

## Research on the Historical Evolution and Cultural Inheritance of Chinese Wushu

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**Abstract:** Wushu, as a representative of Chinese national traditional sports, demonstrates China's unique sports system and history and culture. This paper points out the similarities and differences between modern martial arts and traditional martial arts, and obtains a common understanding of traditional martial arts in different periods through the conceptual analysis of traditional martial arts. This paper summarizes the technical system of traditional martial arts techniques, and summarizes the external behavior performance of "style", "move", "set" and "fist" of Chinese martial arts movement techniques. Analyze the ideological evolution of Chinese Wushu during the late Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China. Combine the transformation of movement techniques with the evolution of ideas to further summarize the development patterns of Chinese Wushu in different periods. Highlighting the role of the National Games in the development history of Wushu, analyzing the development history of Wushu in the National Games. It also analyzes the modern inheritance of Chinese wushu from two aspects, namely the development of socialization of wushu activities and the development of wushu education in university wushu competitions respectively. The survey data show that the socialization of traditional wushu still has certain constraints and needs to be reformed for promotion. There are more and more colleges and athletes participating in wushu competitions, and the injury and illness situation of the competitions has always been kept within the controllable range. The influence of Chinese Wushu in the field of culture, education, and sports has significantly increased.

**Keywords:** Traditional Wushu; Wushu Techniques; National Games; Ideological Evolution; Development Mode

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Chinese Wushu is one of the treasures of Chinese culture, and its long history and tradition have united the wisdom and courage of the Chinese nation. The origin of Wushu can be traced back to ancient activities such as war, hunting and dancing, and after a long period of evolution and development, it has formed a unique kungfu system and cultural heritage (Clements, 2016; Lau, 2022; Lorge, 2012; Yang, 2011). The history of Chinese Wushu can be traced back to the Xia Dynasty period of more than three thousand years B.C. At that time, Wushu techniques were mainly related to activities such as war and defense. During the Han Dynasty,

martial arts were developed more systematically, and three schools of martial arts - Southern Shaolin, Northern Shaolin, and Kongdong School - were gradually formed during this period (Acevedo & Cheung, 2010; Filipiak, 2010; Judkins, 2014; Wang, 2012). During the Tang Dynasty, martial arts began to be widely used in the life of the court and the scholarly community, and gradually developed into an art form related to the culture and spirit of the state (Lorge, 2018; Wu, 2017; Zhouxiang, 2020). During the Song Dynasty, there was a more detailed and exquisite development of wushu techniques, as well as a more mature and complete teaching system (Wile, 2020; Yates, 2015; Zhang & Leng, 2021). During the Ming Dynasty, wushu became an independent art form and was more widely disseminated through some literary works such as miscellaneous dramas and martial arts plays (Allen, 2014; SONG & ZHOU, 2017). The inheritance of Chinese martial arts has always been an arduous task that requires a lot of time, energy and perseverance behind it (Jiang et al., 2016; Wang & Liu, 2017). The transmission undoubtedly begins with the master-disciple relationship, which can be traced back to the period of the ancient Chinese aristocracy, which spanned more than 2,000 years (Chen, 2017; Cheng & Guo, 2024; Qian, 2024). The concept of inheritance is mainly based on the development and growth of skills through learning, practicing and practicing over time (Li & Dai, 2021; Ma, 2023). This paper makes a certain conceptual distinction between traditional martial arts, constructs a complete technical system of traditional martial arts techniques based on the characteristics of traditional martial arts techniques, and summarizes the Chinese martial arts movement techniques as "style", "move", "set" and "fist". The evolution of Chinese martial arts thought is presented in two stages, pointing out the values of each stage in turn (the value of the cultural heritage of "martial arts heroism" in the late Qing Dynasty, the attributes of civil society organizations in revolt, and today's "scientization"). It proposes the development pattern of Chinese Wushu in different periods and summarizes the characteristics of the development trend of Wushu in each period. Combined with the development of wushu in the National Games, the current situation of socialization of wushu activities, and wushu competitions in colleges and universities, it explores the inheritance and development of Chinese wushu.

## 2. EVOLUTION OF MARTIAL ARTS MOVEMENT TECHNIQUES

### 2.1 Modern and Traditional Wushu

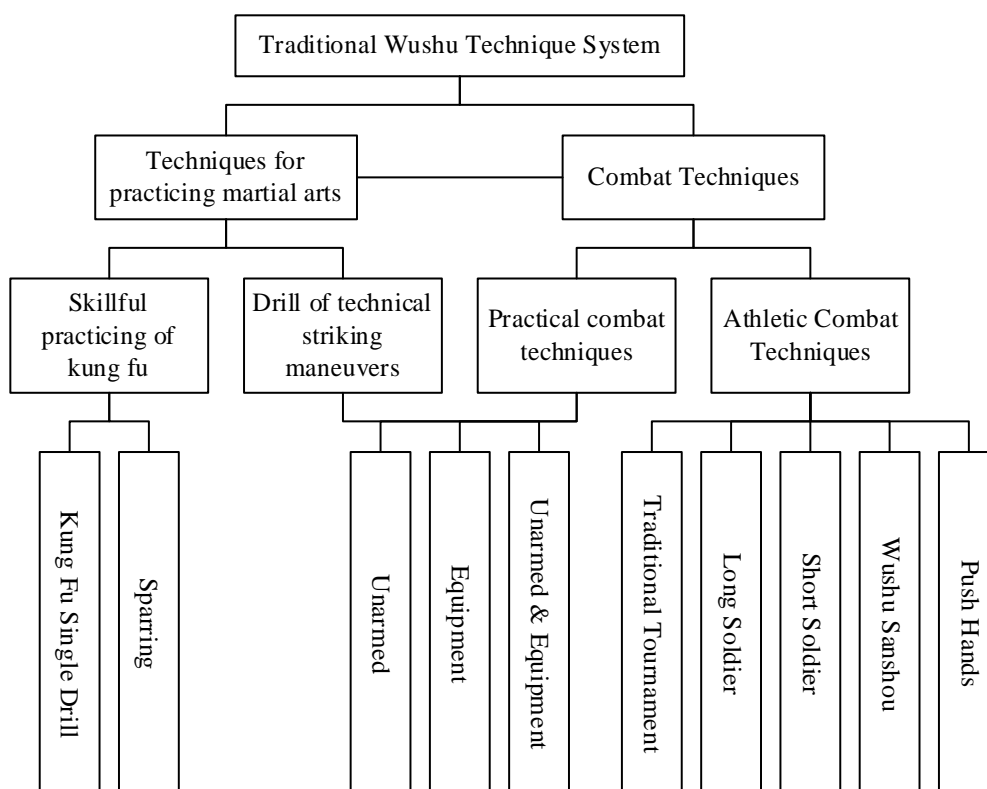
Traditional wushu, as a part of traditional Chinese culture, was formed

