Sheep wrestling competition as Artifact :Bodily Practice,Maintenance of Han National in the Context of Modern China

Pengwei Duan

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
degree of Master of Arts in Fine and Applied Arts Research and Creation
December 2024

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วิทยานิพนธ์

ของ

Pengwei Duan

เสนอต่อมหาวิทยาลัยมหาสารคาม เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตร

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The examining committee has unanimously approved this Thesis, submitted by Mr. Pengwei Duan , as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Fine and Applied Arts Research and Creation at Mahasarakham University

Examining Committee

..... Chairman
(Asst. Prof. Songwit Pimpakun , Ph.D.)

..... Advisor
(Asst. Prof. Peera Phanlukthao , Ph.D.)

..... Committee
(Assoc. Prof. Arkom Sa-Ngiamviboon , Ph.D.)

..... Committee
(Assoc. Prof. Sakchai Sikka , Ph.D.)

Mahasarakham University has granted approval to accept this Thesis as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Fine and Applied Arts Research and Creation

....
(Asst. Prof. Peera Phanlukthao , Ph.D.) (Assoc. Prof. Krit Chaimoon , Ph.D.)
Dean of Faculty of Fine - Applied Arts and Cultural Science Dean of Graduate School

TITLE Sheep wrestling competition as Artifact :Bodily Practice,Maintenance of Han National in the Context of Modern China

AUTHOR Pengwei Duan

ADVISORS Assistant Professor Peera Phanlukthao , Ph.D.

DEGREE Master of Arts **MAJOR** Fine and Applied Arts Research and Creation

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ABSTRACT

Sheep wrestling competition as Artifact: Bodily Practice and Preservation of Cultural Heritage in the Context of Modern China is a certain study. The research objectives include three aspects:1）history of sheep wrestling competition; 2)Modern Bodily practice of sheep wrestling competition;3)sheep wrestling competition festival as the unit of analysis,This study explores the Bodily practice of the art of Sheep wrestling competition in the context of modern China and its role in the protection of cultural heritage. Through the history of the Sheep wrestling competition, the origin, historical development and cultural integration process of the Sheep wrestling competition are discussed, emphasizing the importance of inheritance and protection. The data comes from local chronicles, folklore and academic research, and the research on Sheep wrestling competition adopts the method of literature, field investigation and logical analysis.The research results are as follows:

Modern Bodily practice of sheep wrestling competition: analyzing bodily language, expression, audience interaction and many aspects of modern adaptation, including changes in knowledge and understanding of the bodily, reshaping of the bodily aesthetics improvisation and creativity The introduction and integration of art and culture. 2.Sheep wrestling competition festival as the unit of analysis: through festival context, performing arts, colorful flags and banners, arena under the spotlight, media integration, opening speech and performance, feast of muscles and art, visual rhythm: movement rhythm, fluency and coordination Sexuality and victory praise demonstrate the artistic influence and social recognition of the sheep wrestling competition. 3. Social identity: The relationship between the sheep wrestling competition Festival and community identity is discussed, as well as the significance of the sheep wrestling competition festival as an artistic activity, including the significance of cultural heritage, the significance of art and the significance of cultivating reserve talents, revealing the sheep wrestling competition as a traditional folk activity. How to integrate with art and culture, and demonstrate its unique performing arts and social identity in the festival case analysis.

The purpose of this paper is to provide valuable experience and

inspiration for the protection and inheritance of traditional cultural heritage, and emphasize the important position of sheep wrestling competition in modern Chinese society. As a kind of traditional cultural heritage, it not only reflects the integration of modern bodily practice and art, but also plays an important role in social identity and protection of cultural heritage.

Keyword : sheep wrestling competition, Bodily practice, cultural inheritance, intangible culture

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CHAPTER Ⅰ

Introduction

1.Background of Research

1.1 Sheep wrestling competition and temple fair

Xinzhou Sheep wrestling competition is a traditional folk custom wrestling competition in Xinzhou, Shanxi Province. Commonly known as the sheep scratching competition, it is a traditional folk wrestling competition held in the rural areas of Xinzhou, Dingxiang, and Yuanping at the same time as temple fairs and opera singing, with a sheep as the prize.The Xinzhou area has long been a mixed settlement of nomadic and farming peoples. From the Eastern Han Dynasty to the early Qing Dynasty, a large number of ethnic minorities migrated to the inland and lived together with the Han people, thereby achieving great ethnic integration. The great ethnic integration mainly occurred in the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, Sui, Tang and Five Dynasties, Song and Yuan dynasties, and Ming and Qing dynasties. During the four periods, due to wars, people left their hometowns, forming a situation of great ethnic integration. Therefore, the wrestling with ethnic characteristics in Xinzhou area, including living customs, etc. were created. Where there are folklore, there are folk activities. Folklore is the sum of various behavioral patterns that are generally recognized and established over a long period of time in a certain social community. In short, folklore is the daily behavior of people of a certain ethnic group. Folk activities are activities for people in a region to vent their fatigue and troubles in life, and to pin their hopes on them. This kind of activity is always integrated with the festival celebrations of folk temple fairs, and a kind of ceremony is held. Such temple fairs and festivals all start from entertaining the gods - nature gods and ancestor gods, to self-entertainment and the awakening and publicity of self-awareness. The praise and singing of vitality have become people's carnival. The folk festivals in Xinzhou area have been very rich and unique since ancient times.

1.2historical region

Xinzhou City is located in the north-central part of Shanxi Province, bordering Hebei Province to the east, Shaanxi Province to the west, Taiyuan City to the south, and Datong City to the north. Xinzhou City has a long history, with humans thriving as early as the Neolithic Age. During the Spring and Autumn Period, it belonged to the Jin State, and during the Warring States Period, it belonged to the Zhao State. Taiyuan County was established in the Qin Dynasty, and Yanmen County was established in the Han Dynasty. During the Kaihuang period of the Sui Dynasty, the county was changed into a state, so it was called Xinzhou. In the Yuan Dynasty, it was under the jurisdiction of Zhongshu Province. In the Ming Dynasty, it was changed to a government office and continued in the Qing Dynasty.Xinzhou City currently governs 14 counties (cities and districts), including Xinfu District, Dingxiang County, Wutai County, Dai County, Fanzhi County, Ningwu County, Jingle County, Shenchi County, Wuzhai County, and Lan County , Hequ County, Baode County, Pianguan County and Yuanping City. The Xinzhou area has been an important dividing line between the farming peoples of the Central Plains and the

nomadic peoples of the north since ancient times. There have been constant conflicts, frictions, and wars for many years. On the line of the Great Wall in Juzhu Mountain in the northern part of Xinzhou, there is Yanmen Pass, which has been a battleground for military strategists of all ages. Xinzhou is located in Yanmen Pass, between Border Pass and Taiyuan. In history, there have been constant wars and wars. In the Han Dynasty, Xinzhou prevented the Xiongnu from invading the south, in the Tang Dynasty, it fought against Turkic harassment, in the Song Dynasty, it resisted the invasion of the Northern Liao Dynasty, and in the Ming Dynasty,they prevented the restoration of the Mongolian people. They were battlegrounds for military strategists, and they had many contacts with the people of the North, so they conducted traditional military exercises and martial arts (Li Cuixia and Zhao Min. (2019).pp.5-pp.6). The cruel living environment determines the survival of the strong and the death of the weak. Not only does it require military personnel to resist the enemy with force, but ordinary people must also have a strong body and the ability to defend themselves when encountering enemies.

1.3 Inheritance and intangible cultural heritage

Elders, wrestling fans, inheritors, and coaches who love wrestling in the Xinzhou area's sheep wrestling competition learned that in the past, there were three types of inherited skills, passed down orally or through movements as a cultural chain, which are family inheritance and master-disciple inheritance. and public inheritance. Inheriting the sheep wrestling competition is called a living fossil of history and culture. The sheep wrestling competition has been passed down among the people in the Xinzhou area. It has a long history and traditional culture and is also a place for exchanges between Xinzhou people.

At the National Conference of Cultural and Educational Heroes in 1960, Xinzhou won the title of "Hometown of Wrestling" in China. In 2006, the "sheep wrestling competition" was selected into the "Provincial Intangible Cultural Heritage of Shanxi Province", and in 2008, it was selected into the second batch of national intangible cultural heritage. In November 2013, it was included in the first batch of "China Sports Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection and Promotion Projects" by the State Sports General Administration [Wrestling Events in Wrestling Township Hu Jinglun 2015: pp31].At the 30th executive meeting of the municipal government in 2003, a resolution was made to speed up the development of sports work in our city. The specific requirements are that "the sports work in our city should highlight the shaping of the sports landscape with wrestling as the leader, establish wrestling clubs, organize and organize Wrestling competitions across the country and the province will promote wrestling culture, and the annual China Xinzhou Wrestling Festival will be launched in conjunction with our city's annual Mount Wutai International Tourism Month," and stressed that functional departments will implement it immediately. After receiving the decision, the Municipal Sports Bureau established a wrestling club in April of that year. In September, it organized and held the first "Xinzhou Wrestling Festival" and "Shanxi Inner Mongolia sheep wrestling competition" in the name of the municipal government.

1.4 sheep wrestling competition format

The sheep wrestling competition is usually informal among the people, and is organized voluntarily by the village committee or the masses. It is held together with the temple fairs and operas in each village. The temple fairs in each village have

different times. Duan Ziliang (1973~), male, intermediate coach. Research direction: Physical education teaching time is concentrated from May to October. There are dozens of competitions of various sizes a year. They are usually held voluntarily by powerful villages and towns. This village is called the "home" and invites respected people from other villages. Naoyanghan serves as the referee of the event and ensures fairness and impartiality. Before the play started, the "Master" planted two flags of different colors on both sides of the stage. The flags read, "If a hero falls to the right, there is no guilt for falling to death." After the founding of the People's Republic of China, it read, "Fight in peace, do not hurt others." ", now it's "Friendship first, competition second". As for the "Sheep Scratching Competition" organized by the government, in 1960 the government would hold joint projects together (such as dance competitions, calligraphy competitions, etc.) or separately. The competition will be divided into three levels: lightweight, middleweight and heavyweight. It is usually for men only. This is different from the folk sheep scratching competition. Some are divided into weights and some are divided into men and women, creating a strong atmosphere. Visually impactful on-site effects (Duan Ziliang (2023).pp.89).

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Before the sheep wrestling competition, notices are posted, which will attract wrestling fans from all over the world to watch and cheer. During the sheep wrestling competition, two wrestlers each represent one side, and each side has a "Yingyangren" (Yingyangren). Generally, they are senior and famous people who are responsible for organizing and recruiting wrestlers. They make suggestions, analyze the wrestlers on the field, and arrange their troops. During the confrontation, the participating wrestlers and the audience will actively form two sides. Teams, in the sheep wrestling competition, both sides of the wrestlers advance and retreat, defend and defend. Each team will try their best to fight. During this period, the participating wrestlers and the audience stayed up all night to spend time. The jingle popular in the local sheep wrestling competition:"There are all kinds of operas, songs and dances that are so good, it is favorite to watch the sheep wrestling competition. When older people watch wrestling matches, they focus on the wrestler skills and strategies to see which younger wrestler has potential and skills. Old ladies will be very nervous when watching the game, worried that their children and grandchildren will be injured. When young people watch the game, they will look for their opponents' weaknesses so that when they go on the field, they can attack more targetedly instead of blindly using force. Daughters-in-law will silently pray for their husbands while watching the game, hoping that they will win the game. Young men watch the game with a lot of passion and they can't wait to get wrestling ground and show off their skills. When girls watch sheep wrestling competition, they secretly observe the men they like to see how they perform during the game. Children watch sheep wrestling competition just for fun, and they may imitate the moves in the sheep wrestling competition, although they may not truly understand the rules and techniques of the sheep wrestling competition（Hu Jinglun 2015: pp31）. ”The moods, concerns and emotions of various groups of people in the sheep wrestling competition are generated. The living customs created, applied and passed down by people are also part of life culture. They are also the inheritance of their own national spirit and national psychology, which can promote the exchanges between different groups. communication and interaction, feel the cohesion of the group, and enhance social identity.

1.5 Rules of Sheep wrestling Competition

Rules of Sheep wrestling Competition: During the competition, the two wrestlers stand with their feet in contact with the ground. The two wrestlers must cooperate with their hands and feet. The wrestlers in the competition are not allowed to grab each other except for their faces and private parts, and they must not grab each other's pants or each other. If you hit the opponent, any part of your body that touches the ground will count as a loss. If the opponent is picked up or picked up and lightly slaps you on your shoulder and back, it means giving up and you can no longer attack. You can use your feet to hook or kick the opponent. You can also use your hands to hold the other person's legs and hold the other person's legs. Wrestlers can appear enthusiastically regardless of gender, age, region, nationality, weight, occupation, seniority, or audience. There is no organization (no team members or captains) at ordinary times, but they are formed voluntarily and temporarily during the competition and come on voluntarily. From small to large, from weak to strong, the winner will be determined in one fall. If you lose, the loser will lose the right to scratch the sheep. There will be no round robin competition, and the winner will

continue to compete with the new wrestler. There are no strict requirements for clothing in the Sheep wrestling Competition. There is no uniform wrestling uniform. The upper body can be clothed or bare-backed (so it is also called "bareback wrestling" among the people). The lower body of the pants can be as long or short as you like, and the belt can be A longer sweat towel or hemp rope, but no belt is allowed (you can also wear a belt without a belt). Barefoot is allowed to compete. Female wrestlers wear sports T-shirts on their upper bodies and the same clothes as male wrestlers on their lower bodies (Li Xiaozhen. (2017) .pp.52).If three wrestlers fall down in a row, the organizer will give specific rewards. If five wrestlers fall down in a row, the opponent's team will solemnly select a "Sheep Protector" comes on stage to ensure that the "sheep wrestling competition" keep going.If the "Sheep Protector" is successful, the loser is called a "hero", Being defeated by the sixth wrestler is called a "broken sheep". The appearance of "breaking sheep" starts from the first time a new wrestler comes on the field. If "Sheep Protector" loses, the champion of this competition will be determined. If the winner is six in a row, the winner is known as the "sheep wrestling man ", that is, the winner of "Head Sheep".If other contestants who have not participated still want to participate, someone will fund the "two sheep" and "three sheep" wrestling. The "second sheep" are high-level players from the beginning, and the competition is much fiercer than the first sheep.If winning five people, (also called " break is divided into three rounds, the first round called the first sheep (one sheep), the second round called two sheep, the third round called three sheep, there is no time limit, the length of time is completely determined by the strength of the wrestler.

Generally, there are three forms of wrestling in the sheep wrestling competition. First, mixed wrestling does not distinguish between teams A and B. The audience directly voluntarily enters the arena according to the situation on the field. The wrestlers appear from small to large, from weak to strong, and the technical level is better than the last. Also called "Straight shooter".Let the children appear in the competition at the beginning, and the children will wrestle with each other, and gradually the opponents will become stronger and stronger. Next In mixed wrestling, older teenagers, adults, young adults, and the elderly who are fond of wrestling have begun to appear. Wrestlers with immature skills who can do one or two moves are also called second-in-commands.In the wrestling match, three teams representing A, B and C will compete against each other at the beginning of the match. There is no limit on the number of representatives of each team. The referee will directly announce whether the wrestling is for Team A and Team B, or the wrestling for Team A and C, or the wrestling for Team B and C. At the beginning of the game, each representative Each team has one person wrestling on behalf of their own team. They cannot wrestle on behalf of their own team and against their own representative team. The wrestling will last until there is no one left in one representative team.

1.6 Cultivate talents the sheep wrestling competition

In 1956, after the founding of the People's Republic of China, Shanxi Province established a sports team based on the province's characteristics. Wrestling was among the first projects to be included in the sports team. From 1956 to 1963, they dominated the national wrestling scene for eight years and won a championship in every national competition every year. Or a few champions, they use the "leg-hugging" stunt learned in folk sheep wrestling competitions in regular

competitions,The Xinzhou Sports Committee officially established my country's first twelve-member women's judo team in April 1981. The team members are all folk sheep farmers from the three counties, cities and districts of Xinzhou, Dingxiang and Yuanping. Among them, outstanding representatives include Cui Fuhai, Zhang Maoqing, Bo Haisheng, Guo Liudeng, Zhao Baozhou, Li Lantian, etc., making all opponents hard to guard against. , and are intimidating, thus making Shanxi wrestling enjoy the reputation of "the ace of the Jin army" in the national arena. In 1983, Xin County held the first women's sheep Wrestling competition, which was also a rare initiative in the country.What makes Xinzhou people even more gratified is that the sheep Wrestling competition not only attracted a large number of spectators, but also a large number of "female heroes" emerged. A total of 48 women participated in the sheep Wrestling competition process.In the end, Li aiping won the title of "sheep wrestling Girl". The basic trajectory of their lives is that of a folk sheep wrestling Girl, a professional athlete, a national champion, an athlete, and a coach, which led to the Xinzhou wrestling coaching profession (Zhao Xiaojian (2012).pp.19).

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1.7 Inheritance problem of sheep wrestling competition

In the early 1990s, With the change of national institutional reform and rural policies, The government's promotion and development of urbanization, Make people began to work boom, Young people, young people have dragged their families into the city, The rural population has declined year by year, There are no young people in the village, Many small villages, due to the severe population loss, It has even become barren villages and abandoned villages, The temple fairs in the village also no longer exist, Folk traditional culture sheep wrestling competition began to be impacted, fade, Modern communication norms gradually replace the position of family elders and local fame in the rural society, The modern social order makes people gradually get rid of the dependence on the family and the place.

With the development of society, more and more entertainment projects such as square dancing, billiards, basketball, electronic games, computers, mobile phones, etc. are accepted by people. Secondly, due to the country's exam-oriented education, parents only value learning, which makes their children The academic burden has increased, and there is very little time for rest and play. Even if they have time, parents sign up their children for skill training, such as dancing, broadcasting and hosting, etc. Thirdly, the appeal of mobile phones makes children unfamiliar with and disinterested in sheep wrestling competition, reducing the number of people participating in sheep wrestling competition , resulting in the phenomenon of no backup, and a decline in the number and scale of sheep wrestling competition activities.

The sheep wrestling competition is rich in local customs and has high cultural value, historical value, social value, educational value, artistic value, etc. Most of the local wrestlers have a low level of education. Only cultural people who care about the inheritance of wrestling and study wrestling can do it. Discussion, but no one has conducted a comprehensive, systematic and in-depth theoretical study on wrestling. The lack of theoretical research will inevitably lead to a decline in practical technology and quality.

Lack of awareness of inheritance value: There is a serious lack of awareness of the inheritance value of the national intangible cultural heritage "sheep wrestling competition" in current society. This may be because modern society does not pay enough attention to traditional culture, or the publicity and education of sheep wrestling competitions are insufficient.

The inheritance model is single and the skill inheritance is faulty: The inheritance model of the sheep wrestling competition is relatively single. The officially designated inheritors are older, while the number of unofficial inheritors has dropped sharply and their enthusiasm is low, which has led to the inheritance of the "sheep wrestling " skill. fault. This fault may lead to the gradual loss of the traditional skills of scratching sheep, thus affecting its sustainable development.

Insufficient mass communication: There are deficiencies in the mass communication of the sheep wrestling competition, such as the media's inability to "set the agenda" for the sheep wrestling competition (meaning that when reporting on the sheep wrestling competition, the media failed to effectively guide public attention and discussion, and failed to Sheep wrestling competition has been pushed into the

public eye as an important topic. This may be due to problems in the quantity, quality, angle, etc. of media reports, or it may be due to the lack of public attention to the topic itself, or other reasons. social and cultural factors). The communication content is single and lacks cultural connotation, the "entertainment" value of the sheep wrestling competition is not fully explored, and the communication form is simplistic. These problems may affect the social influence and appeal of the sheep wrestling competition, and thus affect its popularity and development.

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With the deepening development of globalization and the rapid changes of modern society, traditional culture is facing unprecedented challenges. As part of China's long history and rich folk culture, the sheep wrestling competition is not only an ancient folk activity, but also carries the cultural memory and identity of specific regions and ethnic groups. However, in contemporary society, the recognition of the inheritance value of sheep wrestling competition has gradually weakened, the traditional inheritance methods are limited, and the visibility in mass communication is insufficient. These factors have jointly led to the decline of sheep wrestling competition culture. This study aims to explore from the perspective of performing arts how the sheep wrestling competition can adapt to the development needs of modern society while maintaining its traditional essence, and achieve innovative inheritance and widespread dissemination of culture.

