

A Study on the Evolution of Chinese Wrestling, the Characteristics of the Project and Its Value

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Abstract: By using the methods of literature review and expert interview, this paper studies the evolution history, features and value of Chinese style wrestling. The research results show that in the 1950s, Shuai Jiao was established as a modern competitive sport by Chinese sports workers with the background of thousands of years of wrestling practice in China, with reference to the rules of modern sports competition, and based on the wrestling techniques of Beijing and Tianjin, integrating the wrestling techniques of many nationalities. From the perspective of evolution, the main technical schools of Chinese style wrestling include Beijing, Shanxi, Mongolia and Baoding, etc. The main features of the sport are simple rules, well-known, intense sports, strong appreciation, rich techniques, strong dexterity, point to point, safe and civilization. Its project value is mainly to exercise quality, cultivate personality, profound connotation, inheritance carrier, physical fitness, self-defense, competitive viewing, enrich life, etc. It is necessary and meaningful to study the development history, events characteristics and value of Chinese style wrestling, so as to provide theoretical and practical reference for the development and promotion of Chinese style wrestling.

Keywords: chinese wrestling; the course of development; events characteristics; events value

1. Introduction

Wrestling, as one of the oldest sports in human history, has a wide mass base all over the world and is deeply loved by people. According to statistics, there are more than 30 wrestling sports in various ethnic groups around the world, among which there are six most influential wrestling types, namely Greco-Roman wrestling, freestyle wrestling, sumo wrestling, judo, Sambo wrestling and Chinese wrestling. Shuai Jiao is a modern competitive sport established by Chinese sports workers in the 1950s with the background of thousands of years of wrestling practice in China, with reference to the rules of modern sports competition, and based on the wrestling techniques of Beijing and Tianjin, combining the wrestling techniques of many nationalities. It is named "Chinese style wrestling" to distinguish it from other kinds of wrestling in the world. The name has been disputed, but no better title has been found, so it has been used until now. Today, Chinese wrestling is not the Olympic Games, but it is attracting people's love with its unique charm.

With the return of the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation and the improvement of people's living standards, the social, cultural, fitness, entertainment and competitive functions of Chinese wrestling have been increasingly recognized, and the voice of reviving Chinese wrestling from all walks of life has become increasingly strong [1]. In the new era, the promotion and development of Chinese wrestling ushered in a new opportunity. Especially in the past 20 years, the Weightlifting Wrestling and Judo Management Center of the

General Administration of Sport of China established the Chinese Wrestling Development Management Committee, the Chinese Wrestling Development Committee and the Chinese Wrestling Promotion Committee respectively in 2004, 2016 and 2020 to take charge of the development and promotion of Chinese wrestling. At the same time, Chinese style wrestling has become an official competition event of the National Youth Games in 2019 and a mass competition event of the National Games in 2021. In addition, the "2020 National Chinese Style Wrestling Championship" hosted by the Weightlifting Wrestling and Judo Sports Management Center of the General Administration of Sport of the State and hosted by Shaanxi Provincial Sports Bureau and Weinan Municipal Government has attracted a large audience both online and offline. It reflects the profound mass foundation of Chinese wrestling, the easy-to-understand technical and tactical characteristics, and the cultural confidence of Chinese sons and daughters who are linked by blood [2]. In particular, on April 21, 2022, the Ministry of Education issued the *Curriculum Standards of Physical Education and Health for Compulsory Education* (2022 Edition), pointing out that carrying out traditional Chinese sports is conducive to carrying forward the martial spirit of standing upright, doing righteous deeds, persevering in self-improvement and carrying out moral commitment, and helping students to form cultural identity of excellent traditional Chinese sports. Enhance national confidence and national pride. Chinese wrestling is included in the *New Curriculum Standard* (page 74--86) of the Ministry of Education for the first time. For the development and promotion of Chinese wrestling, it has a milestone significance.

To sum up, it is necessary and meaningful to study the development history, event characteristics and value of Chinese style wrestling, so as to provide theoretical and practical reference for the development and promotion of Chinese style wrestling.