and developed along with the formation of traditional societies is a concept with a very broad content and a large coverage (Ma, 2023; Wang, 2022). In the 1950s, in view of the corresponding change in the degree of emphasis on the functions of wushu as physical fitness, recreation, and competition, people called wushu as modern wushu with the main purpose of competition. In contrast to the competitive wushu, the inherent wushu became the traditional wushu. The definition of the concept of traditional wushu is mainly discussed from different perspectives, such as logic, sociology and culture. There are differences in the concept of traditional wushu in different historical periods, which is related to the social environment in which people lived at that time and the differences in people's cognition and social practice in each period. However, in general, with the development of society and the improvement of people's cognitive ability, the definition of the concept of traditional wushu has been constantly undergoing contemporary refinement. By analyzing the concept of traditional wushu, it can be concluded that the common understanding of the concept of traditional wushu in different periods is: (1) Affirmation of the technical nature of traditional wushu. (2) The use of routines and combat fighting as forms of exercise. (3) The attributes of national sports both internally and externally.

## 2.2 Traditional Wushu Striking Technique System

According to the characteristics of traditional wushu combat, a complete technical system of traditional wushu combat is constructed, that is, it includes rehearsal techniques and practical combat techniques as well as related means and methods of gongfu training. The second level of rehearsal technology is divided into gongfu rehearsal and striking action rehearsal, and the actual combat technology is divided into practical actual combat technology and competitive actual combat technology. The third level has gongfu single practice and sparring practice. The community of technical striking movement rehearsal and practical real combat technology is now unarmed, equipment, unarmed and equipment. Competitive practical combat techniques are currently held in Wushu Sanshou (mature program), Push Hands (mature program), traditional boxing ring (experimental stage), short arms (provisional) long arms (provisional), etc. The structure of traditional wushu combat techniques is shown in Figure 1. The traditional Wushu techniques emphasize the “noble softness and female guarding” method of ingenuity, the use of wonderful, rich and varied. In space, there are three ways: upper, middle and lower, and four directions: front, back, left and right. In terms of time, it is fast, slow, quick,

slow, staccato and frustrated, and in terms of strength, it is rigid, soft, brittle, sheer, shaking and transforming. Attack is seven fists and use, defense and counterattack is a thousand variations, formed a diversity of attack and defense, attack and defense conversion rapid technical system. The training of both technical and combat techniques has its own specialized practice methods. Strength, speed, sensitivity, flexibility, balance and resistance to blows are practiced for the offensive movements of each part of the body. For example, the traditional piling, strengthening, fitness, health and modern scientific means of practicing strength, speed, sensitivity, flexibility, balance, etc., can lay the foundation or improve the effect of practicing techniques and actual combat techniques. In practicing to improve the ability of technical combat, in the actual combat to refine the effect of technical combat, practiced to be able to strike to injure, can overcome the enemy to win, can be point to point, free to put, but also to show the technical combat rehearsal skills, according to the time, according to the situation, according to the situation.



**Figure 1:** Traditional Martial Arts Technique Architecture

## 2.3 Evolution of Chinese Wushu Movement Techniques

### 2.3.1 Chinese Martial Arts

Chinese martial arts, also known as national arts or wushu, is a kind of social activity formed by the Chinese people after a long period of life

practice and historical accumulation. It has a broad mass base and is the crystallization of the culture and wisdom of the Chinese nation. The technical behavior shown by people practicing it refers to the purposeful physical activities shown by the practitioners in the process of practicing martial arts according to the external environment and their own understanding of Chinese Wushu. Since Chinese Wushu is a whole, the technical behavior of Chinese Wushu is the common technical behavior of the majority of practitioners in the same era. It embodies the consciousness of the majority of practitioners in the same period of time, and manifests itself as an overall technical behavior. Every movement of Chinese Wushu practitioners is their technical behavior, and every technical behavior has different inner needs and purposes to achieve.

### 2.3.2 “Style, Move, Set, Punch”

In the early stage of the technical behavior of Chinese Wushu, due to the less accumulation of all kinds of human experience, the first thing that was formed was purely attacking behavior. In the later stage, due to the fact that the Chinese ancestors added the sense of defense into the attack and the accumulation of various fighting experiences, the technical behavior of both attack and defense appeared. In this paper, this kind of technical behavior of both attack and defense is called the “move” of Chinese Wushu technical behavior. When China's history evolved into the Tang and Song dynasties, the economy and culture were well developed, and there were many demands for Chinese martial arts in the society, and “sets” with various functions appeared. Known as the Chinese martial arts technical behavior of the “set”. In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the emergence of many schools and portals led to the evolution of many types of Chinese martial arts, known as the technical behavior of the Chinese martial arts “boxing”.

"Style", "Move", "Set" and "Fist" are the external technical behaviors of Chinese martial arts, and the selection of Chinese martial arts technical behaviors according to the chronological order.

The formation process of the “style” can be found in the maturity of the Chinese ancestors were already able to make relatively sharp and pointed weapons.

The “moves” of Chinese martial arts technical behavior were formed in the Neolithic period or even earlier, and matured in the Qin Dynasty at the beginning of feudal society. At this time, the “moves” were mainly based on offense and defense fighting, and at the same time, they also met the needs of people's entertainment. It is the transition from human fighting

behavior to Chinese fighting behavior.

The outstanding artistic value of the "set" of Chinese martial arts technical behavior is as a technique of offensive and defensive technical attack, and the artistic pursuit of "not fighting" begins to appear at the stage when its technical behavior evolves to the stage of "set".

The type of boxing began to appear in the Ming and Qing dynasties and has been widely recognized by the academic community. Therefore, the "fist" of Chinese martial arts technical behavior was formed in the Ming and Qing dynasties, which contains the characteristics and values of "style", "move" and "set", and is a huge cluster of Chinese martial arts technical behavior.