According to Duan Ziliang's journal article "Analysis of the Current Situation and Impact of the Xinzhou "sheep wrestling competition"", the results show that the motivations for watching the sheep wrestling competition show a diversified development trend, which fully shows that most people like the sheep wrestling competition, but overall Generally speaking, publicity efforts are weak and generally rely on interpersonal communication (word of mouth). Currently, we are in the Internet information age, and we need to seize this opportunity of rapid information dissemination to promote and develop the Xinzhou sheep wrestling competition. In terms of private venues and facilities, private venues are informal, small, a flat ground with no prescribed scope, which is a folk wrestling venue. The venue is relatively simple, but it has been greatly improved in recent years. In terms of government venues and facilities, their venues and facilities are formal and relatively large. They are usually held at Xinzhou Stadium and are organized by the Sports Bureau of Shanxi Province, local governments, wrestling associations, etc. The athletes' clothing, venues, lighting, sound, spectator stands, referees, prizes, etc. are different from folk "sheep wrestling competition" wrestling (Duan Ziliang.2023).

Li Wei (1979~), male, master's degree, lecturer. Research direction: National traditional sports. The journal "Research on the History and Culture of sheep wrestling competition in Xinzhou_" mentioned that as for the definition of sheep wrestling competition, domestic scholars believe that performance, entertainment, fitness, and competition are the main characteristics of sheep wrestling competition, especially its origin and development. Inseparable performativity (Li Wei (2014). Wei Yungui (1950-), male, from Ma'anshan, Anhui, associate professor at the Department of Military Sports, Anhui University of Technology. He pointed out that the sheep wrestling competition is a tributary of Chinese wrestling and an ancient sport. Sports events and activities are highly technical, fitness-oriented, and performative. They are suitable for public fitness and competition performances, and are deeply loved by the local people.It originates from the regional cultural characteristics of Xinzhou, that is, the evolution of multi-ethnic cultural integration and the formation of ancient temple fairs. The unique sheep wrestling technique, ancient temple fairs and multi-ethnic exchange activities have brought together a large number of sheep wrestling man. Its technical display attracted the audience to watch. Due to the participation of professional athletes, the performance appears more professional and more attractive to the audience, and all of this is directly related to the professionalization of sheep

wrestling skills. The sheep wrestling competition appears in the form of a competition, which is both ornamental and performative. With the development of society, the sheep wrestling skills are continuously refined.

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As an ancient and ubiquitous form of cultural practice, performing arts has strong physical, visual and emotional expressiveness. Viewing sheep wrestling competition as a performing art helps to expand our understanding of it as an intangible cultural heritage and provides new perspectives for exploring its potential in contemporary culture.The research purposes of this article are three main: first, through in-depth historical research, trace the origin and development of sheep wrestling competition and reveal its profound cultural foundation; secondly, examine the Bodily Practice of sheep wrestling competition in modern society, and through its physical Through the analysis of language, expressiveness, audience interaction, and modern adaptation, we will gain a more comprehensive understanding of the value and significance of the sheep wrestling competition in modern society;Finally, taking the Xinzhou sheep wrestling competition Festival as a case, we will reveal the value and influence of the sheep wrestling competition in the Xinzhou region and even wider areas through specific situation analysis, interpretation of performing arts elements and discussion of social identity. In summary As mentioned above, this study intends to propose effective strategies to solve the existing problems in the inheritance of sheep wrestling competition through an in-depth analysis of the history of sheep wrestling competition , modern Bodily Practice and the case of sheep wrestling competition festival, and provide guidance for future academic research in related fields. Research and practical operations provide reference and inspiration.

2.Research Objectives

1.History of sheep wrestling competition;
2.Modern Bodily practice of sheep wrestling competition;
3.sheep wrestling competition festival as the unit of analysis.

3.Research question

3.Why has sheep wrestling competition developed for a long time and has survived to today? What kind of artistic features and aesthetic value does sheep wrestling competition have?

4.How to improve skills and performance in sheep wrestling competition through training and competition? How did the sheep wrestling competition form a tradition through continuous practice and be passed down? The sheep tickling contest interacts with the audience. What impact does the interaction have on the wrestlers and the audience? How does the sheep wrestling competition reflect people's lifestyle and survival strategies? How is the sheep wrestling contest given meaning and value?

5.How to understand local traditional culture and folk activities？How to protect and inherit traditional culture?

4.Definition of Terms

4.1 Sheep wrestling competition

In the Xinzhou dialect, "scratch" means "to carry", with shoulder support heavy objects. It also means "catch", which is a display of strength, indicating the strength of the wrestler and the embodiment of his ability to express himself. Sheep, as the prize of the competition, Xinzhou area has a lot of water and grass since ancient times, and later there were a lot of sheep, so sheep became an important source of material, and the sheep became the prize for the winner. To Sheep wrestling is to grab the arms and legs of the wrestler with your hands and fall the opponent's wrestler down with his shoulders. During the sheep wrestling competition, the two wrestlers stand with their feet in contact with the ground. The two wrestlers coordinate with each other with their hands and feet. The wrestlers in the competition are not allowed to grab each other except for the face and private parts, and they must not grab each other's pants or hit each other. The opponent loses if any part of his body touches the ground. If the opponent is scratch up or scratch up and slaps you lightly on the back, it means surrender. You can no longer attack. You can use your feet to hook or kick the opponent's feet. you can also use your hands to hold the other person's legs and hold them.

4.2Artifact

Artifact here means that sheep wrestling competition is not only a competitive activity, but also a form of cultural expression. It conveys certain aesthetic values and cultural significance through elements such as body language, rhythm, clothing and rituals.

4.3Modern Chinese context

This refers to considering the significance of the sheep wrestling competition within the social, economic and cultural context of contemporary China. The rapidly changing social environment in modern China has posed new challenges and opportunities to the protection and inheritance of traditional culture.

4.4Bodily practice

bodily practice emphasizes the way people express cultural and social meanings through body movements and behaviors. In the sheep wrestling competition, the body movements of the contestants are not only a sports competition, but also a part of cultural expression, reflecting local characteristics and historical traditions.

4.5 Cultural Heritage of Preservation

This involves the protection and maintenance of the traditional activity of sheep wrestling competition, with the purpose of preserving its historical value, passing on related skills and promoting its cultural significance, ensuring that this intangible cultural heritage can be passed on.

5. Scope of Research

Xinzhou city, Shanxi Province, from the Sheep wrestling competition origin research, this study aims to from the perspective of art, explore the Sheep wrestling competition bodily practice value, from the sheep wrestling competition festival as the unit of analysis analysis how to keep its traditional essence at the same time, to meet

the needs of the development of modern society, combined with the art of the innovation of cultural heritage protection and spread.

Population and Sample

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Key Informant : 1.government official The government officials here are local government officials and national government officials. It plays an important role in policy formulation and implementation, making the competition become China's intangible cultural heritage. At present, they also play a supervisory role in the relevant departments of local governments, such as ethnic development departments and cultural and tourism departments.

2.Ethnographic researcher and scholar The ethnographers here are scholars who specialize in Xinzhou culture.

Casual Informant : Watch the people, tourists and villagers in Xinzhou area.

General Informant : Jia Junfeng, the national Chinese fall referee and sheep scratching referee, Zhang Shunliang, master and apprentice inheritance, inheritor of intangible cultural heritage, Zhu Yanqing, family inheritance, intangible cultural heritage inheritor, Xin zhou wrestling and judo Sports school, Sports school training section chief Wang Zhikuan, two ghost wrestling performers.

6.Research Methodology

This study is a qualitative study of basic research, and its goal is to find academic answers, this paper utilizes the following three main research methods:

1.Fieldwork and data collection Interview: Formal interview, Informal interview,

2.Observation: Normal observation (or general observation), Participatory observation.

3.Documentary data collection

7.Literature Review

The Sheep wrestling competition is a folk wrestling match in Xinzhou, Shanxi Province. It is said that the national hero Yue Fei set up wrestling in the army to train the army. After Yue Fei was killed, his subordinate Cheng Xiaoying returned to his hometown of Xinzhou and taught the wrestling he learned to his neighbors, but Wei Pengbo , Subject major: Ethnic Traditional Sports, Research Direction: Ethnic Folk Sports, in the paper "Research on the Inheritance Model of Sheep wrestling competition in Xinzhou, Shanxi", there are four origins of Sheep wrestling competition, the Spring and Autumn Period theory, the Northern Song Dynasty theory, the Southern Song Dynasty theory, and the Jin Dynasty theory explain.From the literature, it can be concluded that wrestling events have appeared in Xinzhou area of Shanxi Province during the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period. During the Southern Song Dynasty, Sheep wrestling competition was formed. During the Yuan Dynasty, Sheep wrestling competition entered a period of rapid development and has been passed down to this day. Its origin is closely related to the geographical environment and historical background of the Xinding Basin. In ancient times, Xinzhou was a battleground for military strategists. As a means of military training and self-defense, wrestling gradually evolved into a folk entertainment activity at temple fairs and markets (Wei pengbo.2017).

After liberation, the Sheep wrestling competition was protected and passed down as a traditional mass sports activity. It is not only a sport, but also a symbol of local culture and a bond of social unity. The Sheep wrestling competition plays an important role in traditional festivals and celebrations. For example, at the climax, the series of celebrations after the "Sheep wrestling man" defeated six wrestlers in a row reflected people's respect for the winner and the emphasis on traditional culture.

At the National Conference of Cultural and Educational Heroes in 1960, Xinzhou won the title of "Hometown of Wrestling" in China. In 2006, the "Sheep wrestling competition" was selected into the "Provincial Intangible Cultural Heritage of Shanxi Province", and in 2008, it was selected into the second batch of national intangible cultural heritage. In November 2013, it was included in the first batch of "China Sports Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection and Promotion Projects" by the State Sports General Administration.

To this day, the Sheep wrestling competition is still one of the important folk activities in Xinzhou. Although it faces the challenges of modern social changes and cultural diversity, the local government and people are working hard to protect and inherit this precious cultural heritage. The tradition of Sheep wrestling competition continues through the organization of competitions, festivals and publicity using modern media.

The Sheep wrestling competition is not only a folk activity in Xinzhou area, but also a traditional sports competition. It is also a social phenomenon carrying rich historical and cultural significance. From ancient times to the present, the Sheep wrestling competition has experienced the evolution from primitive military training to modern folk activities, and has become a cultural bridge connecting the past with the present and even the future.

Searching the domestic China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) for relevant literature on scratching Sheep wrestling competition, we found that there are currently more than 70 literatures on scratching sheep wrestling, which are relatively sparse in number. Based on the needs of writing the paper, the reviewed literature was classified into four categories: research on the intangible cultural heritage perspective of Sheep wrestling competition, research on the cultural inheritance and development of Sheep wrestling competition, research on the current situation and development of Sheep wrestling competition, and research on the Sheep wrestling competition. Value research.

Zhang Hongbo (1991~), male, master's degree, teaching assistant. Research direction: National traditional sports. and Zhang Shiyu, male, graduate student, national fitness, public sports services, sports industry, from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage of Sheep wrestling competition, it is proposed to inherit the Sheep wrestling competition culture through education and scientific and technological means; strengthen and improve management System, improve the inheritor training mechanism and the wrestling competition system, etc., in order to achieve the sustainable development of the "Sheep wrestling competition", while strengthening and improving the management system, creating the intangible cultural brand of the Xinzhou Sheep wrestling competition , and using "Sports + Tourism" model achieves integrated development (Zhang Hongbo, Huang Jiale & Zhao Min. 2023 , Zhang Shiyu. 2022).

Peng Yuxin. Capital Institute of Physical Education and Liu Wei. Xinzhou Normal University proposed to deeply explore the Sheep wrestling competition culture in the research on the inheritance and development of the Sheep wrestling competition, improve the Sheep wrestling competition system, reserve the Sheep wrestling competition reserve talents, create the Sheep wrestling competition industry chain, and build The Sheep wrestling competition Ecological Tourism Demonstration Zone will strengthen the "ownership" awareness of the inheritors of the Sheep wrestling competition, establish the "Sheep wrestling man Image Ambassador", set up the Sheep wrestling competition R&D and Exchange Center, and effectively promote the Sheep wrestling competition into the classroom (Peng Yuxin, Sun Xiaonan, Zhang Changnian.2022, Liu Wei, Xin Feng & Xie Huangtao.2023)

Duan Ziliang (1973~), male, intermediate coach, discusses the organizational form, participants, competition mechanism, inheritance method, venue facilities and changes in prizes of the "Sheep wrestling competition" in the study of the current situation and development of Sheep wrestling competition. It is proposed to improve the development of folk sports events, and the development of folk competitive sports events will increase the popularity of Xinzhou. (Duan Ziliang 2023).

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Yin Liqing, master's thesis, Taiyuan University of Technology. Research on the current situation and development of Sheep wrestling competition. Proposed targeted strategies: implement the strategy of "one core, one circle and two groups" and the strategy of "two broads" and "two establishments" , among which "two wide" refers to widespread dissemination and widespread popularity; "two establishment" refers to establishing people and establishing character. （Yin Liqing. 2018).

Liu Xingui (1959～), male, intermediate professional title. Research direction: National traditional sports. In the study of the value of the wrestling "Sheep wrestling competition", the cultural, aesthetic, and social value of the "Sheep wrestling competition" viewing were studied and analyzed. Through watching, the ornamental value was demonstrated (Liu Xingui.2014)

Li Xiaozhen, female, born in Xinzhou, Shanxi, associate professor, main research direction: ancient Chinese culture, in the research, through the analysis of the origin, naming, prize setting, competition rules and representative inheritors of the Sheep wrestling competition, the aesthetics of the sheep scratching competition Value (Li Xiaozhen.2017).

Deng Mengnan (1994-), female, research direction: sports human science and sports intangible cultural heritage. In the value of Sheep wrestling competition, the government uses its extensive folk and entertainment to integrate with local tourism resources to deeply develop its commercial value (Deng Mengnan, 2019).

There is no relevant information about "Sheep wrestling competition" in foreign literature, but the word "bodily practice" can be found to find related articles.Bodily practice, performance art, competitive sport: A critique of kalarippayattu, the martial art of Kerala (McDonald, I. 2007), A critique of kalarippayattu reveals how this martial art conveys competitive spirit and fighting skills through bodily practice and performance art. The author discusses the history, technology, philosophy of this art form, and its place and impact in modern society.

Yoga traveling: bodily practice in transcultural perspective(Hauser, B. (Ed.). 2013),The phenomenon of Yoga traveling explores how yoga has transformed from a spiritual practice to a global bodily practice. The authors analyze how yoga traveling has crossed cultural boundaries to become a global health and fitness trend, and discuss the impact of this shift on yoga itself and its participants.

Both articles are concerned with the role and impact of bodily practices and performing arts in culture and society, but their focus and approach will differ. These articles will provide you with valuable information and perspectives. Articles will offer different perspectives on bodily practices, including historical, cultural, social and philosophical aspects. This helps you build a multi-dimensional research framework. Theoretical discussion and critical analysis will provide me with a theoretical background that will help me understand the meaning and role of bodily practices in different cultural and social contexts and integrate these with my own research findings.

Can be seen from the Sheep wrestling competition article research, the current research on the Sheep wrestling competition has made periodic progress, mainly from the historical origin, present situation and development, cultural value, inheritance, intangible cultural heritage, but due to the study of the Sheep wrestling competition in many ways there are deficiencies and defects, especially about its inheritance, this is

the key to the Sheep wrestling competition can grow. This paper will study the Bodily practice of Sheep wrestling competition from the perspective of performing art, find few articles on the existing artistic value of Sheep wrestling competition, and point out the problems with concept of Bodily practice, so as to promote the development and inheritance of the art of Sheep wrestling competition.

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8. Concept, Theory and Conceptual framework

The framework of this study is based on the sheep wrestling competition as the research text, the concept of bodily practice and cultural heritage protection, and the conceptual background of the research in the context of modern China.

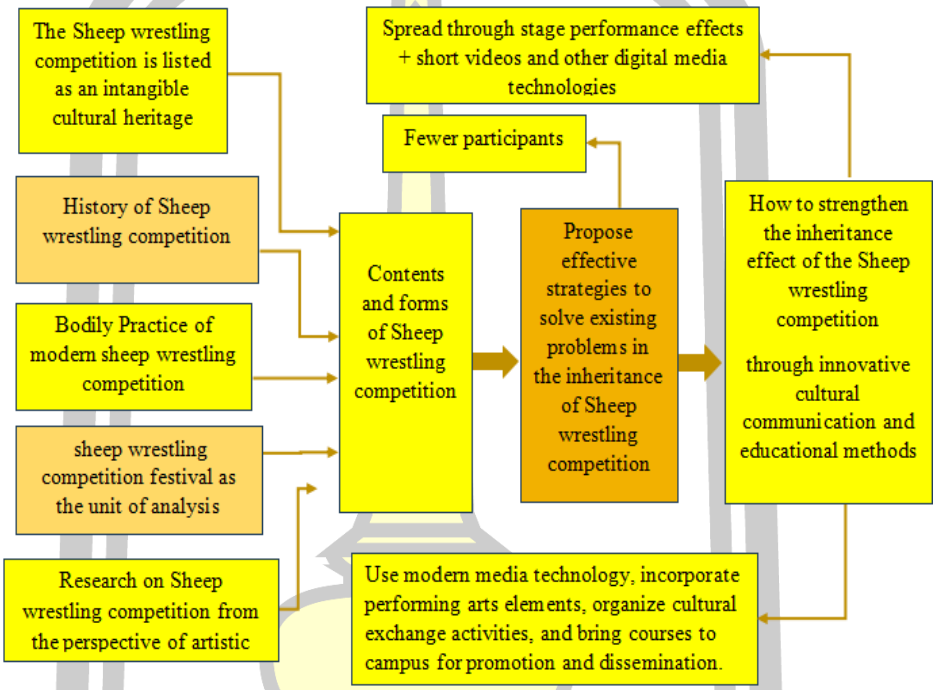

Figure 1

9. Benefits of the study

This article studies the sheep wrestling competition from the perspective of performing arts, and will reflect the bodily culture and social value through bodily practice. Analyze the case study of the sheep wrestling competition in specific festival activities to gain an in-depth understanding of its cultural significance and social impact. Enhance understanding and respect for traditional culture, protect and inherit intangible cultural heritage, enhance community cohesion and identity, and promote local economic development. At the same time, it can also provide new ideas and strategies for the protection and inheritance of cultural heritage.

CHAPTER II

The history of sheep wrestling competition

Introduction

The sheep wrestling competition originated in the Northern Song Dynasty. As a traditional folk activity in Xinzhou area of Shanxi Province, it is not only a contest of strength and skills, but also a performance form with artistic value and cultural significance. As an ancient art form, it records historical changes, reflects social development, and is an important part of intangible cultural heritage. Studying its historical background aims to gain a deeper understanding of the historical evolution and adaptation of this traditional sport, while exploring its role in contemporary society and its potential artistic value. By discussing its origin, development, cultural integration, inheritance and protection, we can better understand the cultural significance and innovative potential of the sheep wrestling competition in the new era. This not only helps to enhance our understanding and appreciation of the sheep wrestling competition, but also provides important thinking and strategies for protecting and inheriting this precious cultural heritage.

1.The origin of the sheep wrestling competition

The sheep wrestling competition is a traditional folk wrestling game in Xinzhou, Shanxi Province. "Commonly known as the sheep wrestling competition, it is a traditional folk wrestling competition with a sheep as the prize held in the rural areas of Xinzhou, Dingxiang, and Yuanping at the same time as temple fairs and opera singing. The Xinzhou area has long been a blend of nomadic and farming peoples. In the Spring and Autumn Period, the Xinzhou area belonged to the territory of the Jin State, and during the Warring States Period, it was occupied by the Zhao State. After the Qin Dynasty unified the six countries, Xinxing County was established in this area, marking the administration of the Xinzhou area. The division was officially established. The ancient city of Xinzhou was built in 215 AD and has a history of more than 1,800 years. It was once an important military defense line in northern Shanxi and was known as the "Key to Northern Shanxi". According to the collected information, the origin of "sheep wrestling competition" . There are four related legends: Li Cunxu's theory, Northern Song Dynasty theory, Southern Song Dynasty theory and Jin Dynasty theory.