2. The evolution of Chinese wrestling

2.1. Chinese style wrestling evolution pattern

In the Qin Dynasty, it was officially named "Juedi". Because the Qin Dynasty destroyed weapons and restricted the folk to hold weapons and learn martial arts, Juedi was widely developed among the people. In 1975, the wooden grate on the Qin Dynasty tomb at Fenghuang Mountain in Jiangling, Hubei Province was found with ancient wrestling pictures (Figure 1). This is the earliest historical data on ancient wrestling ever found.



Figure 1. Ancient wrestling pictures

During the Han Dynasty, the economy developed and culture prospered, with frequent exchanges between China and foreign countries, and the content of Juedi opera became more colorful. The show was grand in scale and unprecedented in pomp. Every spring and summer, a large-scale Juedi opera is held in the capital. All the people within 150 km come to watch it, which is very lively.

The two Jin Dynasties and the Nanbeichao Dynasties, is a period of social unrest and cultural integration of various ethnic groups. During this period, wrestling status is low. In the early Sui Dynasty, the Juedi activity

began to recover and developed and prevailed in the royal and folk festival activities. However, the cost of the drama has also caused some people to criticize and propose a ban.

The martial arts system was put into practice in the Tang Dynasty, which promoted the development of wrestling. At that time, they called wrestling "Juedi" and "sumo", and also called it "hand fighting". The Song Dynasty called wrestling "Xiangpu" or "contorting", and it continued to develop in the Suitangwudai Dynasties. Because of the wide development of wrestling, wrestling in the Song Dynasty has a great improvement in technology.

During the Yuan Dynasty, wrestling activities and their development were limited. However, the Mongols' own sport of wrestling (known as "Boke" or "Palinledu") has developed greatly. Therefore, Mongolian wrestling has a far-reaching influence on the wrestling activities in the Central Plains and minority areas.

After the Ming Dynasty was founded, wrestling was advocated. However, because quanshu has been greatly developed, and weakened the important position of wrestling, so it never recovered to the Tang and Song dynasties. In the Qing Dynasty, the emperor strongly advocated wrestling, so wrestling was more popular than in the Tang and Song dynasties and swept the country. At that time, wrestling activities had "official" and "private" differences. "Guan wrestle" mainly refers to the imperial wrestling of the Qing Dynasty. The Imperial bodyguard Office of the Qing Court set up a "sumo wrestling camp", which was later called "Shan Pu Camp". The Shan Pu camp was dedicated to recruiting and training wrestling experts. "Private wrestling" mainly refers to folk wrestling, Beijing, Tianjin, Baoding and other places have a permanent private wrestling arena and teach private wrestling. At the end of the Qing Dynasty, "good attack camp" disbanded, "official tumble" to the people. In short, on the basis of the original "Buku", the Manchu absorbed the wrestling strengths of the Mongolian, Han and other nationalities, which greatly developed the wrestling skills. In modern times, Ma Liang, the guardian of Jinan, Shandong Province, also advocated wrestling when he set up a new martial arts training center. When the Nanjing Central National Martial Arts Museum was founded, Ma Liang, the dean, made wrestling a formal part of his class. The first relatively complete Chinese wrestling rules was formulated in 1931 "National Martial Arts Examination Rules (Amendment)". However, due to the influence of imperialism and feudalism on politics, economy, culture and education at that time, the inheritance and development of Chinese style wrestling was restricted to a large extent.

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the government have attached great importance to and cared for traditional ethnic sports. The State Sports Commission has listed traditional ethnic sports as a national sports competition and stipulated that a single championship should be held every year, so that wrestling will be on the road of organized, led and planned development. In 1953, the first National Ethnic Sports Performance and Competition Conference adopted the *Interim Rules of Ethnic Sports Wrestling*, which initially established the competition rules of "Chinese-style Wrestling" and made it an independent official sports event to be promoted throughout the country. In 1956, the Wrestling Association was established by the State Sports Commission, and professional wrestling teams were set up in all provinces and cities, as well as in rural factories and mines. National competitions are held every year, such as the first, second, third, fourth, sixth and seventh National Games, where Chinese wrestling was listed as an official competition. In the 1960s and 1970s, Chinese wrestling reached its peak and there were many Chinese wrestling masters.