### 3. EVOLUTION OF THE IDEOLOGY OF CHINESE MARTIAL ARTS

The technical value of martial arts has always been the most important value of martial arts. With the development of history, the change of times, and in the process of fusion with different cultures, the value of wushu began to gradually differentiate. Until the pre-Qin period, as a relatively independent cultural form of wushu, wushu activities basically began to differentiate from military activities.

#### 3.1 Late Qing Period

##### 3.1.1 The Cultural Implications of the Late Qing Dynasty's "Martial Arts Heroism"

In a certain sense, it is the value of the attributes of the martial arts demonstrated in the "battlefield" and "two by two" combat that has enabled the martial arts to be passed on in the wheel of Chinese history, and the flame has not been extinguished. As a result, since ancient times, in the colorful value system of martial arts, the value of its attributes has always had an unshakeable dominant position. It was not until the Ming and Qing Dynasties that this situation quietly changed. That is to say, the functional value layer of martial arts began to come into its own and was emphasized by people. This is mainly due to the emergence of firearms and gradually replaced the military role of cold weapons, cold weapons gradually withdrew from the stage of military battles. However, the martial arts did not come to an end with the end of the military martial arts, but on the contrary were more widely developed. At that time, a large number of people stood in the height of saving the country and extinguishing the

seed, issued a strong voice of the people any chivalry, vigorously advocating that all people should carry forward the spirit of martial arts. To martial arts chivalry, through martial arts to stretch the people's energy, strong country and people, this strong advocate of chivalry voice, but also strongly promote the rise of the trend of martial arts. As a result, the idea of chivalry, which was formed in the pre-Qin era, became a tide of thought for national salvation in the late Qing Dynasty.

### 3.1.2 Instrumental Attributes of Civil Disobedience Movements

Firearms, which had already appeared on the battlefields of the Song Dynasty, had long played a subsidiary role for various reasons. Traditional martial arts have always occupied an important position as a means of warfare. In the late Qing Dynasty, during the windy and dramatic peasant revolutionary struggles of dozens of times, martial arts became an important weapon for the peasants to resist the imperialist invaders and the feudal dynasty. Sanyuanli anti-British victory is the full embodiment of the value of the Chinese martial arts function, and the usual custom of the townspeople practicing martial arts has a lot to do. The famous civil army leaders Wei Shaoguang and Yan Haochang were proficient in martial arts. Martial arts were a common way for the Boxers to contact the people. In the struggle they mobilized millions of poor people by practicing martial arts with strong religious overtones, and opened martial arts temples everywhere to teach martial arts in preparation for the revolt.

### 3.2 Ideas for the Scientificization of Martial Arts

During the Republic of China period, the ideas of “democracy” and “science” gradually took root in people's hearts over time. Especially since the May Fourth New Culture Movement, Chinese people have pursued and revered democracy and science as the core concepts or basic values of modern new culture. The values of martial arts fitness, martial arts teaching and competition have been introduced. From focusing on publicizing the “practical” value of wushu to focusing on physical and mental exercise, moral cultivation, aesthetic requirements and other aspects of wushu to explore the significance of wushu in sports. This reflects that under the influence of modern western sports, wushu is developing in the direction of adapting to the new trend. People began to use new concepts to recognize, organize, and study the traditional Chinese martial arts. This change in understanding is of great significance to the development of wushu sports. After two national examinations for the national martial arts

and the subsequent Fifth Annual National Games and Sixth Annual National Games of the Republic of China, wushu was listed as an official competition item. The rules of wushu were constantly improved and the competition system became more and more reasonable, which made wushu take a big step forward on the road of scientization. A large number of urban wushu organizations have been derived, changing the original situation where wushu was mainly practiced in the countryside and left to its own devices, and forming an urban wushu organization as the center. Organized to promote wushu and carry out finishing and research on wushu. The extent of these organizations' knowledge of wushu and the results of their research often shaped the development of wushu.

#### 4. PATTERNS OF MARTIAL ARTS DEVELOPMENT OVER TIME

##### 4.1 Ancient Chinese Martial Arts Competition History and Culture

##### 4.1.1 The "Jun and" Martial Arts Represented by the Great Shooting Ceremony

Historically, the martial arts competition of "Jun and" is typically represented by the Dasheli. "Jun and", that is, the monarch personally participates. From "Yili • Yanzai": "Jun and shooting, then for the next shot, Zhujiang, music and then things."

The Great archery Ceremony competition was born in the Yan Huang Era of "all princes", and many leaders of "tour groups, tribes, chiefdoms" had good archery force due to hunting and war, and became the earliest leader of the identity of "king" archery. After defeating Chiyu, Huang Emperor carried out public curses and the threatening "shooting Gan Hou" (" Ten Classics • Zheng Chaos "), Shun and Yu Emperors carried out discerning "Hou Ming Zhi (distinguish good and evil by shooting Hou)" (" Ancient Wen Shang Shu • Yi Ji "), and Junwang Yi carried out witchcraft "witchcraft shoot" (" Tianwen • Li Sui ") against Chiyu. All these show that saluting has become an important tool and means for Kings to serve national governance.

In the Yin and Shang dynasties, archery gradually prevailed and initially had a certain scale of competition. In the competitive shooting activities such as shooting the marquis, shooting the animal and shooting the king for the purpose of deterring and bribing, the participants expanded from the Shang king to the noble members of the royal family. In the heyday of the Western Zhou Dynasty, the shooting ceremony of the Duke of Zhou completed the design of the ritual and music system in the sense of national



governance, and became a national competition for the purpose of "selecting scholars for sacrifices" (to select people with both virtue and talent for national sacrifices). It can be seen that the great shooting ceremony competition of "Jun and shooting" originated in the Yanhuang Era, became in the Xia and Shang Dynasties and flourished in the Western Zhou Dynasty. Especially in the Western Zhou Dynasty, after the Duke of Zhou made ritual music, the grand shooting ceremony competition in which the king personally participated completed the design of ritual and music system in the national sense of "the presence of the king", and constructed a top-level elite competition culture circle with "the king" as the core.