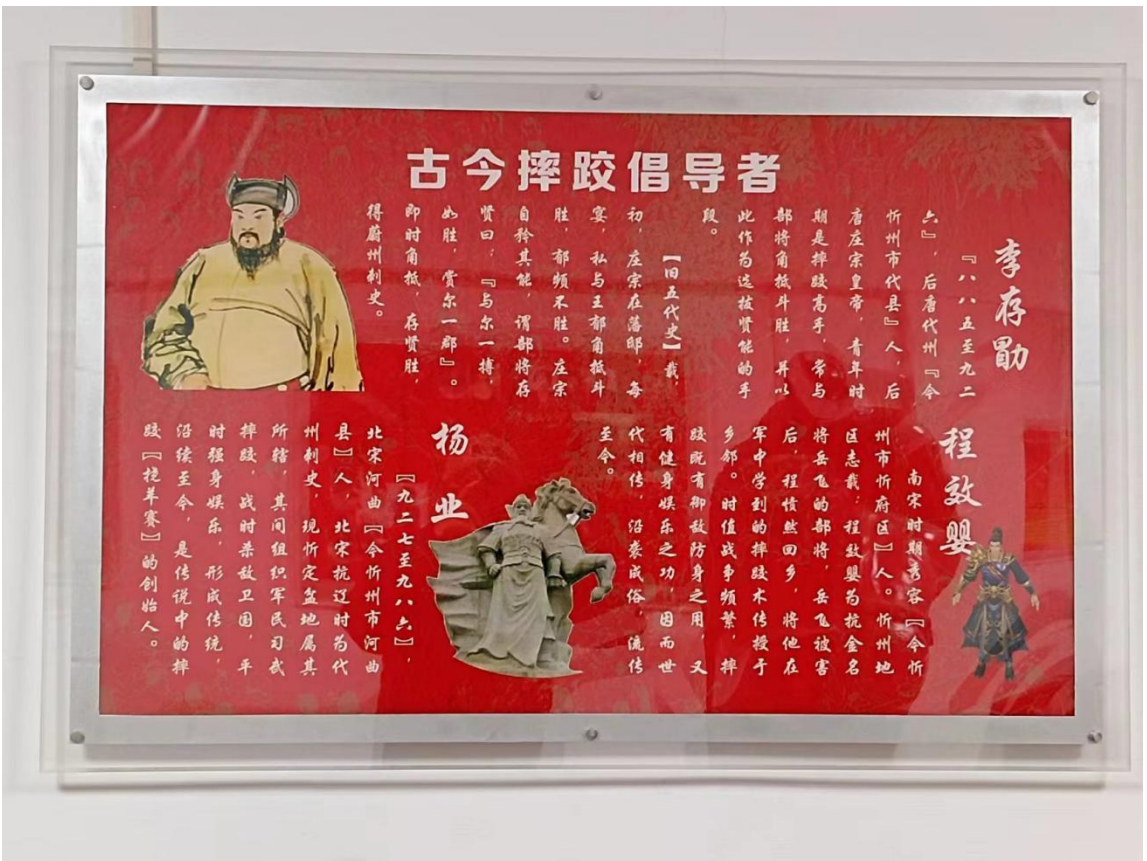

Figure 2

Taken at Xinzhou Wrestling Club on December 21, 2022

According to relevant historical research, Emperor Zhuangzong of the Later Tang Dynasty Li Cunxu, whose father Li Ke, King of Jin, served as a military envoy in Yanmen County (today's Dai County under the jurisdiction of Xinzhou City) for a long time and finally settled in Yanmen. When he was young, he followed the local customs and followed the local customs. The soldiers and civilians have developed a good skill in "wrestling". In 908 AD, which was the war period of the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms, he not only often won the battle with the guard Wang Yu and other soldiers in the palace, but also often won Encourage the soldiers on the battlefield to fight against themselves and win, and use "reward them with a county" as an incentive measure. However, under the heavy reward, there must be a brave man. As expected, one of the generals, Li Cunxian, defeated him and was promoted to the governor of Yuzhou (now Yuxian County, Hebei Province). This record comes from the history of the Old Five Dynasties, which is 1,100 years ago.

During the Song Taizong period in the early Northern Song Dynasty (about 980 AD), swords and horses roared and alarms were often heard along the Great Wall. Song Taizong appointed Yang Ye as the governor of Daizhou to resist the Liao people, and all important military and political affairs were entrusted to one person. But he didn't trust Yang Ye, so he secretly asked Pan Renmei, the scheming opponent, to monitor him. Facing the powerful and brave Liao army, Yang Ye had few major generals and was powerless. Yang Ye’s wife, Yu Saihua, believed that generals come from soldiers, soldiers come from people, and the power of war lies with the

people. He suggested that Yang Ye organize the people to practice martial arts in peacetime and resist the enemy in wartime, so as to kill two birds with one stone. In order to avoid being framed by Pan Renmei, it was also suggested to practice wrestling in the form of folk entertainment activities, and Yang Ye readily agreed.Yang Qilang took the lead in setting an example and led the young people to exercise. Yang Ye used his camera to guide and have fun with the people. She Taijun asked Qilang to divide them into two camps according to geographical boundaries. They took turns to compete and compete. The winners were rewarded on the spot. No one was willing to be outdone. , Pan Renmei also thought it was the children's trouble, and did not interfere. Sometimes she was an enthusiastic spectator. Therefore, wrestling competitions were held at traditional meetings in each village or during the off-farm season. Yang Ye was framed by Pan Renmei and his son and died unjustly. In order to commemorate this national hero, the local folks passed on this wrestling event. It later evolved into the sheep wrestling competition, which has been passed down from generation to generation to this day.

The Southern Song Dynasty said that Yue Fei, the national hero of the Southern Song Dynasty, carried out extensive wrestling training in the army in order to enhance the combat effectiveness of his troops, so as to resist the large-scale attack of the Jin soldiers and carry out heroic and tenacious life-and-death struggles. It turned out that there was a soldier in the Yue Family Army named Chen Xiaoying (ancestral home of Xinzhou City), who was extremely skilled in cornering. He learned that General Yue Fei was unjustly killed by Qin Hui and died. Seeing that the imperial court had no hope of resisting the Jin Dynasty, he left the army and returned to his hometown full of grief and indignation. Teach it to the elders in your hometown and organize struggles behind enemy lines to deal with the enemy. At that time, there were frequent wars. Wrestling could not only defend oneself from enemies, but also provide fitness and entertainment. It was also easy to practice, so it was widely welcomed and loved by the people. It was passed down from generation to generation and eventually became a custom. Due to the natural and geographical conditions, the custom of scratching sheep race was formed after the Yuan Dynasty, which was widely spread in Xinzhou area. In the "Xinzhou Sports Chronicle", it is also specifically recorded that "Chen Xiaoying, a famous wrestler in the Southern Song Dynasty".

Wang Zengshou's deeds were recorded in the "Xinzhou Chronicles" published in the sixth edition of Guangxu in the late Qing Dynasty and were recorded by Yuan Haowen, a poet of the Jin Dynasty, in "Xuyi Jianzhi": Wang Zengshou was a famous wrestler in Shuangbao Village in the southeast of Xinzhou in the Jin Dynasty. Known for his immense strength and superb skills. It is mentioned that he was good at jousting, the ancient sport of wrestling, and that no one could beat him. His nickname "Strength" probably means that he was exceptional in strength. At the end of the Taihe period of the Jin Dynasty, Wang Zengshou did something eye-catching: when the government recruited camels, he cleverly designed a trick to nail the camels' feet to make them limp, and then he carried them from Yangtou Village on his back. The camel reached Daizhou. The officials in Daizhou believed his words, and Wang Zengshou returned to his hometown with his camel on his back.

Based on the above four legends, we can see that the origin and development of the sheep wrestling competition are closely related to the military, political, cultural

and social background in history. Although the exact origin time has not yet been determined, the origin can be attributed to the Northern Song Dynasty. The earliest record of wrestling in Xinzhou is in Tiao Luzi's "Wrestling Records" of the Northern Song Dynasty: Wrestling activities were popular in Xinzhou and Daizhou areas. After the autumn harvest, local people People will gather for jousting competitions, which are called "fields." However, this just corresponds to the "sheep wrestling competition" that is held in the wilderness today during the post-autumn harvest. This shows that the development of corner wrestling in Xinzhou during the Northern Song Dynasty has reached a certain scale. However, it can be determined that the unique folk tradition and wrestling culture of sheep wrestling competition in the Three Jin Dynasties has a long history. From Emperor Zhuangzong of the Later Tang Dynasty, Li Cunxu, to Yang Ye of the Northern Song Dynasty, to Yue Fei of the Southern Song Dynasty, and Wang Zengshou of the Jin Dynasty, they all competed in sheep wrestling competition in different historical periods. sheep wrestling competition are closely related to their deeds and legends. It not only shows the historical importance of sheep wrestling competition, but also shows the value of wrestling as a means of military training.

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In ancient times, people believed that all things in nature, such as the sky, the ground, mountains, rivers, rocks, etc., had deep feelings of awe and worship. This "animism" is the basis of primitive religious beliefs, and people express their awe and gratitude for these natural things through sacrifices. People gather in the ancestral temple on specific dates to hold solemn ceremonies to offer sacrifices. The two most primitive beliefs of mankind are belief in heaven and earth and belief in ancestors.Belief in heaven and earth originates from the worship of nature, while belief in ancestors is the respect for ancestors. These beliefs prompt people to carry out various worship and sacrificial activities to pray for harmonious coexistence. Xinzhou is located at the junction of the farming culture of the Han people and the nomadic culture of the northern minorities. During the Song, Liao, Jin and Yuan dynasties, wars promoted the blending of cultures.With the course of history, the Xinzhou area has experienced many ethnic migrations and cultural exchanges, and sacrificial activities have gradually evolved into a comprehensive social activity integrating commerce and trade, that is, temple fairs. The various villages in Xinzhou have their own traditional temple fairs, where wrestling is regarded as a competition. According to field surveys, it was found that the larger villages in Xinzhou all have temples. The gods worshiped during temple fairs are mostly sacrifices to Sheji-folk gods and heroes. The temple fairs in Xinzhou have ancestor beliefs, and in the ancient Xinzhou area, they had a larger Large-scale folk wrestling activities, temples in Xinzhou area will hold grand temple fairs regularly or irregularly. In addition to the activities of paying gods to perform, these temple fairs also include horn wrestling competitions, the predecessor of sheep wrestling competition.

Figure 3 Photographing the Ershilipu Temple Fair on May 26, 2023

People in ancient times lived in an "animistic" world, and they held deep awe and worship for various phenomena in nature. This belief in natural things shaped people's reverence for heaven and earth and reverence for ancestors, and these two beliefs became the most primitive forms of human religion. Belief in heaven and earth originates from people's respect for the power of the natural environment, while belief in ancestors expresses the memory and commemoration of the heroic spirits of our ancestors. These beliefs not only permeate people's daily lives, but are also reflected in various sacrificial activities. The purpose is to pray for harmonious coexistence

between man and nature, the living and the dead. Xinzhou is at the junction of the farming culture of the Han people and the nomadic culture of northern ethnic minorities. It has continuously witnessed the collision and integration of cultures through the Song, Liao, Jin, Yuan and other dynasties. The intertwined years of war and peace have promoted the migration of ethnic groups and the integration of beliefs. In this process, traditional sacrificial activities have gradually evolved into a comprehensive social activity that integrates religious rituals, social exchanges, and business activities - temple fairs. At temple fairs, folk wrestling has become a popular competition. It not only showcases people's physical strength and skills, but also reflects community cohesion and cultural inheritance.

The sheep wrestling competition is often held during temple fairs, which is closely connected with local religious beliefs and temple fair culture. Temple fair culture provides a platform for the spread of the sheep wrestling competition, making it an important local social activity. This not only enhances the cohesion of the community, but also promotes cultural exchanges between different ethnic groups. Temple fairs are part of local religious activities, and the sheep wrestling competition has become an important activity at the temple fairs. It is not only a form of entertainment, but also a part of people's religious activities. In this way, they can reward the gods and pray for their blessings. shelter. Not only to reward the gods, but also to entertain the people. This wrestling activity gradually transformed from military training to a folk entertainment activity, becoming a folk project for physical fitness and self-entertainment, providing a form of entertainment for local residents. Wrestling has been continuously passed down and developed among the people as a means of self-defense and fitness as well as entertainment. Through the inheritance and development of these traditional cultures, we can not only enhance our understanding and respect of Xinzhou and even Chinese traditional culture, but also continue to promote these distinctive cultural heritages and give them new vitality in modern society.

2.sheep wrestling competition in history

The ancient cultural origin of the Xinding Basin, among which the rich natural resources of Jinyang Lake contributed to the local economic lifestyle based on animal husbandry. This way of life not only shapes the livelihood foundation of local people, but also breeds specific social customs and cultural activities. Sheep herding has become the main local way of life, which shows that people are closely connected with nature, and the rhythm of life and activities are closely related to livestock activities such as sheep herding. This pattern may have affected local people's values, social structure, and all aspects of daily life. In animal husbandry production, the movements required for catching and training livestock (push, pull, pounce, hug, throw) reflect a kind of skill inheritance. These skills are not only for the actual needs of herding, but have also evolved into a way of bodily practice and skill competition in local society.As an entertainment activity, wrestling evolved from labor skills, showing that cultural activities often stem from daily life practices. At the same time, the gambling nature of wrestling reveals the combination of community entertainment and competitive spirit, as well as the role of material rewards (such as sheep) in stimulating enthusiasm for participation. Through how the traditional activities of a place are closely connected with its natural environment, production methods, social structure and cultural values. The sheep wrestling competition is not only a product of

the ancient culture of the Xinding Basin, but also an important way for local people to socialize, entertain and express themselves.

As history has evolved, local wrestling enthusiasts or powerful villages voluntarily host the event. The hosting village is known as the "main family," which is equivalent to the modern organizer. The organizer is responsible for determining the match schedule, number of rounds, referees (wrestling callers), prizes, and maintaining order outside the competition area. The flag protectors, also known as inspectors, are in charge of checking whether the contestants meet the participation requirements, such as physical condition and adherence to the rules, to ensure fair play. The sheep responder is usually a respected senior among the wrestlers who organizes and summons the wrestlers, communicates and coordinates to ensure the smooth progress of the matches. Wrestling callers serve both as referees and commentators; they judge the wins and losses, control on-field misconduct, and explain the match process to the audience. The feeding people refers to situations where the wrestlers have not gone through the organizers, one party intends to lose the match or does not have enough six people to win against the wrestler for crowd numbers. Lastly, stringing sheep refers to situations where the wrestlers have prearranged who will win the match, with one party allowing the other to win by faking a fall. Sheep pickers refer to a situation where a wrestler has managed to defeat four to five opponents, using up a significant amount of physical energy. At this point, the other party may send in a sheep breaker to secure victory. Sheep breakers are adept at spotting an opponent's weaknesses and using their own signature moves to exploit these vulnerabilities and claim triumph.Protectors, also known as protector wrestlers, are among the most skilled on both sides. They are responsible for safeguarding their team from having their sheep picked off by the opposition. Picking sheep wrestlers refers to those who have taken down six rivals; they are the victors of the match. The strategist is in charge of controlling the wrestlers' entry order and timing into the match, devising the strategy for the competition.

The organization of the sheep wrestling competition and its participants consist of local villagers, with the host (the "main family") bearing significant responsibility for the event's organization. This includes setting the match schedule, number of rounds, selecting referees and prizes, as well as maintaining order to ensure the smooth progression of the competition. The flag protectors, acting as inspectors, guarantee the eligibility of contestants and the fairness of the match.The roles of sheep responders, wrestling callers, feeders, stringing sheep maneuvers, sheep pickers, sheep breakers, and protector wrestlers reflect the organized and professional nature of the match, with each role holding unique responsibilities and functions. The strategic arrangement by military advisors and the sequence in which wrestlers enter the ring demonstrate the tactical aspect of the match. However, the roles of flag protectors, sheep responders, wrestling callers, feeders, stringing sheep maneuvers, sheep pickers, sheep breakers, and protector wrestlers, along with the strategic arrangements of the military advisors' control over entry order and timing, are consistent with the scenarios of ancient warfare. In ancient warfare, there were similar organizational structures and role distributions, as well as control and strategic arrangements for the course of battle. For example, the "flag protector" could be likened to the soldiers responsible for guarding the military or war flags in ancient wars; their duty was to ensure that the flag was not captured by the enemy,

maintaining the army's morale and will to fight. The "sheep responder" is akin to messengers or liaison officers in ancient warfare, tasked with conveying information and orders between different departments to ensure orderly combat. The "wrestling caller" is comparable to commanders or referees in ancient wars, responsible for judging the progress and outcomes of battles, as well as controlling and stopping violations. Roles such as "feeders," "stringing sheep maneuvers," "sheep pickers," "sheep breakers," and "protector wrestlers" are similar to various types of troops and functional personnel in ancient wars, each with different missions and responsibilities to ensure victory in battle. The "military advisor" resembles the military strategists or staff in ancient wars, responsible for devising strategies and tactics, as well as the overall control and command of the battle. These regulations and roles reflect the organization and strategic nature of ancient warfare, also mirroring the wisdom and courage of people in battle and competition, which adds to the spectator appeal and interest of the match.

The traditional sheep wrestling competition does not differentiate based on gender, class, age, size, weight, occupation, nationality, or spectator status–anyone can eagerly participate. There is no time limit; the duration of the match is entirely dependent on the wrestler's strength, with victory determined in a single bout. Apart from keeping the soles of the feet on the ground, if any other part of the body touches the ground, it is considered a loss. Once defeated, there are no repechages; the winner continues to compete against new challengers. If a wrestler consecutively defeats five opponents, they earn the title of "hero," prompting their team to seriously select a "protector wrestler" to ensure the continuation of the sheep wrestling competition. If the protector succeeds, it is known as "breaking the sheep." The person who "breaks the sheep" then wrestles against the opposing wrestlers, starting the count from the first. If the protector fails, the champion of that competition is determined, with the ultimate victory going to the one who achieves six consecutive wins, earning the prestigious title of "Sheep Wrestler," or the "Head Sheep" recipient. This practice began organizing larger-scale wrestling competitions and formed the rules of the current traditional sheep wrestling competition

The traditional folk sheep wrestling competition, with its unique rules and open nature, has become an art form deeply loved by people. Unlike the formal competitions of traditional Chinese wrestling, it is not confined by gender, age, weight classes, or even nationality; anyone can participate, and spectators are also encouraged to join in enthusiastically, reflecting a cultural inclusiveness and openness. This open and inclusive attitude has made it a platform for cross-cultural exchange. On this platform, individuals from different cultural backgrounds can learn from each other, draw on each other's strengths, and collectively promote cultural exchange and integration. Such cross-cultural communication not only enriches the connotations of the sheep wrestling competition itself but also fosters understanding and respect between different cultures.The sheep wrestling competition is not bound by time constraints; the duration of the match depends entirely on the wrestler's ability. This principle of valuing strength makes the competition fairer and more just. The rules of the match are straightforward–a single fall determines victory or defeat. Touching the ground with any body part other than the soles of the feet signifies a loss. These rules make the match intense, with each round filled with suspense and

excitement, embodying the principle of fair competition. Each match is unique, as the size, skills, and strategies of the participants are constantly changing. Competitors can showcase their personal styles and characteristics through their performance while also improvising based on their opponent's actions. This improvisational competitive performance not only tests the skills and adaptability of the competitors but also provides the audience with a series of exciting and unpredictable matches, offering a fresh and anticipated visual feast. Moreover, the role settings of "hero" and "protector wrestler" in the sheep wrestling competition add narrative and dramatic tension, making the competition more than just a physical contest–it becomes a psychological battle as well. It represents a sense of community cohesion, where both competitors and spectators can find a sense of belonging and identification within the match. The sheep wrestling competition also serves as a platform for cultural exchange, drawing people from different regions and backgrounds to participate, thus fostering cultural communication and understanding. Additionally, the sheep wrestling competition has entertainment and educational functions; it motivates people to exercise and cultivate a resilient spirit through the competition.

