleges and universities to enhance the awareness of talents of all types and levels in inheriting and protecting intangible cultural heritage; Encourage local high schools and primary schools to carry out research and education related to Taijiqian.

### **4.3. Control Function**

#### **4.3.1. Strengthen Market Supervision and Management**

The market is the second main body of intangible cultural heritage protection outside the government, and plays an irreplaceable role in the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage. When relevant enterprises intervene, the government should strengthen its supervision function to prevent "market failure" caused by the lack of supervision and excessive laxity of the market, or damage due to market development. At the same time, regular or irregular inspections will be conducted on relevant business units to check their operation and development, and certain penalties will be imposed on unqualified enterprises.

#### **4.3.2. Improve Relevant Laws and Regulations**

On the basis of the intangible cultural heritage protection law promulgated by the state, Jiaozuo City should refine the content of the law according to the local actual situation, and form targeted local laws, regulations or policy systems related to the protection and inheritance of Taijiqian.

### **4.4. Leadership Functions**

#### **4.4.1. Improve the Leadership Mechanism for The Protection and Inheritance of Taijiqian**

In accordance with the law of the people's Republic of China on intangible cultural heritage and relevant laws and regulations, the authorities and main tasks of the competent cultural departments and relevant departments of Jiaozuo government for the protection of intangible cultural heritage, including Taijiqian, should be clearly defined, and a unified leadership, efficient and coordinated system of departments for the protection of intangible cultural heritage should be established, giving full play to the role of Municipal Local Party committees in taking the overall situation into account and coordinating all parties, By integrating the resources of all departments, pooling consensus, coordinating all parties in a unified way, we can solve the major decisions and arrangements for outstanding and difficult problems in the protection of intangible cultural heritage. At the same time, we should be good at coordinating and giving full play to the close cooperation between the Bureau of culture, radio, tourism, the Bureau of industry and commerce, and the tax

bureau and the protection of intangible cultural heritage. We should establish the main departments of the local government for the protection of intangible cultural heritage. Establish a smooth cooperation mechanism between local departments and subordinate departments and their staff, set up fixed discussion bodies and efficient implementation processes, strengthen the efficient implementation of resolutions and policies of Party committees and governments, and comprehensively promote the orderly and effective implementation of the intangible cultural heritage protection system project. In addition, to establish and improve the scientific supervision, evaluation and accountability mechanism, it is necessary to clearly formulate the supervision, evaluation and accountability system and its working mechanism for the protection of intangible cultural heritage, so as to improve the executive power of government departments at all levels [1].

#### **4.4.2. Improve The Fund Guarantee Mechanism For The Protection And Inheritance of Taijiqian**

What intangible cultural heritage protection needs is the comprehensive support of all sectors of society. It is far from enough to rely on government subsidies alone. Social forces are also the backbone of intangible cultural heritage protection. The government should expand the local sources of funds for intangible cultural heritage protection, build a diversified fund-raising mechanism, mobilize the enthusiasm of all sectors of society, and ensure that intangible cultural heritage protection has sufficient material foundation; In addition, it is suggested that the processing procedures and tax rates for the projects of the productive development of intangible cultural heritage should be reduced or exempted, and the relevant enterprises, organizations and individuals should be given a reasonable financial discount according to the actual situation [10].

## **5. Conclusion**

The economic and social development in the new era has brought both opportunities and challenges to the inheritance and protection of intangible cultural heritage. Taijiqian, originated from Jiaozuo, Henan Province, is the first batch of intangible cultural heritage in China, and is also a world-class intangible cultural heritage. It has become a cultural card of Jiaozuo City and even Henan Province

Boxing is an important representative of Chinese culture. At the moment of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, we must protect and inherit excellent traditional culture. Therefore, in the new era, Jiaozuo government should combine with the local actual situation, earnestly perform various functions of the government, and do a good job in the protection and inheritance of Taijiqian.

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