#### 4.1.2 "Jun not with" Martial Arts such as Xiangshou Salute, Juyi and Wuju

"Jun not and" is a kind of competition behavior different from "Jun and", which means that the king does not participate in the competition himself. Historically, the socialized martial arts competitions such as village shooting, Juyi and Wuju are the typical types of "king not with". Although in these competitions, the Chinese monarch often appears in a manner of "no and" that is, not personally involved. But to some extent, the king never stopped the "and" that is, the "intervention" in the competition. In other words, the martial arts competitions of "Jun not with" such as the local shooting ceremony, Juyi and Wuju exist and embody their unique and non-explicit forms of "Jun with". Therefore, whether it is the "presence" of "the king is not with" or the "state presence" of "the king" is absent, the invisible "hand" that "shapes the country" behind the competition of the king of the state has a profound impact on the competition. Culture is "the mold that shapes us" and "a field that is good at setting an example for society by which human society affirms its values and choices." In short, the martial arts competitions such as "Jun not with" village shooting ceremony, Juyi, and Wuju cultivate and practice the core values of the society based on the macro positioning of the country, the people, and the nation, and actively guide the "people and" in a broad way, no matter from the heart or from the spirit, to create a moral, prosperous, equal and prosperous "country".

### 4.2 Development of Martial Arts in the Republican Period

#### 4.2.1 "Abandoned Military Examinations" at the End of Qing Dynasty

The educational reform in the New Deal period mainly included three contents, such as "abolishing imperial examinations", "setting up schools"

and "awarding study 'Tours". Martial arts boxing courage skills no longer become the mainstream of the battlefield, is because "pull close to our country, shaken by the fierce gun artillery", everything to follow the Western law, for martial arts "not involved, mock its useless, and let it remain foam". The use of firearms following the example of the West greatly reduced the reliance on martial arts, and finally failed to escape the fate of the abolition of the imperial examinations and the abolition of green camps.

#### 4.2.2 Establishment and Development of new Martial Arts Organizations (1912-1915)

At the beginning of the Republic of China, martial arts organizations made epoch-making progress in promoting the socialization of martial arts education. Before the Xinhai Revolution, there were "not many martial arts organizations and their scope of activities was limited". After the revolution, most of the urban folk martial arts organizations were derived from the old boxing clubs, and actively took up the responsibility of fostering the national martial arts spirit and physical transformation. And for the community, openly adopting a combination of collective teaching and individual teaching to teach martial arts, such as the Beijing Sports Research Society, Shandong Wushu Training Institute, Henan Wushu Society and so on. The establishment of the new wushu organization plays a role in promoting social education that cannot be replaced by other social organizations. More importantly, it provides a landing point for wushu to move from the countryside to the city and builds a multicultural space for wushu inheritance, thus making epoch-making progress in promoting the socialization of wushu education.

#### 4.2.3 Incorporation of Wushu into School Curricula and the "Operationalization" of Wushu (1916-1927)

Wushu has been incorporated into the school physical education curriculum, but many issues such as the source of teachers, content setting, and the use of teaching methodology are the difficulties faced by the country.

(1) The source of teachers for wushu has progressed from private individuals to organizations to schools.

(2) Exploration of Wushu teaching materials to shift from "drill to martial arts" to "body to martial arts". In 1915, Chinese Wushu was included in the school gymnastics program, and the content of its teaching

was not clearly stated, but was chosen independently by each school's Wushu teacher. As a matter of fact, at that time, when school physical education was based on gymnastics, the best opportunity for Chinese Wushu to survive in schools or to be recognized by educational experts was to be “transformed into gymnastics and to become a part of gymnastics in order to meet the needs of school physical education”.

#### 4.2.4 Systematization and Policy of Martial Arts Education (1928-1938)

(1) School martial arts education in this period saw a golden period of development. With the joint efforts of the state and society, wushu education in schools has basically been systematized and the discourse system has been gradually improved in this decade. The discourse on school martial arts education will be centered around the cities of Nanjing and Qingdao and the national programmatic curriculum standards as examples.

(2) The Nationalist government, in contrast to the Beiyang government, emphasized direct control of the martial arts by the state, as evidenced by the fact that each province developed its own approach to the promotion of the martial arts as a countermeasure. The national martial arts museums and public stadiums, as the physical support for the promotion of martial arts, were a big step forward on the basis of the Beiyang government's promotion of martial arts.

#### 4.2.5 Administrativeization of Wushu Education and the “Salvation of the Nation by Wushu” (1939-1949)

(1) From a macro point of view, in the flood of the idea that everything serves the war, administrativeization interfered with the self-development of martial arts education.

In wartime, sports became a tool for accomplishing the highest ideals of national politics, the aims and objectives of sports followed the national policy of education, and all sports activities were based on the actual needs of the war against war and the building of the nation. The development of martial arts education in such an environment was in line with military, political, and economic development, and obscured the internal logic of its own evolution. The administrative transition interferes with the autonomous development space of martial arts education and alienates the attribute of education as a cultural heritage. In fact, at the end of the Qing Dynasty, the practicality of the Chinese martial arts in the battlefield boxing and bravery skills had already declined. At the beginning of the Republic

of China, it began to evolve into self-defense, fitness, and spirituality. In the deafening slogan of “Wushu save the country”, Wushu took up the important task of protecting the country and killing the enemy. In order to practice martial arts to save the country, Hunan Provincial Martial Arts Museum “recruited 100 young women to form a women's sword team, they were trained for one month, that is, to go to the front to kill the enemy”. Of course, this move contributed greatly to national liberation. However, in terms of the inherent law of education, the vague idea of saving the country through martial arts or sports is not in line with the intrinsic factors of the evolution of martial arts education, and can only be used as an extrinsic aid. At that time, democracy and science were the intrinsic mechanisms for the development of wushu education. Therefore, the Chinese martial arts in the war of resistance to the need for fashion can be continued, after the victory of the war, “the national government on the demand for martial arts oriented no longer”, to the central national martial arts museum as the axis of the national martial arts museum education system and then became history.

(2) From a micro point of view, the war led to a tightening of education funds, the fall of local schools one after another, and the ineffective implementation of the guidelines and policies promulgated by the national government, resulting in a slowdown in the development of martial arts education.