In summary, the sheep wrestling competition is a unique form of art that not only displays the charm of traditional culture but also reflects the trend of cultural integration. As a traditional art, the sheep wrestling competition has played a significant role in historical artistic exchanges and social functions. It has not only promoted intercultural communication and integration but has also become an important vessel for community cohesion and cultural heritage.

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Figure 4 Rural sheep Wrestling competition (Photo by Fan Yuan)

In Xinzhou, the traditional sheep wrestling competition is a drama that encompasses various aspects of life and social emotions. Folk rhymes from the Xinzhou region reflect how people regard wrestling as an art, a culture, and a medium for emotional expression. Elderly men, when watching the bouts, peer beyond the intense clashes to discern the subtleties and techniques only insiders understand. They silently critique in their minds, attempting to identify which young person has mastered unique tricks and who has the potential to become a future standout. Old ladies watch the match with worry and concern, their hearts clenching with every move, silently praying for their children or grandchildren's safety, hoping they exhibit courage without getting injured.Young men approach wrestling with a mindset of learning and challenge. Their gaze is sharp, focused on exploiting an opponent's weakness, strategizing how to cleverly win the match rather than relying on brute force. Wives observe from the sidelines, privately praying for their husbands' safety and good performance in the competition. Their support is silent but forms the most solid backing for the competitors. Young lads are filled with fervor, eager to prove themselves. Their passion burns like flames, fueled by love for the Sheep Wrestling Match and dreams for the future. Girls cast shy glances at their favored suitors. Their coy and subtly mischievous eyes hide admiration for brave men; heroes of the wrestling ring often capture their hearts. As for the children, they are purely there for fun and excitement. They laugh and play among the wrestlers, imitating the adults' moves, and although they do not yet understand the skills and rules, their childlike innocence and joy represent the purest experience of the sheep wrestling competition.

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3.Cultural integration

Figure 5 Xinzhou.com data map: The battle of strength and the confrontation of wisdom. Photo by Wang Haoyu/

Participants in the sheep wrestling competition are different from traditional formal Chinese wrestling competitions. Participants in the sheep wrestling competition usually do not wear wrestling uniforms and compete shirtless. Their lower body trousers can be as long or short as they like. Barefoot is allowed to compete. Female wrestlers wear sportswear on their hands. T-shirt, the lower body is worn the same as that of male wrestlers. The belt on the trousers can be a longer sweat towel or a hemp rope, but no belt is allowed (or no belt). The winner will be rewarded with a live sheep. The sheep walked around the arena to thank the audience. If other contestants who have not participated still want to participate, someone will fund the "two sheep" and "three sheep" wrestling. The "second sheep" are high-level players from the beginning, and the competition is much fiercer than the first sheep.

The sheep wrestling competition incorporates costume elements from other ethnic groups and cultures into the competition. For example, female wrestlers wear sports T-shirts and sweat towels or hemp rope belts on their pants. These elements are borrowed from other cultures. This cross-cultural clothing element not only enriches the visual effect of sheep wrestling competition, but also makes it more inclusive and diverse. The cross-cultural clothing elements make the visual image of sheep wrestling competition more colorful and retain the traditional characteristics. It also shows modern style. This kind of visual innovation makes the sheep wrestling competition more attractive and reflects the flavor of the times.

The s sheep wrestling competition also absorbs elements from other art forms during the competition. The celebration method of carrying a live sheep around the field after winning is both practical and full of symbolic meaning, reflecting local characteristics and folk traditions. There are also "two sheep" and "three sheep" competitions. For example, the setting of "two sheep" and "three sheep" is an innovation of traditional rules, providing opportunities for other players who want to participate but are unable to play. This kind of setting It will definitely make the sheep wrestling competition richer and more diverse. This innovation not only maintains the traditional essence of the sheep wrestling competition , but also adapts it to the needs of modern society. In addition, they are all references and integrations of other cultures. The addition of these elements makes the sheep wrestling competition more lively and interesting, and also enhances its artistry and appreciation.

4.Inheritance and protection

4.1Two government people

Figure 6 Photo of Secretary Baiyun, from the official account of Literature, History and Art, written by Wang Xingzhi

From two people, Baiyun, Huili Village, 1921-1985. In 1955, he served as the propaganda minister of Xin County, and in 1956, he served as the deputy Secretary of the County Party Committee, in charge of culture, education, health and sports work. After taking charge of cultural and sports work, during major national festivals, such as "May Day" and "National Day", Baiyun organized a county-scale sheep wrestling competition, forming the scale of the sheep wrestling competition from the folk spontaneous activities to the whole county. In June 1960, the National Cultural and Educational Front Heroes Association was held in Beijing. Deputy Secretary Baiyun had the honor to attend the meeting as the representative of Shanxi sports circle. In the sub-system advanced experience exchange meeting, he reported the historical tradition of Xinzhou (for Xinding County) wrestling, the activities of the sheep

wrestling competition and Xinzhou people's love of wrestling and everyone can wrestling to the leaders of He Long, Rong Gaotang and other national sports committees, with the "hometown of wrestling" this golden plaque.

Through the practical actions and efforts of Bai Yun, the Deputy Secretary of the government, the sheep wrestling competition has been revitalized in modern society, receiving effective preservation and protection. As the Deputy Secretary of the county committee in charge of culture, education, health, and sports, Bai Yun used his authority and influence to elevate the originally spontaneous folk sheep wrestling competition to a county-wide event. This government-led organization not only provided a more stable and standardized developmental environment for the match but also ensured its continuity and widespread popularity. Incorporating the sheep wrestling competition into major festival celebrations made it one of the significant ways for people to celebrate together. Hosting the match during national holidays such as May Day and National Day not only enriched the cultural connotations of these festivals but also helped this traditional activity resonate more deeply with the public.

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Deputy Secretary Bai Yun passionately reported on the xinzhou's wrestling culture and the activities of the sheep wrestling competition at the National Conference of Cultural and Educational Heroes, which not only raised awareness of this traditional event but also earned Xinzhou the prestigious title of "Hometown of Wrestling." This undoubtedly further enhanced the reputation and influence of the match. In his report, Bai Yun mentioned that "everyone in Xinzhou loves wrestling, and everyone knows how to wrestle," reflecting a sense of pride and identification with local culture that helps strengthen the cherishment and protective awareness of the Sheep Wrestling Match. Specific historical periods and social environments provide favorable external conditions for the inheritance and protection of the match. From 1955 to 1960, Chinese society had a positive attitude and support towards the protection and inheritance of traditional culture. This socio-cultural context created advantageous conditions for the preservation of the sheep wrestling competition .

In summary, the sheep wrestling competition , as an ancient art form, has been preserved and protected in modern society mainly due to government support and organization, celebrations during significant festivals, national-level promotion and exchange, local cultural pride and identification, as well as the combined effects of the era's background and social environment. Through the synergistic effect of these factors, the sheep wrestling competition has been effectively passed down and safeguarded in contemporary society, becoming a cultural link connecting the past and present.

Figure 7 Photo Sun Zhongwang, from the official account of Literature, History and Art, written by Wang Xingzhi

Sun Zhongwang, a native of Dongjie Village, was born in 1941. In 1976, he served as the Deputy Director of the Xinzhou County (now Xinzhou City) Sports Committee and was later promoted to Director. During his tenure at the county sports committee, in June 1980, he established the country's first judo team for daughters, selecting 13 rural girls from dozens of members to form the nation's first female judo team. This "Mulan Army" was coached by Yang Ancheng and began regular training.

Figure 8 Photo of coach Yang Ancheng, from the official account of the Sports Science Research Center of Xinzhou Normal University, certificate of attendance at the Sixth CPPCC Committee of Xinzhou in 1981

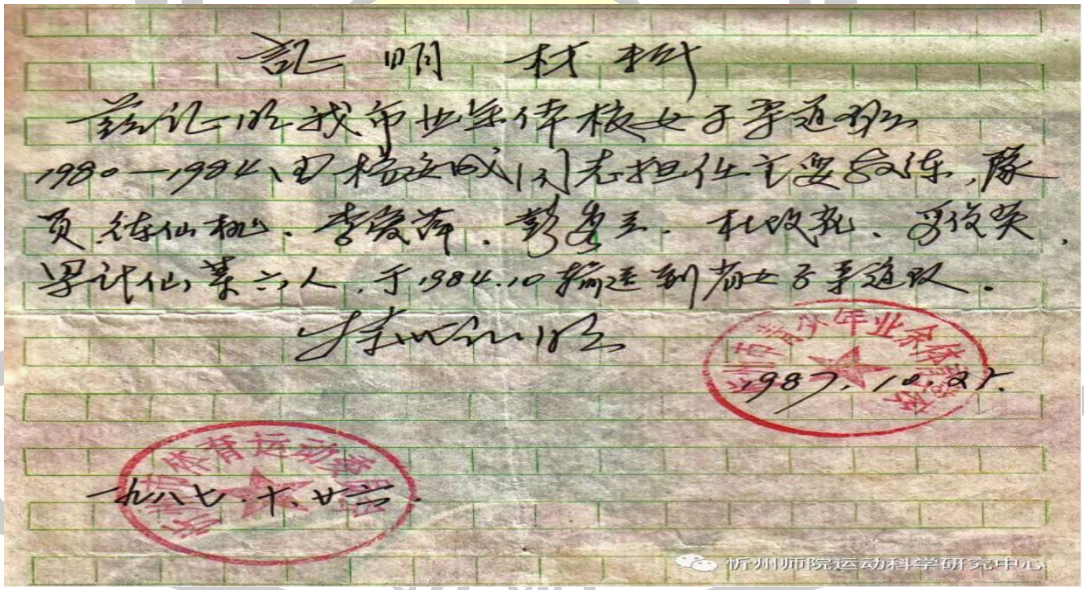

Figure 9 Photo of coach Yang Ancheng, from the official account of the Sports Science Research Center of Xinzhou Normal University. From 1980 to 1984, Yang Ancheng served as the coach of Xinzhou Amateur Sports School. Six team members including Xiantao, Li Aiping, Peng Xiulan, Du Gaihua, Duan Junying, and Liang Jixian were trained in 1984. Transported to the provincial team every year.

Figure 10 Photos from the official account of the Sports Science Research Center of Xinzhou Normal University, awards won by women’s judo

Director Sun believed that the traditional Xinzhou the sheep wrestling competition typically followed a pattern of "lions tumbling embroidered balls, with the best coming last." This meant that the early stages featured average wrestlers grappling, and only towards the end or final stages would the experts emerge, bringing the excitement to a climax with matches between top-notch sheep wrestlers. While the skilled wrestlers inside the ring fought like dragons and tigers, the audience outside had their hearts in their throats, creating a thrilling and captivating atmosphere. However, such exhilarating moments were inevitably brief, as the climax marked the end of the match.Director Sun came up with an innovative idea: what if this thrill could be injected right from the start of the event, keeping the audience on the edge of their seats throughout? Thus, in August 1983, the nationally renowned "Wrestling King Championship" was officially launched. In this championship, a single fall determined victory, adopting a best two out of three falls system. The competition was divided into preliminary rounds (elimination) and final rounds (round-robin), crowning one "Wrestling King" and several runners-up.The original "Wrestling King Championship" did not categorize by weight class, and the wrestlers did not wear wrestling attire, but instead competed in just a belt around their bare arms. The rules retained the characteristics of bare-arm wrestling while also incorporating elements of Chinese-style wrestling rules. Each match lasted 10 minutes under the best two out of three falls system. If the score was tied, an additional 5 minutes were added to determine a winner by a single fall. If there was still no score after this extension, a technical score was used to decide the victor. Following the men's "Wrestling King Championship," Xinzhou then pioneered a women's version of the tournament.

One day in 2007, Sun Zhongwang had a brilliant idea: if teams represented their own villages and societies in national wrestling competitions, wouldn't that better showcase the prestige of the state? His idea immediately received approval from Wang Zhen, the honorary chairman of the "Wrestling and Judo Association" (former county party secretary), and Bo Jianwei, the director of the provincial "Wrestling and Judo Association." That September, the national wrestling competition was held at the Xinzhou "Hometown of Wrestling Gymnasium," and the team organized by Sun Zhongwang from Xinzhou's West Street Village brought back two champions, one runner-up, and one third place. Thirty-five years have passed, and Mr. Sun Zhongwang was grandly awarded the title of "Outstanding Contributor to the Wrestling Enterprise" along with a trophy and a certificate of honor. Under his leadership, sports activities in the county flourished, with every commune having its own team and every village hosting events. The sheep wrestling competition evolved from an informal folk entertainment activity into a modern competitive sport, which greatly promoted its spread and popularization.

Mr. Sun Zhongwang's case provides a vivid example. As the director of the Xinzhou County Sports Committee, Mr. Sun not only promoted the improvement of the traditional Sheep Wrestling Match but also transformed it into a modern competitive sport through organization and promotion. His innovative idea to set the climax of the competition at the beginning of the match made the entire process thrilling and intense. This innovation attracted more audiences and enhanced both the spectator appeal and the competitive nature of the event. As the director, Mr. Sun actively organized and popularized the Sheep Wrestling Match, turning it from an informal folk entertainment into a modern sporting event. This transformation significantly boosted the dissemination and popularity of the match. By organizing teams to participate in national wrestling competitions, he strengthened the sense of local cultural identity and pride. This not only helped protect and pass down the tradition of the Sheep Wrestling Match but also brought honor and recognition to the local community. Such cultural identification and pride are fundamental for protecting and inheriting any traditional activity. The endeavor received support and cooperation from various sectors of society, including Wang Zhen, the honorary chairman of the "Wrestling and Judo Association," and Bo Jianwei, the director of the provincial association. This social support provided a strong guarantee for the preservation and protection of the Sheep Wrestling Match. These partners contributed resources and support, as well as offering a broader platform for the heritage and development of the event. Thirty-five years later, Mr. Sun Zhongwang was honored with the title "Outstanding Contributor to the Wrestling Enterprise," along with a trophy and a certificate of merit. This accolade signifies not only personal recognition but also an affirmation of the value of the Sheep Wrestling Match as a traditional activity. Such honors and recognition further motivate Mr. Sun and other stakeholders to keep striving for the preservation and protection of the match. In summary, the survival and protection of the Sheep Wrestling Match as an ancient art in modern society are mainly due to the combined effects of innovation and improvement, organization and promotion, cultural identity and pride, social support and cooperation, and honors and recognition. These factors have collectively propelled the transmission and development of this traditional activity, allowing it to flourish with new vitality in contemporary times. Through Mr. Sun Zhongwang's case, we can see that protecting

and passing on traditional activities requires the concerted efforts and support of the entire society.

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4.2 Xinzhou Sports School

Figure 11**Photo taken at Xinzhou Sports School in 2021**

Since its establishment on February 5, 1979, Xinzhou City Sports School has been enrolling students for secondary vocational education since 1981, with approval from the provincial education and sports committees. Over the course of 40 years, the school has made outstanding contributions in training reserve talents, especially in wrestling, with more than 70 athletes reaching the provincial level or above. The school offers freestyle, Greco-Roman, Chinese-style, and judo wrestling programs and has participated in international and domestic major sports competitions, promoting fitness for all and cultivating sports talents for society.

Leveraging its professional coaching staff and training facilities, the city sports school is able to systematically train athletes in the traditional sport of sheep wrestling, enhancing their athletic performance and competitive skills. This not only maintains the vitality and competitiveness of sheep wrestling but also provides a solid platform for the personal development of the athletes. By organizing related activities and competitions, the school has increased the visibility of sheep wrestling, attracting a larger audience and societal attention. This helps to elevate the social status and influence of sheep wrestling, making it a focus of interest for many people.

Furthermore, the school stimulates students' interest in sheep wrestling, nurturing future professionals in this field—a particularly important endeavor for a sport requiring physical confrontation and special skills. By fostering students' interests and professional skills, the Xinzhou City Sports School lays a foundation for the long-term development of sheep wrestling.

The school fully utilizes its resources and networks to promote cultural exchanges in sports between different regions. Such cross-regional exchanges not only foster mutual understanding and respect between different cultures but also add new dimensions to the diversity and richness of culture.

In summary, the Xinzhou City Sports School plays an irreplaceable role in the development of sheep wrestling in modern society. It serves not only as a crucial venue for the transmission of skills but also as a platform for enhancing the social value and influence of the sport. Through the efforts of the city sports school, the traditional sport of sheep wrestling has been revitalized with new vitality and vigor in modern society, laying a solid foundation for its future prosperity.

4.3 Wrestling family and heirs

Figure 12 Photographed on July 13, 2022, at the gate of the Wrestling Family

Figure 13 Photographed on July 13, 2022, in the courtyard of the Wrestling Family

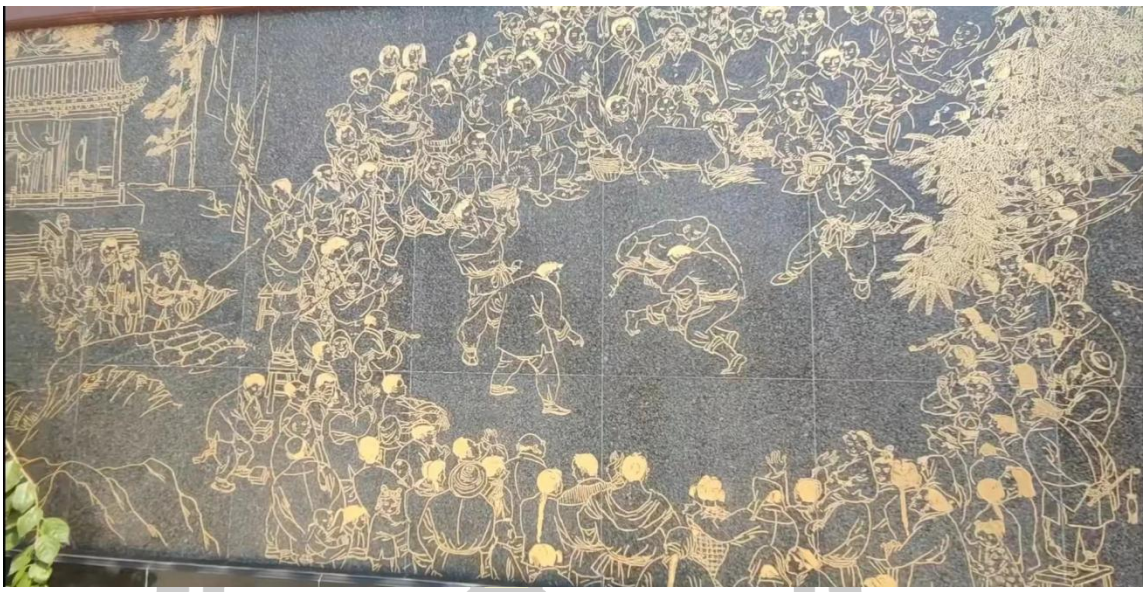

Figure 14 Photographed on July 13, 2022, the courtyard wall of the Wrestling Family

Figure 15 Photographed on July 13, 2022, Mr. Cui Fuhai explained the story of wrestling

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Figure 16 Photographed on July 13, 2022, at the home of the wrestling family

Figure 17 Photographed on July 13, 2022, at the home of the wrestling family

The transmission of sheep wrestling often involves official designated inheritors who possess rich experience and high levels of skill. Their involvement ensures that traditional activities are preserved and propagated according to their original forms and rules. Sheep wrestling is a folk activity passed down through generations, with many families involving several generations in this activity, where familial inheritance plays a significant role. Some have even formed "wrestling lineages." In Nan Gao Village, Qi Village Town, Xinzhou City, there is a family legacy worth noting.

Cui Yinmang from Nan Gao Village was known as a famous sheep wrestling champion before the liberation of Xinzhou. Not only did he leave behind many remarkable stories with his agile moves and exquisite skills, but he also had the foresight to train his descendants to become generations of wrestling champions. Thus, he subjected his sons to long-term training. Under his meticulous guidance, his sons emerged one after another: his second son, Cui Guihai, became a renowned sheep wrestling champion in Xinzhou. The third son, a leading figure Cui Fuhai, is a representative inheritor of the sheep wrestling intangible cultural heritage at both the provincial and national levels in Shanxi. He has won three national championships at the National Games and the National Wrestling Championships, served as the head coach of the Shanxi Provincial Wrestling Team, a national team coach, and vice-chairman of the Shanxi Provincial Wrestling Association. He has trained numerous talents, whose influence extends far and wide. He also became the national sports delegation wrestling coach, leading the national team to the World University Games in Rome, bringing honor to the country. The Xinzhou municipal government awarded him titles such as "Wrestling Meritorious" and "Wrestling Coach," the Shanxi Provincial Wrestling Association presented him with a bronze plaque titled "Grandmaster of the Generation," he was selected among the top ten figures moving Xinfu in the sixtieth year since the founding of the PRC, and he received the National Chinese Wrestling Outstanding Contribution Award and the "New China Sports Pioneer" accolade.