After the "farewell" of Chinese style wrestling to the National Games in 1993, the sport quickly fell silent, and the national championships and championship matches were very cold or even suspended. Since the establishment of the Chinese Wrestling Development Management Committee in 2004, the competition of this excellent traditional sport of the Chinese nation has been gradually standardized. Especially after the launch of the "China Wrestling King Competition", this sport has been revitalized, and the number of participants in the national championship has reached nearly 500. At present, there are the national Championship, the National championship, the Club Championship, the Youth Championship, the National College Championship, the National Ethnic Games and so on. In addition, once Chinese style wrestling was the key competition at the National Sports Conference, or the national farmers' Games.

With the continuous development of Chinese wrestling, it has been paid more attention in colleges and

universities. The universities with good performance include: Tianjin University of Physical Education, Wuhan University of Physical Education, Shandong University of Physical Education, Capital University of Physical Education, Shanghai University of Physical Education, Harbin University of Physical Education, School of Physical Education of Zhengzhou University, etc. Institutions of higher learning set up Chinese style wrestling courses, for the development of Chinese style wrestling sports opened up a broad road and prospects.

2.2. The main technical school of Chinese wrestling

Judging from the evolution of Chinese style wrestling after the founding of New China, the main technical schools of Chinese style wrestling include Beijing style wrestling, Shanxi style wrestling, Mongolian style wrestling and Baoding style wrestling.

Beijing wrestling is mainly popular in Beijing area. It inherits and develops the unique skills and techniques of the wrestling of Puying in the Qing Dynasty. It is characterized by a variety of skills and techniques, exquisite movements, and is known for its techniques. Its spread includes Shandong, Henan and other places, these areas of the original technical action combined with Beijing, and each has its own characteristics. Shanxi wrestle is mainly popular in Shanxi Xinzhou, Yuanping and other areas, to grasp the wrist, inverted arm, neck, shoulder, elbow lock, leg, especially to hold the leg fall as its specialty. In the 1950s, Cui Fuhai, a Shanxi athlete, popularized the leg-holding technique through the national Chinese-style wrestling competition. Mongolian wrestling is mainly popular in Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang and other regions, the school is good at strength, with a lot of Mongolian wrestling characteristics. Baoding wrestle is mainly popular in Baoding area. It is a combination of martial arts and wrestling to form a unique Baoding quick wrestle, which is also known as "martial arts wrestle". Influenced by Ma Liang, a famous wrestler in modern times, many fast wrestlers were trained in Jinan, Nanjing and other places.

3. Characteristics of Chinese wrestling events

3.1. The rules are simple and well known

Chinese wrestling is a type of standing wrestling in which the two teams compete in a circular ring with a diameter of 9 meters. The rules can be summed up in one sentence: When two people fall against each other, the person who lands first, except for the feet, loses the points, and the person who lands behind, or the person who stands behind, scores the points. (In one case, when the knee touches the ground and succeeds, no points are lost.) . Therefore, Chinese wrestling rules are simple, well-known, easy to judge the outcome, favored by the masses.

3.2. The sports are intense and the viewing is strong

Chinese wrestling is a technique used to look for fighters in the process of intense grab and reverse grab, control and reverse control. Therefore, in the match, the athletes should be timely according to the opponent's change of center of gravity, the use of technical movements and technical style of decisive attack, which is just as the old generation of wrestlers often say "move like a flash needle" as fast.

Chinese wrestling is very confrontational and competitive, so it is self-evident to watch. It is not savage or bloody; Anti - joint is not allowed to use, as long as the opponent falls to the ground even score, athletes generally will not be injured, so it is very civilized, with a strong appreciation. These characteristics are very much in line with the requirements of Olympic sports. Insiders generally believe that Chinese style wrestling can not only reflect the faster, higher, stronger Olympic spirit, but also show the gentleman modest traditional Chinese culture way, Chinese style wrestling is one of the best sports for China to enter the Olympic Games.