#### 4.3 New China's Wushu Development Model of “Fighting and Training as One” (1949-1955)

##### 4.3.1 Formation of the Idea of “Sport and Martial Arts”

After the founding of New China, the Party and the Government attached great importance to sports and the health of the general public. While emphasizing sports, wushu was also given attention by the Party and the government. In 1950, the All-China Sports Federation held a symposium on wushu in Beijing, advocating the development of wushu and putting wushu on the agenda of sports in new China. In 1952, the State Sports Commission officially listed wushu as a promotion project and set up a specialized agency. That is, the National Forms of Sports and Physical Education Committee, which practiced leadership in wushu. With the basic tasks of “developing sports, enhancing people's physical fitness” and “serving labor production and national defense construction”, and with the goal of “popularizing and regularizing sports”, Wushu is regarded as a sport for the people's health. Under the guidance of the sports development

ideology, which is characterized by “populism” with the participation of all people and the service of all people, wushu is regarded as a kind of sports for the health of the people. It was incorporated into the administration of the sports department and became part of the sports of new China, and the idea of “sport and wushu” gradually took shape.

#### 4.3.2 Wushu Social Communication and Wushu Organizational Forms

(1) During this period, although the promotion of wushu was not as active as that of modern sports such as track and field and ball games, wushu still flourished throughout the country. Under the call of “sports must serve the people, serve the interests of national defense and national health”, wushu was widely combined with production work, especially in factories and mines, where it was widely spread. Statistics from surveys in three cities, Shanghai, Tianjin and Qingdao, show that workers who participate in organized wushu exercises account for 50 per cent of the total number of practitioners.

(2) In rural areas, the tradition and custom of practising wushu has been passed on, and the form of organization is highly spontaneous and loose. In cities, the organization of wushu dissemination is more diverse and complex. Mainly under the leadership of sports committees at all levels, youth groups, enterprise trade unions, etc., different groups in society participate in a wide range of national forms of sports teams, national forms of sports groups, martial arts study groups, etc.. Among them, there are both official wushu sports teams and a number of government-controlled and privately-run wushu associations, which are more clearly autonomous, voluntary, spontaneous and widespread.

#### 4.3.3 Martial Arts Performance Competition

This period also saw the gradual development of performance competitions in the martial arts. In 1952, performance competitions of martial arts were organized in Zhejiang, Ningxia, Southern Jiangsu, Northern Jiangsu, Shandong and Noble. From November 8 to 12, 1953, the National National Forms Sports Performance and Competition Congress was held in the city of Tianjin. This conference is divided into three parts: competition, performance and special guest performance. The competitions included: weightlifting, boxing, wrestling, short arms and infantry shooting. The performance programs include: martial arts (383 items, including stick fighting and equipment), folk sports, and horsemanship. A total of 395 athletes from nine units in North China,

Northeast China, Northwest China, Southwest China (including Tibet) and Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the People's Liberation Army and the railroad system participated. Wushu became the brightest star in this conference, which continued the competition mode of “fighting and practicing together” of the Republic of China period.

#### 4.4 Development of Wushu in China since the reform and opening up (1978-present)

(1) Reform and opening-up stage of comprehensive development (2002-2012): The report of the 16th Party Congress in 2002 proposed: “Actively promote the reform and development of health and sports, carry out the national fitness campaign, improve the health of the whole population, and strive to host the 2008 Olympic Games”. It means that Chinese sports and even Chinese Wushu have entered a new process of reform and opening up. In particular, at the 113th IOC Session, the International Wushu Federation (IWUF), which has Chinese national characteristics, was granted full membership in the IOC. These two landmark events promoted the comprehensive development of reform and opening-up of Chinese Wushu.

(2) Continuing and Deepening Stage of Reform and Opening Up (2013-present): Nowadays, there are numerous events in Chinese Wushu. There are more than a thousand school, local, corporate, national and international competitive tournaments, traditional tournaments, mass tournaments, invitational tournaments and ring competitions every year. The abundant events and wonderful competitions convey the Chinese power to the world. These related policies and tournaments have pointed out the direction for the continuous and deep reform and opening up of Chinese Wushu. A new situation of Chinese Wushu has been created under the multiple integration and common development modes of the state, localities, folk, scholars and enterprises.

### 5. ANALYSIS OF DATA ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSMISSION OF MARTIAL ARTS

China's National Games have a long history of development, with about a century of history since the first National Games was successfully held. According to the different backgrounds of the times in which each National Games was held, the Games can be categorized into the National Games before the founding of the People's Republic of China and the

National Games after the founding of the People's Republic of China.

### 5.1 National Games and Wushu Development

The origin of Wushu and the National Games goes back to the Republic of China period. 1924 in Wuchang, the Third National Games Wushu in the name of “national art” as a performance program for the first time in the National Games. In this National Games, although Wushu was only a performance item, the rules of the competition and the scoring standards of the techniques were clearly defined, laying down the basic rules of the competition and scoring standards for future Wushu competitions. Wushu was influenced by Western competitive sports from this time onwards, and the development of some fair and quantifiable competition rules played an important role in the development of competitive wushu. The competition mode is a navigation in the development of Wushu, where different forms of competition activities are used to achieve the goal of improving and developing Wushu. The participation of Wushu in the previous National Games is shown in Table 1. Starting from the 6th National Games, Wushu was listed as an official competition event with 16 gold medals, and the gold medal scores were directly counted in the total results of the region. Since the 8th National Games in 1997, all non-Olympic competition events were removed from the National Games, leaving Wushu as the only non-Olympic event. Wushu's participation in the National Games can be seen in the fact that it was included as a performance sport in the Second and Fifth National Games. It was also the only performance sport in these two National Games.

In the Fifth National Games, although wushu was a performance sport, 33 gold medals were set up, and almost all of the competitive wushu routines were set up as competition events. The Fifth National Games Wushu Competition was only a performance event, but it gave enough conditions for Wushu routines to fully display all the competition routines. Starting from the 6th National Games, Wushu has been officially recognized as a competition item, and the gold medals are counted in the overall results of each region. From the 6th to the 11th National Games, the gold medals of Wushu were gradually increased and stabilized, indicating that the development of Wushu was steady and rising during this period. In the 12th National Games, the gold medals of Wushu suddenly dropped from 19 to 13, which indicated that the development of Wushu encountered new resistance during this period. Wushu is a representative of Chinese national traditional sports, demonstrating the system unique to

oriental sports and bearing the historical responsibility for the inheritance of Chinese culture. In contemporary times, it has diversified values and functions. The setting of competition items and gold medals of Wushu in the previous National Games epitomizes the development of Wushu in various periods.