His fourth son, Cui Minghai, is also a national middleweight champion. His grandson, Cui Shuhe, has won the national lightweight wrestling championship nine times consecutively and now serves as a professor at the Shandong Institute of Physical Education, as well as the head coach of the Chinese wrestling team, leading the team to 138 gold medals in top national and international competitions. He has also been recognized as a provincial model worker and youth pacesetter. Another grandson, Cui Buhe, has twice traveled to the United States to participate in the World Youth Championships, winning second place in wrestling on both occasions. In August 1984, the "Wrestling Family" plaque was hung in Nan Gao Village. In April 2006, Nan Gao Village was awarded the title "Wrestling Champions Village" because the Cui wrestling family had produced over six national sports champions, more than twenty national champions, and two international champions by that time. Through learning and emulation among family members, sharing knowledge and skills across generations, the younger generation is able to directly learn authentic sheep wrestling techniques and related cultural knowledge from their elders.

In the preservation of traditional skills and knowledge, family inheritance plays an indispensable role. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the technically demanding sport of sheep wrestling. Elders in the family, with their rich experience and profound skills, teach the younger generation techniques and strategies, ensuring the continuity and purity of this ancient art. By participating in sheep wrestling with grandchildren, the elders not only spark interest in this traditional activity but also guide them in learning and practicing, cultivating a new generation of inheritors. The wisdom and experience of each generation are accumulated and shared in the process of family transmission, providing a rich practical foundation and suggestions for improvement to the development of sheep wrestling. This mode of transmission extends beyond the core family members; it can spread to the entire community or

ethnic group, becoming a bond that connects community members and maintains community cohesion and the stability of cultural traditions.

Family inheritance helps to maintain and convey the cultural connotations and historical stories behind sheep wrestling. The transmission of these stories and values helps to strengthen the family members' sense of identity and belonging to the tradition. At the same time, family inheritance also helps to enhance the status and recognition of sheep wrestling in society, making it a cultural symbol and pride of the region and even the nation.

In summary, family inheritance not only ensures the continuity of the skills and culture of sheep wrestling but also provides the impetus and possibility for the modernization of this traditional activity. Through intergenerational transmission, sheep wrestling continues to evolve in modern society, laying the groundwork for future innovation and prosperity.

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Figure 18 Photographed on March 9, 2023, the successor of Zhang Shunliang explained wrestling to me

Zhang Shunliang, now 56 years old, with a bachelor's degree and an inheritor of intangible cultural heritage, was once a senior judo coach at Xinzhou Sports School and is now retired. In 1984, he was honored as a National Judo Master of Sports. During his coaching career, he trained 120 provincial-level athletes, with 128 provincial champions, and provided 26 athletes to the provincial sports team and the national team. Zhang Shunliang has nurtured many outstanding athletes. In 1982, he was awarded third-class merit by the Shanxi Provincial Sports Commission. In 1984, he was named "New Long March Vanguard" by the Communist Youth League Xinzhou Regional Committee. From 1992 to 2012, he was eight times named "Outstanding Coach" by the Xinzhou Wrestling and Judo Sports School. In 1991, he received commendation from the Xinzhou Prefectural Government. In 1993, he was awarded first-class merit by the Xinzhou Regional Labor Competition Committee. In 1998, he was honored with the title of "Wrestling Town Contributor" by the Xinzhou Municipal People's Government and received a significant contribution award from the Shanxi Provincial Wrestling and Judo Association. In March 2000, he was recognized as an "Advanced Worker" by the CPC Xinzhou Local Committee and Prefectural Government. In August 2000, he was named "Amateur Training Advanced Individual" by the Shanxi Provincial Sports Bureau. In April 2002, he was awarded second-class merit by the Shanxi Provincial Socialist Labor Competition Committee. In 2005, he was recognized as an "Outstanding Coach" by the Shanxi Provincial Sports Bureau.

Figure 19 Source: Douyin media interview on July 8, 2023, Zhu Yanqing

Figure 20 **Photographed on September 13, 2023, Zhu Yanqing**

Zhu Yanqing, born in 1966, nicknamed "Kitten", is an inheritor of intangible culture and currently the head wrestling coach of Xinzhou Sports School. He was born in a Naoyang family. Zhu Yanqing has loved wrestling since he was a child under the influence of his father Zhu Fushan. 1983 In 2001, under the deliberate training of Zhu Fushan, at the age of 16, he was admitted to the Shanxi Sports School to study wrestling, and during this period he entered the Beijing Sports University to

study and train. Later, he entered the provincial sports team training. At this time, Zhu Fushan had been transferred to the provincial sports team as a coach. He noticed that his son had physical limitations and would not develop as an athlete, so he decided to retire his son. After retiring, Zhu Yanqing served as the wrestling coach of Xinzhou Sports School.

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Zhu Yanqing saw that he was tall and had a tenacious and heroic spirit, so he decided that he was a talent and recruited many team members including Liang Lei. Liang Lei, born in 1982, is a Chinese wrestling player. Although Liang Lei looks tall, he is The family's financial situation was poor and he lacked nutrition, so he often had no energy when practicing. As a coach, Zhu Yanqing saw it in his eyes and felt pain in his heart. He devoted a lot of effort to Liang Lei. During the most difficult time, coach Zhu Yanqing led Liang Lei to Lei and several other disciples lived and ate in his own home, spread out mats in the courtyard and practiced internal energy hard.

In 2000, Zhu Yanqing won the title of "National Youth Sports Advanced Personnel"; after the Xinzhou sheep wrestling competition was successfully selected as a national intangible cultural heritage in 2008, Zhu Yanqing also trained many famous wrestling players in the ups and downs, including Liang Lei and Fan Jian. , Shi Shangyong, Wang Zhijun, Xu Guodong, Jia Zhen, etc. They galloped in domestic and foreign arenas and won many honors for the country. In 2009, he won the "Shanxi Provincial Outstanding Talent Transfer Award"; in 2011, he won the "Xinzhou Elite Newsmaker" award from the Xinzhou Municipal Party Committee. At the same time, he also won the "Transformation Across Shanxi" award from the Shanxi Provincial Committee of the Communist Youth League and Shanxi Youth Federation. Youth May 4th Medal", and in this year, he also participated in the compilation of the "Shanxi Province International Wrestling Basic Technical Training Outline".

In the preservation of traditional skills and knowledge, inheritors play a vital role. Inheritors such as Cui Fuhai, Zhang Shunliang and Zhu Yanqing are not only masters of the art of sheep racing, but also the bridge between the tradition and the new generation. Through continuous practice and teaching, they ensure that the skills and spirit of sheep wrestling competition can be passed down from generation to generation, allowing the traditional essence of the sport to be preserved. The existence of inheritors ensures the transfer of technology and knowledge, allowing the sheep wrestling competition to continue to flourish in modern society. They have high prestige and influence in the local community. By organizing sheep scratching competitions and related activities, they have enhanced the connection and cohesion among community members and promoted the stability and development of community culture. The teaching of the inheritors is not limited to the technical level, but also pays attention to the cultural significance and values behind the sheep scratching competition.Through words and deeds, they teach the history, culture and values behind the sheep wrestling competition to the younger generation, enhancing their sense of identity with traditional culture. This fusion of tradition and modernity makes traditional culture take root in the hearts of the younger generation. As coaches and educators, inheritors impart skills and knowledge to those who are interested in learning sheep wrestling competition through training courses and workshops, and cultivate a new generation of inheritors. They not only have the responsibility to protect tradition, but also have the ability to innovate appropriately according to changes in modern society. They continue to explore ways to combine the sheep wrestling competition with modern sports, culture and entertainment activities to make it more suitable for the needs of modern society. As the representative and symbol of the sheep wrestling competition , the inheritors promote the sheep wrestling competition to a wider stage and enhance its popularity by participating in

domestic cultural activities and exchanges.They are well aware that they shoulder the social responsibility of protecting and inheriting cultural heritage. While promoting the sheep wrestling competition , they also work hard to advocate the importance of protecting intangible cultural heritage and improve the public's awareness of cultural protection. Inheritors are important resources for the study of the history, technology and culture of sheep wrestling competition . Scholars and researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the tradition of the sheep wrestling competition and its evolution in modern society by working with its inheritors. The inheritors' professionalism and persistent pursuit of traditional culture have set a positive example for the younger generation, inspiring them to learn and inherit traditional culture.

In general, inheritors play a key role in the protection, inheritance and development of sheep wrestling competition in modern society. They are not only the guardians of skills and culture, but also an important force in promoting innovation, enhancing community cohesion and promoting the spread of culture. Through their unremitting efforts, the traditional sport of sheep wrestling competition has been able to radiate new vitality and vitality in modern society.

4.4 Xinzhou Wrestling Club

Figure 21**Taken on December 21, 2023**

In May 2003, Xinzhou City established the "Xinzhou City Wrestling Club" and made it clear that its responsibilities are: adhere to the principle of public welfare, mobilize all positive factors, and widely absorb contributions from all walks of life to

discover, develop, inherit, and improve wrestling (sheep wrestling competition). Contribute to the overall level of traditional culture and sports, and carefully create a regional cultural characteristic brand with wrestling (sheep wrestling competition) as the leader. Continuously participated in organizing the Three Realms Xinzhou Wrestling Festival. In 2004, he organized the Wrestling Museum, which excavated, organized and exhibited many wrestling (sheep wrestling competition) cultural relics and cultural and historical records as well as poetry, literature and music. In 2006, the "sheep wrestling competition" was successfully applied for the first batch of intangible cultural heritage protection in Shanxi Province. On June 7, 2008, sheep wrestling competition was approved by the State Council of the People's Republic of China to be included in the second batch of national intangible cultural heritage list, project number VI-41. In November 2019, "Representative Projects of National Intangible Cultural Heritage" List of Protected Units" was announced, and the Xinzhou City Wrestling Club was qualified as a protected unit for the "sheep wrestling competition" project.

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In May 2003, Xinzhou City established the "Xinzhou Wrestling Club", marking a new stage in the protection and development of this traditional culture and sport. This move not only reflects the local government's sense of responsibility for the protection of cultural heritage, but also opens a new chapter in the modernization of the sheep wrestling competition. From the beginning of its establishment, the Xinzhou City Wrestling Club has made clear its responsibilities: adhere to the principle of public welfare, mobilize all positive factors, and widely absorb contributions from all walks of life to improve the overall level of the traditional culture and sports event of the sheep wrestling competition. The club's efforts soon bore fruit - it continuously participated in the three Xinzhou Wrestling Festivals, making the cultural connotation of the sheep wrestling competition more widely disseminated and recognized. In 2004, the club organized a wrestling museum. This move is of milestone significance for the protection and inheritance of the sheep wrestling competition. The museum has excavated, sorted out and exhibited many wrestling (sheep wrestling competition) cultural relics and historical records as well as poetry, literature and folk arts, providing valuable information and places for subsequent researchers and enthusiasts. These exhibits not only allow people to appreciate the technical details of the sheep wrestling competition, but also let people understand the local characteristics and spiritual outlook it carries. The influence of the sheep wrestling competition gradually expanded.In November 2019, the "List of National Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative Project Protection Units" was announced. The Xinzhou City Wrestling Club was listed and qualified as a protection unit for the "sheep wrestling competition" project. This is not only an affirmation of their past efforts, but also an encouragement and expectation for future work.

4.5 National government supports Participation

With the strong support of the State Sports General Administration and the Provincial Sports Bureau, the Xinzhou Municipal Government and the participation of the Xinzhou Municipal Sports Bureau under the government, from September 23 to October 16, 2003, the Xinzhou Municipal Party Committee and the Municipal Government successfully held the first China·Xinzhou A total of seven wrestling events were organized during the Wrestling Festival. More than 1,300 athletes from 22 provinces and cities across the country participated in the competition. More than 400 reporters from all over the country participated in the publicity and reporting of the Wrestling Festival, and nearly 100,000 people watched it. The competition and the successful holding of the Wrestling Festival have won unanimous praise from the State Sports General Administration and the participating teams, revitalizing the traditional sports event of wrestling and writing a new chapter for the development of characteristic sports.

Strong support from the State Sports General Administration and the Provincial Sports Bureau. Provide necessary policy support for the development of sheep wrestling competition by formulating relevant policies. These policies include financial support, event organization, talent training and other aspects, which are conducive to the protection and inheritance of the sheep wrestling competition.

The local government and sports bureau are responsible for organizing and managing activities and competitions related to the sheep wrestling competition to ensure the smooth progress of these activities. By holding various forms of sheep

wrestling competition, we can attract more participants and audiences and increase the social influence of the sheep wrestling competition. The government's support is also reflected in providing professional training and competition opportunities for the sheep wrestling competition athletes, improving the technical level of the athletes and enhancing the competitiveness of the sheep wrestling competition. In addition, the development of the sheep wrestling competition has also driven the development of sports tourism, cultural products and other related industries, playing a positive role in promoting local economic growth.

5. Conclusion

As a traditional folk activity with a long historical background, the sheep wrestling competition is a cultural heritage with profound artistic and historical value. According to four theories about its origin, it has experienced hundreds of years of development and evolution, constantly absorbing the characteristics of the times and cultural elements, forming a unique artistic style and cultural significance.

From an art historical perspective, sheep wrestling competition carries rich local cultural characteristics and national traditional spirit. It combines multiple elements such as sports competitions, folk customs, local dialects, temple sacrifices, etc., showing the vivid practice of an ancient culture in modern society. The competition of strength and skill displayed in the sheep wrestling competition, as well as the spiritual confrontation between the participants, are both highly ornamental and artistically expressive.

In contemporary art, the value of the sheep wrestling competition is reflected in its unique contribution to body aesthetics. It presents a primitive, uncarved art form with a natural display of human strength and skill. At the same time, the existence and spread of sheep wrestling competition in modern times provides contemporary art with the possibility of combining traditional elements with modern expression, thereby broadening the boundaries of artistic expression.

At the cultural level, the status of sheep wrestling competition is very significant. It is not only a cultural symbol of Xinzhou and even the entire Xinzhou region of Shanxi Province, but also a treasure in the treasure house of traditional culture of the Chinese nation. The continuous inheritance and development of the sheep wrestling competition reflects the attitude of respecting and protecting traditional culture. It also promotes the establishment of national cultural confidence and the maintenance of cultural diversity.

In general, the art historical research on sheep wrestling competition is not limited to a review of the past, but also emphasizes its value and status in contemporary art and culture. This ancient folk activity continues to adapt to the development of modern society and has become an important carrier to connect ancient and modern times and promote cultural exchanges. It plays an irreplaceable role in promoting the innovation and revitalization of traditional culture and enhancing the soft power of national culture.

CHAPTER Ⅲ

Bodily Practice of modern sheep wrestling competition

Introduction

As an ancient and unique Bodily practice, sheep wrestling competition not only carries a profound historical and cultural heritage, but also shows its unique artistic charm in modern society. This study aims to deeply explore the artistic nature of the Bodily practice of sheep wrestling competition and its characteristics as a performing art. Through the analysis of its body language, expressiveness, audience interaction and modern adaptation, we will gain a more comprehensive understanding of the value and significance of the sheep wrestling competition in modern society.

1.Body language

As a traditional folk activity, the sheep wrestling competition not only tests the Bodily skills of the contestants, but is also an artistic expression with aesthetic value. In competitions, athletes demonstrate Bodily skills, which require the coordination of wrestling frames, techniques, footwork, and offensive and defensive skills. When two athletes wrestle, the offensive and defensive skills should change with the changes of the opponent. The body movement techniques are complex. The following is a typical hug. Analysis of leg and Bodily skills, analyzing how these skills are transformed into a unique artistic charm in fierce competitive confrontations.

Figure 22 Taken in the 2022 sheep wrestling competition, the leg-hugging technique

Leg-hugging technique: The opponent's right leg is in front of him in a right frame position, standing with his feet forward or backward or left and right, his upper body slightly tilted forward, his center of gravity higher and falling on his front legs, his arms slightly bent close to his chest, and he is on the right side. Stand with your feet forward and backward, your upper body slightly tilted forward, your center of gravity higher and on your legs, your arms slightly bent and placed in front of your chest. When the other person steps forward and reaches out to grab your upper part and head and neck, you Stretch out your right hand and quickly lift up the opponent's elbow. At the same time, you lower your head and bend your right foot forward and step forward, landing on the front and inside of the opponent's left foot. At the same time, you step forward with your left foot and land in front of the opponent's right foot. Your right hand moves from the outside to the outside. Hold the knee socket of the lower end of the opponent's left thigh with your inside, and hold the knee socket of the lower end of the opponent's right thigh with your left hand from the outside inward. Keep your head close to the opponent's right rib and crotch side. When the opponent's upper body falls on your back, When you suddenly raise your head, straighten your chest, stretch your waist and kick your legs to pick up the opponent, you can quickly throw him to the front, back or right according to the direction of the opponent's center of gravity.

In the heat of competition, it's crucial to have skills that can change the situation quickly. Among them, the "leg hugging" technique is a strategy that uses a series of consecutive movements to make the opponent lose his balance and eventually knock him down. Both parties stand in a right-hand stance, with one party's right leg in front, standing with feet front to back or left and right, with the upper body leaning slightly forward, and the center of gravity slightly higher and mainly falling on the front leg. This stance helps respond quickly to incoming attacks while also maintaining flexibility both defensively and offensively. When your opponent attacks and tries to take control by stepping up and reaching for your upper body and head and neck, you have to react quickly. This response involves using your right hand to cup the opponent's elbow upward to prevent further control. At the same time, lower your head and bend over, your right foot goes around the opponent's left foot, landing on the front and inside of it, and your left foot follows suit and moves in front of the opponent's right foot.This series of moves not only disrupts the opponent's offense, but also creates conditions for the next move. Your right hand tightly hugs the knee socket of the lower end of the opponent's left thigh from the outside inward, and your left hand also hugs the knee socket of the lower end of the opponent's right thigh. The purpose of this action is to immobilize the opponent's legs, making it difficult to move or break free. When the opponent's upper body weight falls on his back, he suddenly raises his head, straightens his chest, stretches his waist and kicks his legs, using this strength to lift the opponent up. According to the offset and stability of the opponent's center of gravity, choose the most appropriate direction to quickly throw the opponent to the front, back or right. The successful execution of this action depends on the reasonable distribution of body strength and accurate timing. In short, the effective implementation of the "hugging legs" technique requires good physical coordination, strength, speed and skills. More importantly, it requires keen observation and judgment of the opponent's dynamics in order to make the

correct decision at critical moments. Reactions and movements. Through this technique, the opponent's strength and center of gravity can be effectively used to knock the opponent down, thereby gaining an advantage in close combat.

Figure 23 Filming the 2023 sheep racing single cell leg technology

Single-leg hugging technique: The opponent is in a right frame, standing with his feet front to back or left and right, the center of gravity of the body is relatively high, the arms are slightly bent close to your chest, you are in a right frame, with your right foot in front and left foot behind, and the body's center of gravity is generally maintained In a medium position, both arms are naturally extended in front. Your right hand quickly reaches to the left side of the opponent's neck, clasps the neck, and your left hand is ready to grab, grab, block, and block the opponent's right arm. The moment the opponent stretches his right arm to your left shoulder, you lift it up with your left hand. Hold the opponent's right arm, lower your head and bend down half-squat, place your upper left foot on the front and inside of the opponent's right toe, and at the same time, dive into the opponent's right armpit with your head, raise your head, raise your chest, and kick your legs to rotate downwards to your right rear side. . And your left hand quickly reaches to the outside of the opponent's right thigh to hug and lift it, while your right arm pulls hard to your lower right side at the same time, pulling the opponent's upper body to your lower right side, so that the opponent's head, shoulders, and back touch the ground.

During the game, your right hand should be quickly and forcefully stretched to the left side of the opponent's neck and clasped. This is not only to make the opponent feel pressure, but also to gain better control. At the same time, the left hand should be ready to intercept or control the opponent's right arm. This requires players to have extremely high reaction speed and movement accuracy. When your opponent attempts to counterattack with his right arm, this is your best chance to make your next move. Use your left hand to support the opponent's right arm, and at the same time prepare for your next move by lowering your head, bending over, and half squatting. These movements need to flow smoothly to maintain balance and make the next move smoother. Stepping up the left foot to the front and inside of the opponent's right toe is a delicate footwork adjustment, which requires players to have a high degree of

physical coordination.Dig your head under the opponent's right armpit, raise your head, lift your chest, kick your legs, and turn downward to your right rear side. This series of actions must be completed in a quick and consistent manner to increase the probability of successfully knocking the opponent down. While turning, your left hand quickly reaches out to the outside of the opponent's right thigh and hugs it, while your right arm pulls down hard. This action requires players to have strong strength and accurate skills to ensure that the opponent cannot resist or break away. Through the above consecutive actions, the opponent's head, shoulders, and back will be thrown to the ground to complete the throwing method. Throughout the process, the player's strength, speed, skills, observation and judgment abilities and quick reactions all play a decisive role. In short: players must make accurate judgments in a very short period of time, use appropriate strength, speed and skills, and must also have excellent physical coordination and quick reaction capabilities. The mastery and implementation of this technology can not only gain an advantage in the game, but also the best proof of the player's ability to compete.

In the two techniques of "double leg hugging" and "single leg hugging", the players not only demonstrated superb skills through a series of precise and powerful movements, but also conveyed rich emotional and psychological information. Each movement brought There is clear intention. In the process of realizing the "double leg hug", the player quickly steps forward and hugs the opponent's leg, conveying a strong intention to engage in a wrestling move. This action is not only a tactical layout, but also a strategic move. It is also a psychological declaration, conveying visual clues to the opponent and the audience that an impact is about to occur, and enhancing the tension and anticipation of the game. The gestures between the players and their opponents engage in a silent dialogue.In the "single leg hug" technique, when the contestant clasps the opponent's neck and holds up his right arm at the same time, the postures of both parties create a tension, demonstrating the interaction of control and resistance. This gesture dialogue conveys the competitiveness and tension of the game, allowing the audience to feel the intensity of the battle and the fighting spirit of both sides. The fast, violent movements in both techniques convey aggression and decisiveness; while the smooth, smooth movements demonstrate confidence and control. Players control the rhythm of their movements to convey different emotions and psychological advantages, allowing the audience to visually feel the level and depth of the game. In the "double leg hugging" technique, the player's step up and leg hugging actually physically occupy the opponent's space. This space occupation conveys aggression and possessiveness, adding the symbolic meaning of territorial competition to the game.The movements of raising the head and chest, kicking the legs and turning around show the strength and determination of the players, conveying physical strength as well as psychological determination and confidence. This posture not only forms the core of technology, but also becomes a way to express the inner world of players. In short, the movements included in the "double leg hugging" and "single leg hugging" techniques not only have a literal wrestling meaning, they also constitute a rich body language. This body language conveys the player's strategic, emotional and psychological status through intentionality, posture dialogue, rhythm and emotion, distance and body strength.

2. Expressiveness

Figure 24 Photos from Dingxiang County Rong Media Center

Before the game begins, the athletes warm up first, taking off their shirts to reveal their muscular bodies. The referee comes on the stage, and there is a ceremonial handshake. The athletes stand in the center of the field, with their feet spread to the left and right, about shoulder width apart, one foot forward about one foot away, the toes slightly buckled inward, and the knees slightly bent. The body is tilted forward, the upper body is slightly tilted forward, and the weight is mainly placed on the hind legs. The arms are slightly bent, the forearms are raised flat in front of the chest, the hands are half-clenched, the front hand is at the same height as the shoulder, the back hand is slightly lower, and the muscles of the whole body are in a state of natural tension. The referee gave the order and the game officially kicked off. The athletes quickly entered the state, staring closely at their opponents with blazing eyes. As the game progresses, the athletes coordinate their movements with their hands and feet, using flexible and steady steps. Facing the opponent's offensive, the athletes quickly grab their arms, necks, or legs, trying to find the best angle of attack. The opponent constantly adjusts their strategies and strives to crack the opponent's skills, which change with the changes in body technical movements. In the fierce transition between offense and defense, they accurately judge the timing and move quickly and powerfully. At the climax, the athletes successfully fell the opponent, and the referee announced the end of the game. , the winner will raise his hands excitedly to show his victory to the audience.

Every aspect of the competition is not only a test of the athletes' physical fitness and skills, but also a stage for their personal style and emotional expression. From the pre-game warm-up, the athletes have begun to show their focus and determination to the audience. They took off their shirts to reveal their strong muscles, not only to adapt to the upcoming fierce confrontation, but also to show the results of their long-term hard training. After the referee comes on the stage, a ceremonial handshake is performed. This link not only maintains the dignity of the game, but also reflects the mutual respect between athletes. The athletes then stand in

the center of the field and adopt specific standing postures, which not only help them respond quickly to their opponents' attacks, but also silently demonstrate their confidence and readiness. Their bodies lean forward slightly, their knees are slightly bent, and their muscles are in a state of natural tension, as if they are an arrow ready to be fired at any time. The referee gave the order and the game officially kicked off.The athletes quickly entered the state, staring closely at their opponents with blazing eyes. Their eye contact is a silent psychological warfare. A firm and sharp gaze conveys the desire to win and respect for the opponent. As the game progresses, the athletes coordinate their movements with their hands and feet, using flexible and steady steps. Facing the opponent's offensive, they nimbly grab their arms or necks or legs, trying to find the best angle of attack. The fluidity of movement and technical choices each athlete makes during a game reflect their individual style. Athletes demonstrate resilience and indomitable spirit through perseverance and determination when faced with adverse circumstances. This spirit is the embodiment of the athlete's personal qualities. The strategies that athletes use to deal with their opponents and adjust their skills reflect their intelligence and adaptability. The selection and application of these strategies and techniques showcases the athlete's personality and creativity. Some athletes may be more oriented toward strength-based techniques, while others may excel at agility and subtle moves. At the climax of a game, such as successfully knocking down an opponent, the athlete's emotions are released. They express their excitement and joy by raising their hands and shouting loudly.

In short, an athlete's body movements are a visual representation of their personal style and emotions. From the posture of preparation to the strength and strategy in confrontation, to the speed and passion in transition between offense and defense, as well as the joy and respect of victory in celebration, every action silently conveys the athlete's personality, technique, style, emotion and mental state.

3. Audience interaction

Figure 25 The photo comes from the fifteenth day of the first lunar month in 2024

In the sheep wrestling competition, a national event full of strength and confrontation, athletes not only demonstrate their physical abilities through highly trained physical techniques, but also convey skills, determination and emotions. These body techniques become their inner language of communication, silently telling their personal stories and spirits to the audience. The competition stage is the climax of the entire festival and the moment that best reflects the artistic charm and cultural connotation of the sheep wrestling competition Festival. Before the game of the sheep wrestling competition, the entire stadium was filled with an atmosphere of tension and anticipation. The players perform some warm-up movements and interactions, which is also an integral part of the game. At this time, the emotional communication and tacit cooperation between them have resonated with the audience. They relax and adjust their bodies by stretching each other, jumping and other actions. These actions not only demonstrate the physical fitness and physical practice of the players, but also provide a unique visual enjoyment for the audience. The contestants are making final preparations on the ring. Their eyes are focused and firm, and their postures are tall and calm. The spectators were eagerly waiting in their seats, looking forward to the upcoming game.

As the game officially begins, every attack and defense of the players reflects their amazing physical strength. This kind of power is not only the contraction of muscles and the explosion of physical strength, but also a symbol of mental toughness and willpower. When a wrestler successfully executes a powerful throw, the moment of release of power is an affirmation of his own strength and a strong challenge to his opponent. It is accompanied by strong emotional investment. Their eyes, gestures and body language all silently convey their desire for victory and respect for their opponents. Players use quick, accurate, and powerful movements to pick up their opponents, then quickly turn around and turn their backs to the ground.These actions may seem simple, but in fact they require players to have extremely high skills and physical fitness. The display of these skills is not only the result of years of hard training, but also reflects their calm thinking and instant judgment in tense confrontations. Every successful skill movement is an affirmation of the athlete's intelligence and creativity. Athletes often have to persist in competition under extreme pressure. Their eyes, posture and breathing convey determination and perseverance. Even when being beaten passively or at a disadvantage, the athletes' determined eyes and unyielding reactions convey to the audience their determination to never give up. Every successful action will win bursts of applause from the audience, while every failure will cause regrets from the audience. One of the reasons why this traditional event is so popular.

In the auditorium, the emotions of the audience fluctuated with the rhythm of the game. They are not only passive recipients, but also active participants in the transmission of emotions. When players perform well, they cheer and applaud their favorite players. When the players encounter difficulties, the audience will convey strength and confidence through encouraging slogans and cheers. This interaction filled the entire arena with a warm and united atmosphere. This interactive method not only enhances the audience's participation and viewing experience, but also allows the audience to become part of the game and jointly promote the progress of the game.

With the end of the last game, the Xinzhou Sheep wrestling competition Festival has also come to an end. The players will thank the audience and share their competition experiences and feelings; the audience will also express their love and support for the players by taking photos with the players, asking for autographs, etc. This intimate interaction not only shortens the distance between the players and the audience, but also makes the entire event more meaningful and memorable. Although the fierce competition has come to an end, the arena is still filled with the afterglow of art. After the game, the audience was not in a hurry to leave, but chose to stay for a while to reflect on the wonderful moments they had just witnessed. The players greeted each other on the ring and thanked each other for their outstanding performance in the game. The sportsmanship and artistic talent they displayed moved everyone present. Even after the game ended, the Bodily practice of Sheep wrestling competition they showed still left a deep impression on people's minds.

In general, the "preparation for the game, during the game, and after the game" in the Xinzhou Sheep wrestling competition Festival together constitute the unique artistic atmosphere of the Sheep wrestling competition Festival. It is not only reflected in the competitive interaction between players, but also in the emotional communication between players and the audience. This sincere emotional transmission adds unique artistic charm to the Sheep wrestling competition Festival. From the sportsmanship and artistic talent of the players to the enthusiastic participation and active interaction of the audience, these elements together reflect the traditional cultural value of the Sheep wrestling competition Festival. It shows the local people's love and inheritance of this traditional activity.

4. Modern adaptation

4.1The artistic transformation of Bodily practice

In traditional culture, sheep wrestling competition is a fiercely competitive sports activity, the core of which is to demonstrate the physical strength and speed of the participants. In this concept, the athlete's body is regarded as a direct tool to win the game, and the emphasis is on physical strength, endurance and speed, while the expressive and emotional transmission functions of the body are often ignored. However, as modern performing arts continue to develop and gain popularity, people's knowledge and understanding of the body is undergoing a profound transformation. Modern performing arts teaches us to recognize that the body is not only a physical presence, but also a medium for emotional and artistic expression. Affected by this, athletes in the sheep tickling competition began to convey emotions through their body language and show the artistic beauty of sports. They are no longer just completing technical moves, but interpreting roles, turning the field into a stage, and turning competition into an emotional conveyance. Every movement and expression of an athlete may contain a specific emotional meaning, making the traditional sheep wrestling competition more dramatic and enjoyable to watch.

4.2 The art of Bodily practice

The main goal of traditional sheep wrestling athletes is to knock down each other through a series of physical confrontations. With the integration of modern performing arts, this traditional folk activity begins to pay attention to the smoothness, harmony and expressiveness of movements. These new elements not only enrich the body language of the athletes, but also enhance the artistic effect and viewing value of the entire game. In the sheep wrestling competition, athletes are no longer satisfied with simple offensive and defensive techniques, but pursue the continuity and elegance of every movement. Their movements become more precise and controlled, and every turn and every jump is full of power and beauty. This pursuit of smooth movement not only improves the quality of the game, but also brings a more pleasant visual experience to the audience. During competitions, athletes began to pay more attention to the interaction with the venue environment, using different spatial levels and locations to create more aesthetic scenes. This use of venue space not only increases the strategic nature of the game, but also provides a richer visual experience for the audience. The training methods for the sheep scratching competition have also been adjusted accordingly. In addition to traditional physical and technical training, athletes also began to receive training in dance and other performing arts forms. These cross-training exercises not only improve their physical fitness and coordination, but also enhance their expression and creativity.

4.3 Introduction of improvisation and creativity

Inspired by the improvisation of modern performing arts, artists can flexibly use body techniques to respond to changes in the scene. On the premise that the participants in the sheep scratching competition follow the basic rules, the athletes on the field no longer mechanically perform preset actions. Rather, like an actor on stage, he responds flexibly to the opponent's movements and the flow of the game, creating novel and imaginative techniques and movements. Demonstrated superb body control and rich expressive power. This kind of improvisation and creativity not only tests the athletes' on-the-spot adaptability and innovative thinking, reflects the contestants' personality and creativity, but also greatly enhances the uncertainty and enjoyment of the game. The audience cannot predict what exciting moment will happen next. This kind of suspense and anticipation makes the entire event full of excitement and excitement.

4.4 Integration of art and culture

Under the influence of modern performing arts, wrestling is not only a competitive sport, but also a platform that combines physical ability and artistic value. Their every movement, every turn, and every knockdown is the result of countless practices and sweat, demonstrating their strength, speed and skills to the fullest. The artistry of this physical practice is not only reflected in the precision and smoothness of movements, but also in the interaction and confrontation with opponents, showing a unique beauty of competition. With the clever integration of lighting, music and other elements on the modern stage, more rhythm and rhythmic beauty are added to wrestling. Through the physical practice of the wrestlers, the audience can feel the Xinzhou people's worship of strength and devotion to skills. In pursuit of the love and inheritance of traditional culture, the addition of these modern performing arts elements not only

enhances the viewing experience of Xinzhou wrestling, but also makes this traditional activity glow with new brilliance while maintaining its original cultural connotation.

5.Conclusion

Through an in-depth exploration of the modern Bodily practice of sheep wrestling competition, we can clearly see its significant significance as a unique body art. sheep wrestling competition is not only a sports competition, but also a comprehensive art form that integrates Bodily, emotion, culture and innovation. The athletes convey deep emotions through precise movements, smooth rhythms and rich expressions, immersing the audience and making them resonate. Athletes connect with the audience through their eyes, smiles and movements, allowing the audience to participate and experience the performance more deeply. From the artistic transformation of physical practice to the art of physical practice, to the introduction of improvisation and creativity, the sheep wrestling competition continues to advance with the times, bringing new surprises and experiences to the audience. At the same time, the integration of art and culture also makes the sheep wrestling competition present a diversified artistic style and cultural charm. I suggest: Provide more performance platforms and opportunities so that more people can personally participate in and experience the charm of the Bodily practice of sheep wrestling competition. Athletes are encouraged to continue to innovate and try, to integrate more modern elements and multiculturalism into their performances, to enrich their artistic connotation and expression forms, so that more people can understand and appreciate their unique artistic value.

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CHAPTER Ⅳ

Analyzes xinzhou sheep wrestling competition festival as the unit of analysis.

Introduction

Through an in-depth analysis of the case of the sheep wrestling competition Festival, we will generally explore the artistic role and cultural significance of this traditional event in local society. This is not only a study of a folk activity, but also a study of art, culture and community. We will reveal the role of sheep wrestling competition in the Xinzhou area through specific standpoint analysis, interpretation of performing arts elements and discussion of social standpoints. Intrinsic value and impact.

1.Holiday situations

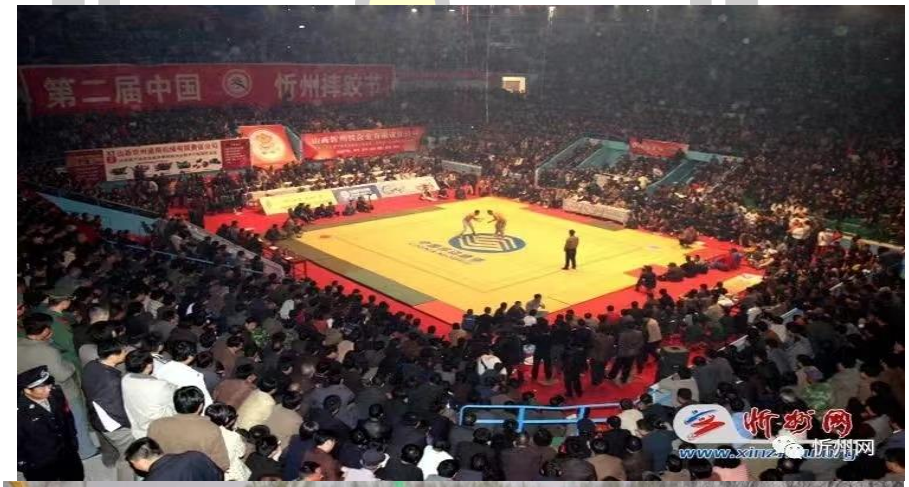

Figure 26 Photo from Xinzhou.com Group photo of the first, second, third China Xinzhou Wrestling Festival

In the vast land of Xinzhou City, Shanxi Province, northern China, there is a bright cultural pearl - the Xinzhou Wrestling Festival. Local people often call the folk wrestling competition " sheep wrestling competition ", which is a wrestling competition. The competition was not held in stadiums at first, but in the fields. Every autumn harvest season, nearby villages would sing operas and hold "sheep scratching competitions". At this time, I would stay up all night to watch it, and I would always be very passionate about it. After the play ended, people formed a circle behind the theater and started the " sheep wrestling competition ". Most of the people who could scratch the sheep were the strong young ones. They passed five levels and killed six generals, defeating each other amidst the cheers of the crowd and the eager eyes of the girls. Once the sheep is "tickled", the whole village will celebrate the victory, and the girls will cast warm eyes. The sheep-tickling man became the hero of the entire audience, even in villages ten miles away. In a few days, the marriage proposers and matchmakers will be able to cross the threshold. Popular with local people;On September 23, 2003, at 8:40 pm, the first China Xinzhou Wrestling Festival opened. Song Zhaonian, leader of the State Sports General Administration, announced the official opening of the first China Xinzhou Wrestling Festival in 2003. Leaders of the national and provincial sports bureaus and the leaders of the four major municipal teams attended the opening ceremony. 21 wrestling teams from various provinces and cities across the country came to Xin to participate in the invitational competition. This wrestling festival lasted for 24 days and concluded on October 16. From October 1st to 10th, 2004, the 2nd China Xinzhou Wrestling Festival opened. Nearly 300 athletes, coaches, and referees from all over the country participated in this China Xinzhou Wrestling Festival. In September 2005, the third "China·Xinzhou Wrestling Festival" was held, which was larger in scale and with more people than the previous two; the fourth China·Xinzhou Wrestling Festival in 2007 was scheduled to be held from September 12, 2007 to It was held grandly on September 18th at the Qiaoxiang Gymnasium in Xinzhou City, Shanxi Province. The 2011 Fifth China Xinzhou Wrestling Festival was held grandly at the Qiaoxiang Gymnasium in Xinzhou City, Shanxi Province from October 30 to November 5, 2011. The Xinzhou Wrestling

Festival has become an important local festival. On August 2, 2012, the opening ceremony of the "Yanmen Pass Cup" Sixth China·Xinzhou Wrestling Festival, the Second China·Yanmen Pass International Frontier Cultural Tourism Festival, and the 2012 China Great Wall Hiking Conference-Yanmen Pass Station Competition was held in Yanmen Pass, Dai County.