Table 1: The Participation of Martial Arts in the National Games

Categories	Time	Venue	Participating Province	Golden Number
First Session	1959/09	Beijing	Competition Project	4
Second Session	1965/09	Beijing	Performance Project	-
Third Session	1975/09	Beijing	Competition Project	13
Fourth	1979/09	Beijing	Competition Project	22
Fifth	1983/9	Shanghai	Performance Project	33
Sixth	1987/11	Guangdong	Competition Project	16
Seventh	1993/9	Beijing	Competition Project	10
Eighth	1997/10	Shanghai	Competition Project	15
Ninth	2001/11	Guangdong	Competition Project	19
Tenth	2005/10	Jiangsu	Competition Project	19
Eleventh	2009/10	Shandong	Competition Project	19
Twelfth	2013/08	Liaoning	Competition Project	13

## 5.2 Development of Socialization of Martial Arts

The activities of traditional wushu are organized mainly in the form of spontaneous organization by the masses and the establishment of relevant folk wushu associations according to their respective styles, such as the Yang's Taijiquan Association and the Xingyiquan Association. It can be said that folk martial arts associations have played a pivotal role in the socialization and development of martial arts.

### 5.2.1 Characteristics Related to Martial Arts Activities

The document survey sample of this paper was selected as the gathering place of wushu activities in a city, and the method of random sampling was used. About 820 people who exercise were selected to investigate the problems in the development process of traditional wushu, which is the research focus of this paper. Using spss22.0 and Excel, the recovered valid questionnaires were organized and statistically analyzed. The characteristics of wushu activities such as styles, age stages, time and location are shown in Table 2. Among the people surveyed, the gender ratio was 428 males accounting for 52.58% and 386 females accounting for 47.42%. Among



them, in terms of age stage, most of the people who participated in morning exercise were middle-aged and old people (50-60 years old). For the way of exercise, exercise program is to have a certain selectivity, can not go to do some difficult too high program, in the exercise at the same time also to do safety. Compared with competitive wushu programs, the vast majority of people believe that traditional wushu is more suitable for social promotion than competitive wushu. However, the survey found that the social promotion of traditional wushu is also affected by a variety of factors, 25.33% of the people believe that traditional wushu is still difficult to practice, and the promotion of this program is greatly affected by the venue and learning time. The socialization of traditional Wushu still has certain constraints and needs to be reformed and promoted.

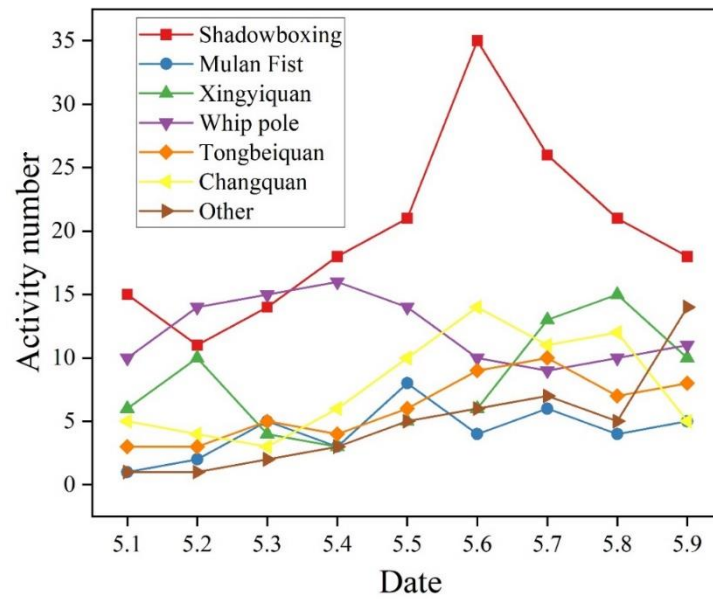
Table 2: The Characteristics of Boxing, Age, Time and Location of Martial Arts Activities

Population Age	20-30	30-50	50-60	60-80
Percentage %	12.56	25.71	45.39	16.34
Exercise Mode	Fitness	Competitive martial arts	Square dance	Run, walk
Percentage %	46.23	12.25	26.17	15.35
Difficulty in Exercise	Difficulty	Harder	Medium	Simplicity
Percentage %	42.01	26.21	25.74	6.04
Factors that Restrict Development	Site limitation	Technical difficulty	Time factor	Other reasons
Percentage %	25.33	41.76	25.11	7.8

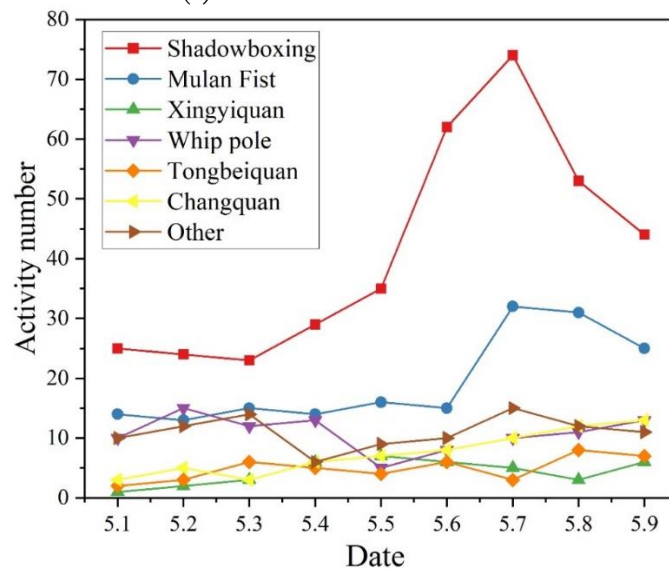
### 5.2.2 Distribution of Martial Arts Practices

The fitness activities in a park are shown in Figure 2, which can be statistically derived from the distribution of martial arts practice in the park from May 1st to 9th. Park to participate in martial arts activities practitioners to taijiquan, whiplash and other boxing as the main practice, accounting for a considerable part of the total number of martial arts activities. Among them, the number of people practicing taijiquan was clearly in the majority, and there were more women than men. The number of women practicing taijiquan was 369. Mulanquan, Tongbeiquan and Changquan are also practiced by some people, but the number of people is not enough, and attention should be paid to promoting these styles. And the number of people practicing wushu is also unstable, with more people on Saturdays and Sundays than on weekdays, probably due to work pressure and lack of time, wushu enthusiasts choose Saturdays and Sundays

to work out.



(a) The Number of Men



(b) The Number of Women

**Figure 2:** Fitness Activities in a Park

### 5.3 Martial Arts Education Development

#### 5.3.1 Development History

The development of competitive wushu routines in colleges and universities cannot be separated from school education, and the development of competitive wushu routines needs the development platform provided by higher education. The combination of competitive wushu routines and higher education can mobilize the enthusiasm of both sides, fully discover and cultivate excellent wushu talents, which is a novel mode of talent cultivation and a need for the development of modern

competitive sports. The development history of competitive wushu in colleges and universities is shown in Table 3, and the National College Students' Wushu Routine Championship has been successfully held for several sessions since the first one was held in 2005. According to the characteristics of different time periods, it can be roughly categorized into four main stages: the early stage of founding, the rapid development period, the promotion period and the steady period. Since 2007, Beijing University of Physical Education began to pay attention to college competitive wushu routine competition, and invested a lot of manpower, material and financial resources from all aspects, also for the preparation of the Olympic Games, the major colleges and universities have also begun to focus on the cultivation of wushu athletes.

Table 3: The Development of Competitive Arts in Colleges and Universities

Stage	Year	Organizer	The Number of Schools Participating	Total Number
Initial Stage	2005-2007	General association	124 (Cumulation)	1573 (Cumulation)
	2008	General association	52	501
	2009	General association	53	566
Rapid Development Period	2010	General association	45	523
	2011	General association	46	505
	2012	General association	48	524
Lifting Period	2013	General association	49	506
	2014	General association	49	524
	2015	General association	48	519
Steady Period	2016-2019	General association	45	536

### 5.3.2 Distribution of Higher Education Institutions

The 2015 China University Championship is organized by colleges and

universities for registration, and college teams are formed to participate in the competition. Based on the division of the country into four major economic regions, the participating colleges and universities are divided into the eastern, northeastern, central and western regions, according to the colleges and universities. In order to study the regional distribution of participating colleges and universities. The statistical comparison of colleges and universities in the China University Wushu Championship is shown in Table 4. Organizing statistics of participating colleges and universities in the Chinese University Wushu Championships during the period of 2020-2022, the number of participating colleges and universities has been increasing during the three-year period of 2020-2022, from 44 in 2020 to 93 in 2022, which is an increase of about two times.

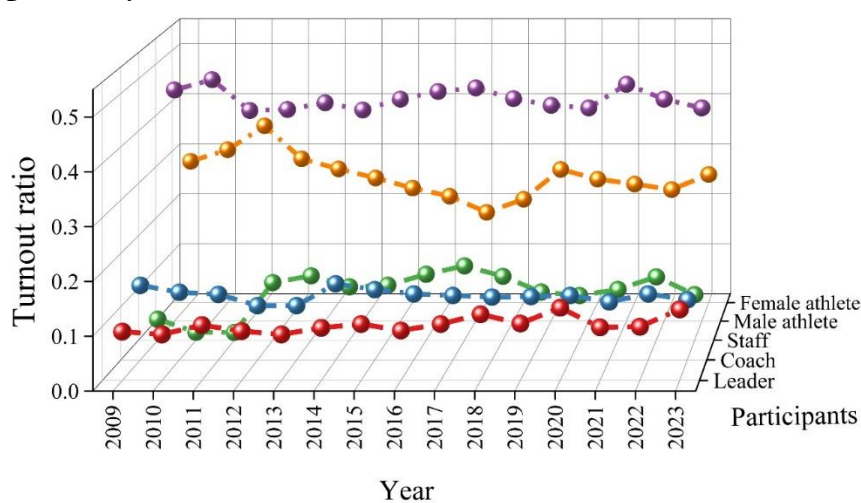
Table 4: Statistical Comparison of Colleges and Universities in Wushu Championships

Region	Province	In 2020 (n/%)		In 2021 (n/%)		In 2022 (n/%)	
Northeast	Jilin province, liaoning province	4	0.091	10	0.143	15	0.161
Central Region	Henan, hubei, hunan and jiangxi provinces, Anhui province, Shanxi Province	15	0.341	22	0.314	30	0.323
	Beijing, tianjin, hebei, shandong, jiangsu, Shanghai, guangdong, zhejiang, fujian, hainan	17	0.386	25	0.357	32	0.344
Eastern Region	Sichuan province, guangxi zhuang autonomous region, shaanxi province						
Western Region	Gansu, ningxia hui autonomous region and guizhou province	8	0.182	13	0.186	16	0.172
	Chongqing, xinjiang province, xinjiang uygur autonomous region						
Microscope	27 provinces and cities	44	1.000	70	1.000	93	1.000

### 5.3.3 Participating Groups

Competitive wushu in colleges and universities has a unique development advantage. On the one hand, in terms of cultural background, the theoretical knowledge contained in competitive wushu can be integrated with other disciplines. For example, competitive wushu can make full use of historical information and human resources to explore its historical origin to enrich its historical background and excavate the secrets hidden in history. On the other hand, in terms of scientific training, colleges and universities are equipped with professional talents engaged in training and research of competitive wushu. Competitive wushu can rely on the

advanced training theories and scientific methods researched in related disciplines to lay a solid foundation for cultivating high-level competitive wushu talents. The ratio of participants in the National University Wushu Championships is shown in Fig. 3. From 2009 to 2023, the ratio of male athletes has always been maintained at 0.432, which is always higher than that of female athletes. The overall situation has not reached a one-to-one ratio, with relatively few female athletes. This is also related to the inherent characteristics of a sport like Wushu, which is designed for technical combat and is more oriented towards rigidity. The mean values of the parameter ratios of leaders, coaches, and staff remained at 0.103, 0.121, and 0.092, respectively.