The arrival of the autumn harvest season not only means the joy of harvest, but also heralds the start of a cultural event - the Xinzhou Wrestling Festival. Here, the traditional folk wrestling match is affectionately called "sheep scratching match" by the locals. This is not only a contest of strength and skills, but also a heritage of history and culture. Over time, the "sheep wrestling competition" has developed into an important event that integrates sports competition, social culture and economic development. Its role and significance far exceed the game itself. This ancient activity is not only the reproduction and inheritance of customs, but also the praise of farming culture for strength and courage. Every event is held to promote the national spirit and educate future generations. It is also an event and a medium for communication among villagers, which promotes community cohesion and the formation of collective identity.In the process, it helps create a more united and harmonious community environment. As part of the autumn harvest celebrations, the "Sheep Scratching Race" also provides necessary entertainment and leisure, bringing moments of joy and relaxation to local residents. Its hosting adds to the festive atmosphere and becomes an anticipated annual celebration. Being worshiped as a hero not only brings honor and inspiration to young people, but may also improve their status in society and even increase their chances of finding a mate. With the expansion of the influence of the Xinzhou Wrestling Festival held by the government, the "Raising Sheep Tournament" has attracted more and more attention from tourists and media. With its unique local sports characteristics and profound cultural heritage, it has gone nationwide and contributed to building a wrestling sports brand. , popularize mass wrestling, expand its influence, and build a good platform to promote local economic development and tourism. Today, it has become an important tourism product that attracts foreign tourists and enhances local visibility.

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2. Performing Arts

Figure 27 **Photos from the ancient city in 2023**

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When you walk into the Xinzhou sheep wrestling competition Competition area, the first thing you see is a bustling scene. The crowd was huge, and spectators came from all directions. They were standing or sitting. Some crowded in the front to watch the upcoming game more clearly, while others talked loudly in the back and enjoyed this rare time of togetherness. Colorful flags fluttering and banners fluttering in the wind announce the arrival of this traditional festival in the most intuitive way. The entire venue is decorated with colorful colors, and the venue for the sheep wrestling competition is usually chosen in a wide square or stadium to accommodate a large number of spectators and participants. In the center of the venue, a standardized wrestling ring will be built with steel pipes. The ring will be decorated with colorful flags and banners. Staff will hang lights around the ring. The lights will illuminate the competition venue. Reporters, Kuaishou, and Douyin anchors will be on site outside the venue. Live broadcast, photography art lovers and audience seats, as night falls, colorful lights are intertwined, complementing the surrounding decorations, and music also sounds, with melodious melody and cheerful rhythm. Before the official start of the event, government leaders or Special guests will take the stage to deliver speeches.Their words were full of enthusiasm, thanking the organizers and participants for their hard work, and announced the official start of the sheep scratching competition, followed by the wonderful lion dance performance at the opening ceremony, expressing joy through various movements of the lions. Then the two-ghost wrestling performance is another traditional folk performing art. A performer ties the upper bodies of two dummies on his shoulders, uses his arms to act as the legs of another ghost, and inserts his palms into his shoes to resemble feet. . In this way, one person becomes two, and the performers fight through a series of wrestling moves to the sound of gongs and drums. The last step is to perform basic wrestling skills. Performers usually demonstrate some basic wrestling skills, such as kicks, protective rolls, hugs, trips, etc., and perform wonderful performances in the ring. During the festival, wrestlers from all over the country gather together to showcase their skills and strength and bring exciting matches to the audience. On the field, players wear no clothes and use various techniques and strategies to win. The winner holds the sheep high and circles the field to express his gratitude to the audience. Every movement was full of power and rhythm, and every confrontation elicited warm applause and cheers from the audience.In addition, the live sound and music continued to play after the game, adding a warm atmosphere to the stadium. As soft music played, the audience began to leave slowly, their footsteps and conversations forming a different melody.

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2.1 Colorful flags and banners

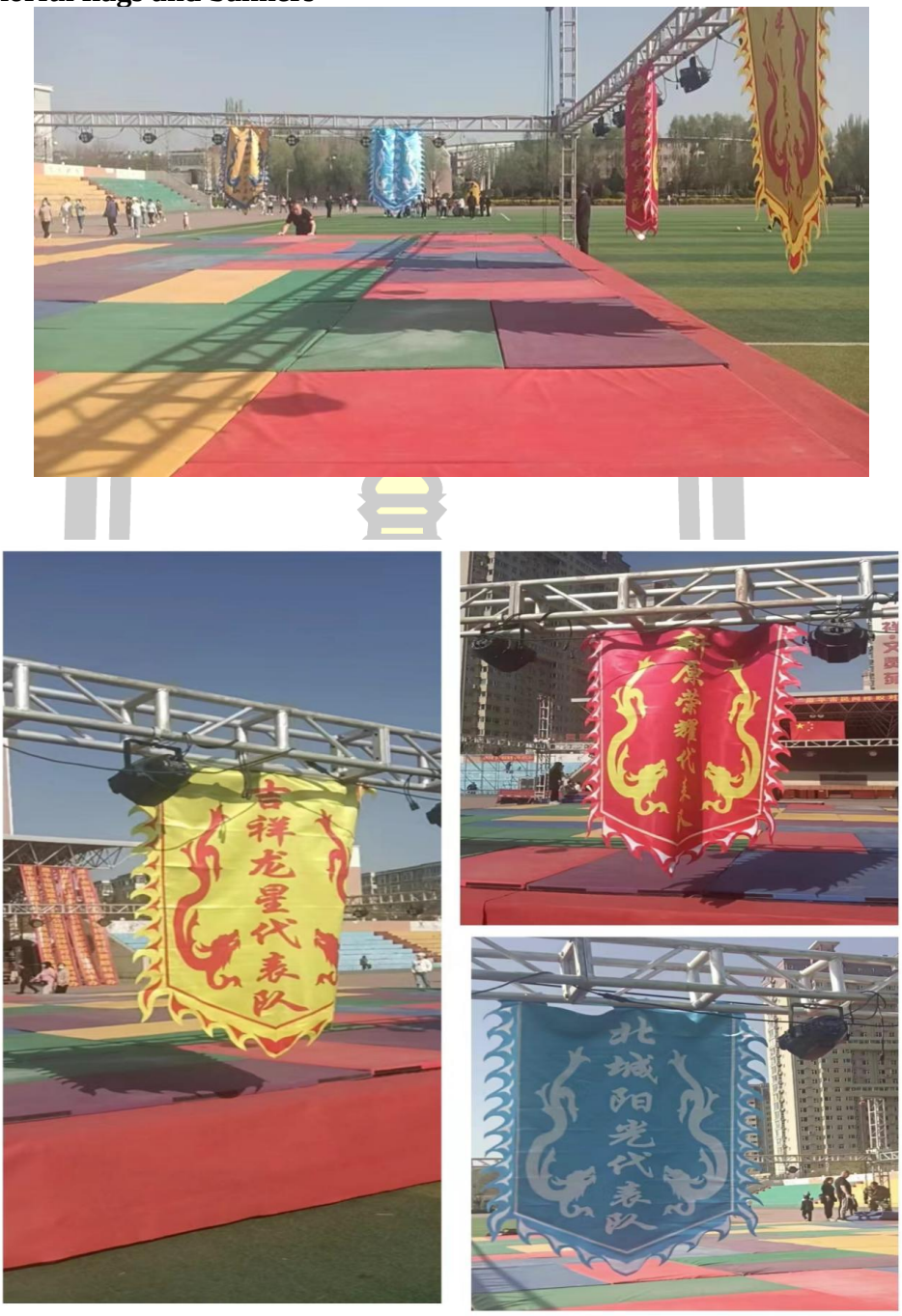

Figure 28 The photo comes from 2023, Wrestling Flag

The sheep wrestling competition Festival is a traditional folk event deeply loved by local people. This festival not only carries rich cultural connotations, but also shows unique charm at the artistic level. Colorful flags and banners are indispensable decorative elements in the sheep wrestling competition Festival. With their bright colors and profound meanings, they add a strong artistic flavor to the festival.

Buntings are usually made of lightweight satin or fabric and are colorful and patterned. During the sheep wrestling competition Festival, the colorful flags are often painted with traditional auspicious patterns such as auspicious clouds, dragons and phoenixes. These elements not only symbolize good luck and happiness, but also reflect the profound cultural heritage of the Xinzhou area. The colorful flags flutter in the wind, and the dynamic beauty is pleasing to the eye. It also inspires people's respect and love for traditional culture.

The banner expresses holiday blessings and encouragement to the contestants in concise and straightforward words. The text on the banners is often presented in the form of calligraphy art. The flowing brushstrokes and full ink colors show the beauty of traditional Chinese calligraphy. These banners are hung around the stadium, which not only enhances the festive atmosphere, but also demonstrates the artistic accomplishment of the local people.

The colorful flags and banners in the sheep wrestling competition Festival are not just simple decorations, they are a comprehensive expression of visual art and traditional culture. The elegance of the colorful flags and the calmness of the banners form a kind of beauty that combines movement and stillness, providing the audience with an artistic enjoyment from vision to soul. To sum up, as an important part of the sheep wrestling competition Festival, colorful flags and banners not only play a role in beautifying the environment and creating an atmosphere, but also inherit and carry forward the local traditional culture in a unique visual art form.

2.2 Arena in the spotlight

Figure 29 The photo comes from the live broadcast of the ancient temple fair in 2024

As a traditional folk activity, the sheep wrestling competition Festival has become a beautiful cultural landscape with its careful venue layout and artistic display. The arena is not only a place for players to display their skills, but also the visual focus of the entire festival. The design of the ring is usually simple yet exquisite, with colorful flags at the corners and carpets in the center, which not only reflects traditional elements but also conforms to modern aesthetics. This design not only provides a clear stage for the competition, but also provides a good viewing field for the audience. During the game, the multimedia background can play images or videos related to the sheep wrestling competition Festival, such as showing the natural scenery, history and culture of Xinzhou. The use of this multimedia background not only enriches the content of the game, but also allows the audience to have a deeper understanding and experience of local culture and traditions. Lighting can not only create different atmospheres, but also meet the needs of competition and viewing. For example, using intense flashing lights at the start of a game can stimulate the emotions of players and spectators, while using soft lights during the award ceremony can add glory to the winners. Changes in lighting can mobilize the atmosphere of the scene and make the game more lively and interesting.From the exciting opening music to the intense background music during the game to the cheerful victory tune, music accompanies every aspect of the game. It can not only arouse the emotions of players and spectators, but also add more passion and dynamics to the game.

To sum up, the venue layout, multimedia background, lighting, sound and music and other elements in the sheep wrestling competition Festival jointly shape the artistic charm and cultural connotation of the festival. They not only provide visual and auditory enjoyment for the audience, but also provide a stage for players to showcase their skills. These elements blend together to create a festival atmosphere full of passion and energy, allowing people to experience local culture and traditions while enjoying the game.

2.3 Media Convergence

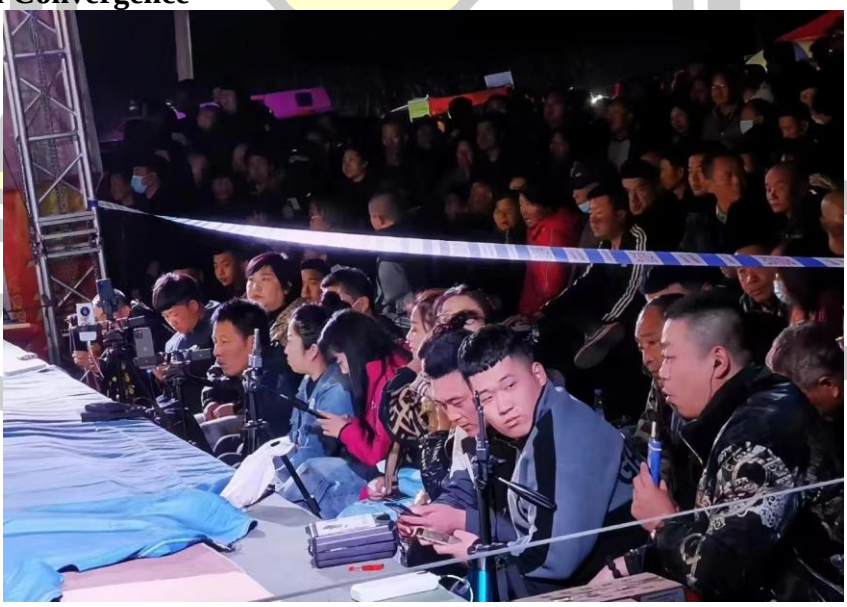

Figure 30 The photo comes from the ancient temple fair in 2023

With the rise of new media, the communication methods of traditional events are also changing. Outside the venue of the scratching sheep competition, interviews with reporters, live broadcasts by Kuaishou, and Douyin anchors not only provided real-time competition information for viewers who could not attend the event in person, but also added a broader audience base to the event. The use of this modern communication method allows the charm of the sheep scratching competition to transcend geographical boundaries and attract national and even global attention. The participation of photography art enthusiasts, and every wonderful moment recorded through their lenses, will be disseminated again in the form of pictures on social media, enhancing the visual impact of the event. The integrated use of these new media has brought a more diversified audience experience and wider influence to the sheep wrestling competition.

2.4 Opening speech and performance

In the lively Xinzhou sheep wrestling competition area, the official start of the event marked the unveiling of a feast that blended tradition and modernity. The opening speech by government leaders or special guests is not only an introduction to the event, but also an affirmation and thank you for the hard work of the participants. Their enthusiastic words added positive energy to the event and also announced the official start of the sheep wrestling competition.

Figure 31 Photos from 2023, Harvest Cup Sheep wrestling Competition, Lion Dance, and Two Ghost Wrestling Performances

With the wonderful lion dance performance at the opening ceremony, the lion's vivid movements and expressions conveyed a joyful and peaceful atmosphere, symbolizing good luck and prosperity. This vibrant traditional art form not only displays the profound heritage of Chinese culture, but also attracts the attention of the audience and makes people feel the joyful atmosphere of the event. The two-ghost wrestling that follows closely provides a folk art enjoyment full of humor. A performer demonstrates the unique charm and technical mastery of folk art through dramatic performances of two characters and a series of fierce wrestling moves. This

kind of performance not only increases the entertainment of the event, but also reflects the rich cultural heritage of the Xinzhou area. Finally, the basic wrestling skills demonstrated by the performers are a preview of the fierce competition to come. By showing kicks, protective rolls, hugs, trips and other skills, it not only proved to the audience the sophistication and difficulty of wrestling as a competitive sport, but also inspired the audience's enthusiasm and expectations for the next game.

Figure 32 Photos from 2023, Harvest Cup sheep wrestling competition, basic wrestling performance

These rich and diverse performance elements interact with each other in the event to form the unique attraction of the sheep scratching competition. They not only enhance the audience's sense of participation and viewing experience, but also give the sheep scratching competition a deeper cultural and social significance. Through such a prelude, the sheep wrestling competition is not only a grand event of sports competition, but also a celebration of cultural heritage and community cohesion.

2.5 A feast of Muscles and Art

In the warm and joyful Xinzhou sheep wrestling competition Festival, the most eye-catching thing on the field is the fierce confrontation between the shirtless players. This unique competition format not only showcases the powerful and skillful wrestling skills of the contestants, but also adds to the viewing experience and original competitive flavor of the event. The players compete without clothes on their upper bodies, making every movement and muscle tension clearly visible, providing the audience with a raw beauty of strength and showing the natural beauty of the human body. This visual display of the image symbolizes the players' frankness and courage, as well as their fearless spirit when facing challenges. At the same time, this format also reminds the audience that the Sheep Ticking Festival is a fair and just competitive event, emphasizing honesty and transparency in the competition. It shortens the distance between the players and the audience, allowing the audience to feel every effort and struggle of the players more truly.

2.6 Visual rhythm: movement rhythm, fluency and coordination

In this fierce competition, the rhythm, fluency and coordination of movements are the key elements that constitute the visual experience. The athletes demonstrated the intensity and intensity of the competition through fast and powerful movements. These rhythms are not only reflected in the movement speed of the body, but also in the rapid switching between offense and defense. Spectators can feel the speed changes and tense atmosphere of the game by observing the rhythm of the athletes' movements, thereby becoming more involved and excited. Athletes have trained for a long time to make their movements very smooth and natural. This fluency not only reflects the skills and coordination of the athletes, but also makes it easier for the audience to understand and appreciate the content of the game. When athletes move smoothly and smoothly, the audience will be attracted by their graceful movements, as if they are watching a wonderful dance performance. Athletes need to maintain a high degree of coordination

with their opponents in order to attack and defend effectively.This coordination is not only reflected in the tacit understanding of the two people's cooperation, but also in the balance and stability of individual movements. Spectators can feel the team spirit and individual abilities of the game by observing the coordination performance of the athletes. A good sense of rhythm can make the audience feel the tension and intensity of the game; smooth movements can make it easier for the audience to understand and appreciate the content of the game; and a high degree of coordination can make the audience feel the tacit understanding and personal ability between the athletes. Performance. These elements are intertwined with each other and together constitute the unique visual charm of the sheep wrestling competition.

In short, the rhythm, fluency and coordination of movements in the sheep tickling game are the key elements that constitute the visual experience. They not only reflect the skills and abilities of the athletes, but also make it easier for the audience to understand and appreciate the content of the game. By in-depth analysis of how these elements affect the audience's visual experience, we can better understand and appreciate the traditional folk sport of sheep wrestling competition.

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2.7 Praise of victory

Figure 33 The photo comes from the 2022, sheep wrestling competition award ceremony

During the sheep wrestling competition Festival, when the game is over, the victors hold their prize, a sheep, high aloft and circle the field. The sheep lifting ceremony in the sheep wrestling competition Festival has unique artistic value. The winner demonstrates their courage and strength by lifting the sheep and circling the field, while also providing a visual treat for the audience. The winner vividly expresses the joy of victory and gratitude to the audience through his movements and expressions. This kind of performance is not only a way of self-expression but also a way of interacting with the audience. In this way, a strong connection and interaction is formed between the winner and the audience.

The sheep-raising ceremony is a unique body language. The winner expresses his victory and joy with physical strength and posture by lifting the sheep high. This body language is not only a primitive and direct way of expression, but also a strong visual artistic effect. At the same time, circling the field further emphasizes the glory and pride of the winner. Sheep symbolizes luck, harmony and beauty in traditional Chinese culture. By lifting the sheep, the winner not only demonstrates his victory, but also expresses respect and inheritance of traditional culture. At the same time, expressing gratitude to the audience also reflects the humility and gratitude of the winner. On the field, the audience and the contestants experienced the intense and intense competition

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process together. When the victor lifts the sheep and thanks the audience, a powerful emotional resonance develops between them.This kind of emotional transmission not only enhances the warm atmosphere of the stadium, but also allows the audience to participate more deeply in the game and feel the charm and significance of the game. Through the presentation of this traditional ceremony, people can not only understand the historical and cultural background of the sheep wrestling competition Festival, but also feel the charm and value of traditional culture. At the same time, this ceremony also provides an opportunity for a new generation of young people to understand and get in touch with traditional culture, helping to promote the inheritance and development of culture.

In general, the winner's sheep lifting ceremony in the Xinzhou sheep wrestling competition Festival is a unique form of artistic expression. It vividly expresses the victory of the game and the gratitude to the audience through body language, symbolic expression and emotional transmission. At the same time, this ceremony also has rich cultural connotation and artistic value, adding a unique atmosphere and emotional color to the stadium.

3. Artistic influence

3.1 Wrestling and paper-cutting: crossover art fusion

Figure 34 **Photo from August 7, 2022**

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Figure 35 **Taken on June 30, 2023, Duan Pengwei**

The dynamic nature of wrestling provides rich action materials for paper-cut works. Movements such as quick turns, flexible avoidance, and precise control in wrestling can be presented in the form of paper-cutting. For example, using paper-cutting to depict the various postures of athletes in competition can not only show the intensity and power of wrestling, but also reflect the delicacy and sophistication of paper-cutting. The strength and determination of a wrestler can be conveyed through the lines and shapes in cutout art. This sense of power is not only reflected in the visual effects of paper-cut works, but can also be expressed through the movements and gestures of paper-cutting. The skills and strategies of wrestling can also provide new ideas for paper-cutting. For example, using paper-cutting to depict an athlete's strategic layout and use of skills in a game can not only show the resourcefulness and strategy of wrestling, but also bring new forms of expression to the art of paper-cutting. Finally, the cultural background of wrestling also provides rich cultural connotation for paper-cutting. For example, you can draw inspiration from the history, tradition and culture of wrestling to create paper cutouts with cultural depth. These works can not only show the cultural charm of wrestling, but also allow more people to understand and appreciate the art of paper-cutting.

In general, absorbing elements from the physical techniques of wrestling and creating paper-cut works with wrestling characteristics can not only bring new vitality to the art of paper-cutting, but also add new cultural connotations to the sport of wrestling. This cross-field artistic fusion undoubtedly brings new development and innovation possibilities to both fields.

3.2 Stone carving art comes from Bodily practice

Figure 36 Taken in Xinzhou Ancient Bell Park on May 30, 2023, Duan Pengwei

Figure 37 Photos from Yunzhonghe Park, Xinzhou Cit

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The Bodily practice of wrestling provides rich inspiration and materials for stone carving art. As an ancient and powerful folk activity, stone carving artists simulate the body language and expressions of the players, the muscles, bones and movement patterns of the human body by observing and understanding the skills and movements of wrestling, and carefully carving and sculpting the stone. , the power, beauty and emotion displayed affect the aesthetic feelings of stone carving artists, and then express the corresponding emotions and aesthetic pursuits in their works. Bodily practices find unique expression in the durable and monumental art form of stone sculpture. In this way, people's images and movements can be expressed more realistically and accurately in creation. Improvisation and performance in physical practice can stimulate the innovative thinking of stone sculpture artists, prompting them to try new forms of expression and technical methods in their creations. Bodily practices reflect the multifaceted nature of society and are often associated with specific social conventions and symbolic meanings. Stone sculpture artists can incorporate these elements into their works, such as carving iconic wrestling moves with local characteristics. The scale and placement environment of the stone sculptures can also increase the visual impact of the works, making the works not only show the physical techniques of wrestling, but also these social practices. It provides rich social connotation for stone carving art, making it not only a work of art, but also the crystallization of wisdom and cultural inheritance.

These dynamic moments are permanently fixed in the hard stone. The posture of the players, the tension of the muscles, and the continuity of the movements are all important elements in the creation of stone sculptures. The artists simulate the body language and expressions of the players through careful carving and sculpture of the stone, thereby conveying the skills and spirit of the movement. . The solid texture of stone sculpture and its durability to withstand the test of time allow the sense of power and lasting impression of the physical practice to be preserved and displayed in the artwork. Through different carving techniques and surface treatments, the stone sculptures depict the muscular texture of the players. In addition, the scale of the stone sculpture and the environment in which it is placed can also increase the visual impact and public art value of the work. In short, the physical practice of wrestling provides vivid dynamic materials and cultural connotations for stone carving art, allowing stone carvings to display the spirit of sports and cultural diversity in a unique way. Through the skillful hands and creative expression of stone carving artists, the passion and power of wrestling are preserved forever in stone, becoming an impressive artistic experience.

3.3 The integration of inkstone art

Figure 38 Photographing Xinzhou Wrestling Club, December 21, 2023, Duan Pengwei

Among the many traditional festivals in China, the Xinzhou Wrestling Festival has attracted countless attention with its unique charm and profound cultural heritage. As an ancient folk activity, the wrestling festival provides inkstone artists with rich creative materials. Artists draw inspiration from the theme of wrestling to create inkstone works that reflect the spirit of wrestling and local characteristics. This kind of cultural innovation and inheritance not only enriches the connotation of inkstone art, but also adds new forms of expression to it, making traditional art glow with new vitality in modern society. Inkstone art exhibitions and activities are held during the Wrestling Festival, providing a platform for inkstone artists to showcase their works. This not only increases the exposure of inkstone art, but also gives more people the opportunity to understand and appreciate this art. Through such displays, the popularity and market value of inkstone art have been significantly improved, providing artists with more opportunities to communicate with the outside world.Such exchanges not only help artists absorb new ideas and techniques, but also promote the development of diversity in artistic creation. Festival activities can promote the development of local tourism and related industries, which naturally includes the sale of handicrafts and artworks. As a traditional local handicraft, the sales and promotion of inkstones will also be promoted. This not only brings more economic benefits to artists, but also further encourages their investment and innovation in artistic creation. The sheep wrestling competition Festival is rich in cultural elements with local characteristics. These elements provide inkstone artists with rich creative materials

and inspire their creative inspiration. Artists can use these elements to create inkstone art works with local characteristics, thereby inheriting and developing traditional culture while also contributing to the spread of local culture. To sum up, the activities in the Xinzhou Wrestling Festival have promoted the development and spread of local inkstone art through various contributions. They enhance artists' creative motivation and enhance the cultural value and market potential of artistic works. This traditional festival is not only a display of sports competition, but also a feast of cultural inheritance and innovation, injecting new vitality into the local inkstone art.

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3.4 Contribution of Bodily practice to the art of painting

Figure 39 **Photographed on April 9, 2023**

In painting, somaesthetics is a critical study of bodily experience and perception that refines and enhances the use of the body as a vehicle for aesthetic appreciation and style creation. This aesthetic perspective emphasizes the importance of the body in artistic creation and aesthetic experience, believing that the body is the medium of artistic creation. Sensory experiences in physical practice, such as vision, touch, etc., are formed in practice through the five senses and the body they rely on. The knowledge of these feelings is crucial to the development of sensibility in painting. They constitute our basic relationship with the objective world and are reflected in the creation of paintings. The emotional experience in physical practice can be transformed into visual expression in painting, allowing the work to convey more profound emotions and artistic conception. Physical practice also influenced the development of the artist's personal style and technique. Through the understanding and control of their own bodies, artists are able to express unique brushstrokes and use of color in their paintings. Physical practice provides a wealth of materials and sensory experience for painting, and also affects the formation of personal style and techniques, making the work more vivid and true to express people's emotions and physical beauty. Through physical practice, artists are able to explore deeper cultural and social meanings in paintings and achieve artistic innovation and development.

4.Social identity

4.1 The association between the Festival and community identity

In Xinzhou City, Shanxi Province, the sheep wrestling competition , a folk activity with a long history, has become a unique cultural symbol in the region. It not only represents an ancient wrestling skill, but also symbolizes the rich historical and cultural heritage of Xinzhou area. The sheep wrestling competition Festival provides community members with a shared historical and cultural memory that strengthens their sense of regional identity. As a traditional activity, the sheep wrestling competition Festival maintains its historical characteristics while constantly incorporating modern elements, becoming a bridge between the past and the present. This not only shows the lifestyle and personality characteristics of local residents, but also promotes communication and cooperation within the community. By participating in the sheep wrestling competition festival, community members can better understand and appreciate their cultural roots, thereby strengthening their sense of community identity.In the sheep wrestling competition Festival, competition and friendship are equally valued, reflecting the values of honesty, friendship and unity advocated by the community. The spirit of competition emphasizes fair competition and friendly exchanges, reflecting the attitude of community members to respect each other and live in harmony. This spirit not only promotes unity within the community but also projects a positive image of the community to outsiders.

The courage and perseverance embodied in the sheep scratching competition are exactly the spirit of positivity and fearlessness respected by the community. This spirit encourages community members to face challenges in life and pursue excellence. Through the sheep scratching competition, community members were able to demonstrate their strength and courage, further strengthening the community's identity.

As an event with regional characteristics, the sheep wrestling competition Festival attracts a large number of tourists and out-of-towners to watch. This not only promotes local tourism but also provides community members with an opportunity to showcase their culture to the outside world. Through interaction with the outside world, community members can better recognize and understand their own cultural characteristics, thus enhancing their identification with the community's identity.

The holding of the sheep scratching competition not only helps to inherit and develop local culture and art, but also stimulates community members' interest and enthusiasm for traditional culture. By participating in the cultural activities of the sheep wrestling competition Festival, community members can gain an in-depth understanding of and inherit their own cultural heritage, further consolidating community identity.

As an artistic event with unique charm, the sheep wrestling competition Festival not only shows the unique style of Xinzhou area, but also deeply reflects the identity and values of the community. Through the continuous holding of sheep wrestling competition , community members can inherit and promote their own cultural heritage, while also providing a window for the outside world to understand and get in touch with local culture and art. The successful holding of the sheep scratching competition demonstrates the community's emphasis on and protection of

traditional culture, and also demonstrates the community's pursuit of harmony, friendship and fair competition.

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4.2The significance of sheep wrestling competition as an artistic activity

4.2.1The Significance of cultural heritage

As a cultural heritage, the Xinzhou sheep wrestling competition Festival is not only a traditional folk activity, but also a folk activity with profound historical and cultural heritage. As one of the intangible cultural heritages of Shanxi Province, the Xinzhou sheep wrestling competition Festival carries rich historical information and cultural connotations, reflecting the local people's lifestyle, values and spiritual pursuits. This festival is not only a sports competition, but also a social activity that reflects the living habits, ways of thinking and values of the local people. By studying and inheriting this festival, we can better understand and protect China's intangible cultural heritage. Wrestling has a long history in the Xinzhou area. As a traditional form of sports competition, it not only showcases the strength and skills of the local people, but also embodies their wisdom and courage. By participating in the wrestling festival, people can personally experience the charm of traditional culture and feel the passion and vitality. The Xinzhou area is famous for its unique geographical environment and cultural landscape, and the wrestling festival is a vivid embodiment of this regional feature.During the festival, various forms of wrestling competitions and performances are held, showing strong local characteristics and national customs. This not only helps to enhance people's sense of identity with their hometown culture, but also attracts many tourists to come to watch and experience it, promoting the development of local tourism. As a traditional mass event, the wrestling festival provides a platform for local residents to communicate and interact. During the festival, people can compete with each other in skills, exchange experiences, enhance friendship, and promote community cohesion and centripetal force. At the same time, the wrestling festival is also an important social activity, where people can make new friends, expand interpersonal relationships, and enhance social interaction skills. To sum up, the significance of Xinzhou Wrestling Festival as a cultural heritage lies in that it is not only a traditional sports event, but also a folk activity with profound historical and cultural heritage. Through this activity, traditional culture can be inherited and carried forward, regional characteristics can be displayed, and social exchanges and cohesion can be promoted. Therefore, we should value and protect this precious cultural heritage so that it can continue to flourish in modern society.

4.2.2Art Significance

As a folk cultural expression, the Xinzhou sheep wrestling competition Festival carries rich artistic connotations. As a folk activity, the sheep wrestling competition Festival has been endowed with profound local characteristics and cultural connotations in the Xinzhou area. This is not only reflected in the techniques and strategies of wrestling, but also in the posture, movements and expressions of the wrestlers. Every wrestling movement contains a kind of power and beauty, showing the dynamic beauty of the human body. Every moment in a wrestling match can be considered a stage performance. The body language, movement rhythm and competitive state of the wrestlers all constitute unique stage art elements. While enjoying the game, the audience also enjoyed a wonderful stage art performance. In addition, the Xinzhou sheep wrestling competition Festival also embodies the emotional expression of art.The courage, tenacity and fighting spirit displayed by the wrestlers in the competition are a profound expression of human emotions. This kind

of emotional expression not only infects the live audience, but also allows more people to feel the charm and power of wrestling through artistic communication. Wrestling, as a unique art form, provides artists with endless creative material. Through paper cutting, painting, sculpture,

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photography and other methods, they transform the dynamic beauty, power and emotional expression of wrestling into works of art, allowing more people to appreciate the charm of wrestling art. To sum up, the Xinzhou sheep wrestling competition Festival not only shows the dynamic beauty and power of the human body, but is also a vivid stage art and profound emotional expression. At the same time, it also provides artists with rich creative inspiration and promotes the inheritance and development of wrestling art.

4.2.3Cultivate reserve talents

The Xinzhou sheep wrestling competition Festival continues to cultivate reserve talents for the community, which has far-reaching significance for the inheritance and development of local culture and art. The Wrestling Festival provides a platform to spark interest and enthusiasm among young wrestling enthusiasts by giving them an opportunity to showcase their talents and skills. This experience of participation and competition is vital to their growth and development, helping them build self-confidence and develop teamwork and leadership skills. By hosting events like this, more people can learn about and be exposed to the sport of wrestling, thus increasing the number of people participating. This popularization and promotion will help cultivate more sports reserve talents and lay a solid foundation for the long-term development of wrestling. In addition, the Xinzhou Wrestling Festival also provides wrestlers with an opportunity to communicate with high-level players. During the competition, young athletes can learn more techniques and tactics and improve their competitive level. At the same time, they can also make more friends, expand their network, and lay a good foundation for their future careers.

5.conclusion

In terms of artistic function, the sheep wrestling competition Festival shows the perfect combination of strength and beauty. The feast of muscles and art brings profound visual enjoyment to the audience. The colorful flags and banners, the arena under the spotlight and the comprehensive coverage of the media together constitute the unique artistic atmosphere of the sheep scratching competition. The exquisite skills and smooth rhythm of the wrestlers' movements vividly demonstrate the art of physical practice.

In a social sense, the sheep wrestling competition has strengthened the sense of identity and belonging of community residents and has become an important part of community culture. It not only inherits and protects the unique cultural heritage of the Xinzhou area, but also promotes cultural exchange and integration through the form of art. At the same time, the sheep scratching competition also provides a platform for the younger generation to exercise and showcase themselves, cultivates reserve talents, and injects new vitality into the art and cultural fields.

Looking forward to the future, we look forward to the continuous innovation and development of sheep wrestling competition on the basis of maintaining its traditional characteristics. Through the combination with modern technology, such as virtual reality, augmented reality and other technologies, it can bring a more immersive artistic experience to the audience. At the same time, the game can also try to conduct more cross-border integration with other art forms to create richer and more diverse artistic works.

In short, as a unique cultural phenomenon and artistic activity in Xinzhou area, the sheep wrestling competition not only shows the charm of Bodily practice art, but

also carries profound cultural connotation and social identity. We believe that in the future development, the sheep wrestling competition will continue to exert its artistic function and social significance, and make greater contributions to the development of local social and cultural fields.

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CHAPTER V

conclusion and suggestion

1.Research conclusion

In the context of modern China, considering sheep wrestling as an art form provides a new perspective for understanding physical practice and cultural heritage protection. sheep wrestling competition is not only a traditional folk activity, it is also a tangible symbol of local culture, history and identity. Through this study, we have explored the origin, spread, evolution and social and cultural functions of the Sheep Wrestling Game, while also examining its modern transformation and protection from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage.

In analyzing the case of the sheep wrestling competition Festival from an artistic perspective, we paid attention to various forms of artistic expression inside and outside the stadium, including the visual art of colorful flags and banners, the arena setting under the spotlight, the athletes' physical practice and emotional display, and the stadium A feast of art outside. These elements together constitute the cultural landscape of the sheep wrestling competition, making it a multi-dimensional art experience venue.

2.Research discussion

Innovative practice and artistic integration: Innovative practice and artistic integration play an increasingly important role in the development of contemporary culture. For sheep wrestling competition , which has a profound historical heritage, the combination with contemporary art forms can not only inject new vitality into it, but also achieve innovative expression of traditional culture.

Stage and Reproduction: It is an attempt at cultural innovation to transform the action vocabulary and expressions of the sheep scratching game into performing arts on the stage. This not only requires a deep understanding of the traditional techniques and spirit of the sheep scratching competition, but also requires the use of stage art expression techniques to reinterpret and present it.

Performing art and cultural reproduction: As a vivid way of cultural communication, performing arts plays an irreplaceable role in promoting the reproduction and dissemination of the cultural connotation of sheep wrestling competition . Through the inheritance and promotion of the art form, it can not only maintain and pass on the traditional skills and knowledge of sheep wrestling competition , but also attract the interest and participation of a new generation, thus injecting new vitality into this cultural heritage. Inheriting and promoting the cultural connotation of sheep wrestling competition i through the art form, how the artistic expression of sheep wrestling competition helps maintain and transfer traditional skills and knowledge, and the role of innovative practice in activating the cultural heritage of sheep wrestling competition .

Combination of art and technology: In contemporary society, the combination of traditional art and technology has become a trend. It can not only enhance the modern sense of art, but also increase the communication and influence of artistic works. As a traditional folk activity with rich cultural connotations, the sheep wrestling competition performing art is of great significance and value in its

combination with technology. The focus of the discussion was on how to use scientific and technological means to enhance the appeal of the physical performance art of scratching sheep, and at the same time analyze the impact of science and technology on the inheritance of traditional culture.

Art approach to education and training: Education and training are the key to inheriting any culture. Teaching the knowledge and skills of sheep scratching through art education can not only enhance the younger generation's understanding of this traditional culture, but also inspire their appreciation of this traditional culture. Interest and enthusiasm for sports. The following is a discussion of how to teach the knowledge and skills of scratching sheep through art education, and an analysis of how this education method promotes cultural inheritance.

Media display and cultural and artistic exchange: Media display and cultural and artistic exchange play a vital role in contemporary society. They are not only tools to disseminate information and knowledge, but also a bridge to promote cultural understanding and respect. For the sheep wrestling competition , which has a profound historical heritage, this cultural heritage can be effectively protected and promoted through film, television, Internet and other media platforms. The following is an assessment of how media platforms can be used to present the artistic face of sheep wrestling competition , and how such presentation can increase domestic and international awareness and respect for the artistic value of sheep wrestling competition .

3.Research Suggestions

In the process of contemporary social development, traditional culture faces the dual challenges of inheritance and innovation. As a unique traditional folk activity in northern China, the sheep scratching competition not only carries rich historical and cultural connotations, but also has strong physical practice characteristics. In order to explore how to inherit and promote the cultural connotation of sheep wrestling competition through art forms, analyze how the artistic performance of sheep wrestling competition helps maintain and transfer traditional skills and knowledge, and discuss the role of innovative practices in activating the cultural heritage of sheep wrestling competition .

First of all, it is an attempt at cultural innovation to transform the action vocabulary and expressions of the sheep scratching contest into performing arts on the stage. This not only requires a deep understanding of the traditional techniques and spirit of the sheep scratching competition, but also requires the use of stage art expression techniques to reinterpret and present it. Through the integration of drama, dance, music and other art forms, the audience can experience the charm of the sheep scratching game from a new perspective while maintaining respect for the original tradition.

Secondly, performing arts, as a vivid way of cultural communication, play an irreplaceable role in promoting the reproduction and dissemination of the cultural connotation of sheep wrestling competition . Through the inheritance and promotion of the art form, it can not only maintain and pass on the traditional skills and knowledge of sheep wrestling competition , but also attract the interest and participation of a new generation, thus injecting new vitality into this cultural heritage.

In contemporary society, the combination of traditional art and technology has become a trend. It can not only enhance the modernity of art, but also increase the dissemination and influence of artistic works. As a traditional folk activity with rich cultural connotations, the sheep wrestling competition performing art is of great significance and value in its combination with technology. The use of scientific and technological means such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), motion capture technology, etc. can enhance the appeal of the physical practice performance art of scratching sheep, and at the same time provide new ways for the inheritance of traditional culture.

Education and training are key to passing on any culture. Teaching the knowledge and skills of sheep tickling through art education can not only enhance the younger generation's understanding of this traditional culture, but also stimulate their interest and enthusiasm for this sport. School courses, workshops, exhibitions, etc. are all effective ways to teach the knowledge and skills of sheep scratching. These methods can help students fully master the skills and cultural connotation of sheep scratching in theory and practice.

Finally, media display and cultural and artistic exchanges play a vital role in contemporary society. Through the display of media platforms such as movies, TV, and the Internet, the cultural heritage of the sheep scratching competition can be effectively protected and promoted. These platforms can not only showcase the artistic aspects of sheep wrestling competition , but also enhance domestic and foreign understanding and respect for the artistic value of sheep wrestling competition .

To sum up, through the inheritance and promotion of art forms, combined with the application of scientific and technological means, as well as the dissemination of education and media, the traditional cultural heritage of sheep wrestling competition can be reborn in contemporary society. This will not only help protect and inherit the sheep scratching competition, but also allow more people to understand and appreciate this unique cultural activity, ensuring that this ancient tradition will continue to be carried forward in modern society, thereby achieving sustainable cultural development.

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website：

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BIOGRAPHY

NAME	Mr. Duan pengwei
DATE OF BIRTH	On November 15, 1993
PLACE OF BIRTH	Jingle County, Xinzhou City, Shanxi Province, China
ADDRESS	Xinfu District, Xinzhou City, Shanxi Province, China
POSITION	Sanda coach
PLACE OF WORK	Shanxi Xinzhou City Sports School
EDUCATION	2015 Bachelor's degree, Luoyang Normal University, ethnic traditional sports 2022 Master of the faculty of fine and applied arts (M.A.) Major Fine and applied arts Mahasarakham University

พหูนํ ปณฺฑิโต ชีเว