**Figure 3:** The proportion of participants in the national college wushu championships

It is incomplete to directly measure the cultural level of coaches to measure their level of martial arts teaching. However, the level of literacy will inevitably have an impact on the coach's level of thinking, business level, teaching ability and other aspects. Generally speaking people with a high cultural level can understand more relevant knowledge, such as physiological anatomy, Chinese medicine and other knowledge, and at the same time it is easier to understand the connotation of wushu and wushu's movement body and principles. It is easy for a coach to transfer his behavior and awareness of physical exercise to his students, which is expressed through competition results. Therefore, the literacy level of coaches is related to the development of competitive wushu competitions to a higher level. The survey of coaches' situation is shown in Table 5. At present, most of the competitive wushu athletes in general colleges and universities are taught by their own wushu teachers. The vast majority of them graduated from national higher physical education faculties and have

a solid foundation in wushu theory. (Undergraduates make up 60.22% of the total.) However, there is some lack of sports experience in high-level competitive wushu, little practical experience as coaches of professional wushu teams, and a lack of systematic knowledge in the training and recovery of competitive wushu. In addition, in the selection process of teachers' titles, colleges and universities often take their scientific research level as the decisive factor and neglect the practical ability they have as physical education teachers. As a result, most martial arts teachers spend more time on scientific research in addition to training. It is because of the school in the general direction of physical education on the positioning of martial arts teachers have bias, which leads to martial arts teachers in the cultivation of martial arts talent more and more incompetent, greatly affecting the work of the relevant personnel enthusiasm.

Table 5: Coach situation survey

<b>Age Structure</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>The Stage of Learning Martial Arts</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Educational Background</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>%</b>
<25	9.65	Primary school	19.33	Specialty	-	Primary	16.86
26-35	52.47	Junior high school	32.67	Undergraduate	60.22%	Intermediate	47.34
36-45	19.68	High school	44.75	Graduate student	39.78%	Subheight	30.05
46-55	6.33	University	3.25	Doctoral student	-	Positive height	5.75
>56	11.87			Workers			

#### 5.3.4 Competitions

Taking Sanshou as an example, Sanshou as a competitive and confrontational sport, athletes will have some sports injuries during the competition and training. Although the competition grouping try to consider the athletes' skill level, professional training level, etc., and try to put athletes with similar level in the same group. However, it still can't avoid the generation of injuries and diseases. Through a visit to the organizer of the 2020-2022 China University Wushu Sanshou Championships, we learned that all participating athletes must purchase personal insurance in accordance with the rules of the competition. All teams must do the physical examination of athletes carefully in accordance with the requirements of the tournament organizing committee and the rules of the tournament. From the results of the review, the content of the medical examination is relatively true, the medical examination form is standardized and complete, and most of them meet the requirements of

the competition rules.

However, there are some problems with the medical examination forms of individual teams, for example, there is no physician's signature on the medical examination forms, and some of them are not filled in with the date. The statistics of injuries and illnesses in the competitions of the 2020-2022 Chinese College Wushu Sanshou Championships are shown in Table 6, in which ①, ② and ③ are the number of injuries and illnesses in the competitions, the percentage of injuries, and the percentage of the total number of participants, respectively. The percentages of injuries and illnesses in the 2020-2022 Wushu Sanshou Championships are 0.081, 0.077, and 0.086 in that order. The three sessions of the Chinese College Wushu Sanshou Championships Injuries and illnesses accounted for less than 10% of the total number of participants. In the past three years, the number of people who were sent to the hospital for treatment due to critical condition was very small.

To summarize, the injuries and illnesses in the Chinese University Wushu Sanda Tournaments are all within the controllable range. As most of the players are non-professional athletes, they have poor training foundation, insufficient competition experience and relatively weak skills. Self-protection awareness is poor, physical fitness can not keep up, so some injuries and illnesses in the course of the tournament is common and in line with the law of sports. Through the interviews with the organizers and coaches, we learned that, excluding other uncontrollable factors in the competition, the main factors leading to ankle injuries and other injuries during the competition were that some facilities of the competition venues failed to meet the requirements of the competition, and the medical protection was not perfect enough.

Table 6: Statistics on Injury Status of Chinese College Students' Martial Arts Competitions

	2020(185)			2021(427)			2022(722)		
	①	②	③	①	②	③	①	②	③
Nasal Hemorrhage	5	0.333	0.027	15	0.455	0.035	25	0.403	0.035
Eyebrow Cracking	2	0.133	0.011	3	0.091	0.007	5	0.081	0.007
Ankle Injury	3	0.200	0.016	6	0.182	0.014	10	0.161	0.014
Head Accident	2	0.133	0.011	4	0.121	0.009	6	0.097	0.008
Other Injuries	3	0.200	0.016	3	0.091	0.007	12	0.194	0.017
Critical Injury	0	0.000	0.000	2	0.061	0.005	4	0.065	0.006
Total	15	1.000	0.081	33	1.000	0.077	62	1.000	0.086

## 6. CONCLUSION

This paper analyzes the historical development and evolution of Chinese wushu from three dimensions: wushu movement technology, wushu ideological evolution, and wushu development mode. The inheritance and development of wushu is mainly reflected in the development of the National Games and wushu, the development of socialization of wushu, and the development of wushu education. The concept of martial arts distinguishes modern martial arts from traditional martial arts, and briefly summarizes the movement techniques of Chinese martial arts as "style", "move", "set" and "fist". The idea of Chinese martial arts has gone through a historical transformation from "martial heroism" and "tool of resistance movement" in the late Qing Dynasty, to "scientific" in the Republic of China nowadays. The historical evolution of Chinese Wushu can be further summarized as the ancient Chinese Wushu competition model, the Republican Wushu education model, the early liberation Wushu "fighting and training as one" model, and the comprehensive development model during the reform and opening-up period. The competition mode of the National Games, as an important display channel in the development process of wushu, is a navigation in the development process of wushu. The evolution of the wushu rules in the National Games can also be understood as the evolution of the rules for the technical development of wushu sports. In the Sixth National Games in 1987, wushu was listed as an official competition event. There were 16 gold medals, and the scores of the gold medals were directly counted in the total score of the region, marking the orthodoxy of Chinese national traditional sports represented by wushu. The socialization development of Wushu is analyzed in terms of the number of people playing Wushu, the types of choices, and the age of Wushu players. Compared with competitive wushu programs, more people believe that it is more difficult to promote the socialization of traditional wushu. 25.33% of the people believe that traditional wushu is still difficult to practice. In terms of wushu education, the number of athletes participating in wushu championships has been increasing year by year, the ratio of male to female athletes has been slowly adjusted, and injuries and illnesses of wushu athletes in competitions have been kept within a manageable range.

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