3.3. Rich techniques and strong skills

In the process of its formation and development, Chinese wrestling continuously absorbs the wrestling technical advantages of various nationalities and regions and enriches its technical system. In the long-term practice, Chinese wrestling has formed rich, delicate, systematic and comprehensive technical characteristics. From the technique, footwork, body method and its composition of the ever-changing fall techniques can be seen

its rich, delicate techniques, as the fall sector saying: "big stumbling thirty-six, little stumbling game cow hair."

Skill is the most prominent characteristic of Chinese wrestling. Since ancient times, Chinese wrestling is not graded (although in modern times according to the rules of artificial classification), the wrestlers with large weight and strong strength naturally took advantage of the wrestlers, and the wrestlers with light weight and small strength if they want to beat the weight and strength of the opponent must master superb technology and "follow the trend of others, borrow the power of others" unique skills. In the process of attack and defense of Chinese wrestling, its strong skills are not only reflected in the virtual-real conversion, the desire to leave first, the desire to come first, and the desire to join first, but also reflected in the moderate speed of the change, the right place is slow, the fast is fast. In short, strong skill is the typical characteristic of Chinese wrestling, from the form of expression reflected in the mechanics principle of the technique, from the philosophy reflected in its principle in Yin and Yang.

3.4. To the point. Safe and civilized

The third touchdown of a team is the winner, known as the point. The game advocates not intentionally hit each other, clean, civilized and generous. This feature is unique in the two person direct confrontation project, very safe and civilized. In a race of four or five hundred people, no one gets hurt.

4. The value of Chinese wrestling

4.1. Exercise quality, cultivate personality

Chinese wrestling training, from the basic skills, basic techniques, to conditional combat and overall combat practice process, in each stage and each level of people's will quality and personality have different degrees of tempering. Increase the amount of strengthening degree, to overcome the pain of fatigue. It is necessary to overcome adverse psychological reactions such as timidity and nervousness during actual combat. Through the long-term Chinese wrestling training, it can cultivate the learners boldness, perseverance, being not afraid of hardship, not afraid of fatigue, dare to fight, and then form mature, steady, positive and excellent quality.

The rules of Chinese wrestling are simple, the conditions are not high, the advantages of easy to carry out activities and its competitive entertainment are easy to be accepted by teenagers. Therefore, it is of great significance and broad prospect for this sport to be carried out widely in schools at all levels. Chinese wrestling is a combination of sports that require the dexterity of a martial artist, the flexibility of an acrobat, the strength of a weightlifter and the finesse of a chess and card player. It can cultivate young people's personality such as competitive consciousness, heroic spirit, ideal belief and self-concept.

4.2. Deep connotation, inheritance carrier

Mr. Su Xueliang, who has been engaged in martial arts research for many years, pointed out that Chinese wrestling fully embodies the eight-word concept of "neutralization, integrity, self-improvement and virtue". The idea of neutralization is the way of the mean. Neutralization also has another meaning, which is called "only good and both good". Being impartial is the middle, and living in harmony is harmony, and harmonious coexistence is one thing. The letter "integrity" requires that one who learns to practice Chinese wrestling in order to regulate their own behavior. Self-strengthening and thick virtue is the moral character of life. "Neutralization, integrity, self-improvement, thick virtue" has long been the moral of life and work code of our Chinese nation since ancient times. With this concept as the core, from the aspects of dress, etiquette, confrontation, humanistic fitness, etc., the traditional significance and national spirit of this sport are deeply explored, and a relatively large-scale and systematic Chinese wrestling culture system is formed.

Chinese wrestling and other traditional sports are one of the carriers of the excellent traditional culture and spirit of the Chinese nation. Developing them is an effective means to inherit and promote the excellent traditional culture and spirit of the Chinese nation.

4.3. *Build up your body and defend yourself*

Chinese wrestling is a traditional national sport, through practice, can develop people's strength, endurance, flexibility, agility and other qualities and improve the body function. Insist on Chinese wrestling training can strengthen the body.

Chinese wrestling is a form of sport in which the two sides fight against each other, which requires the learners to grasp the timing of attack correctly in practice, the defense should be in place, and the counterattack should be timely, so as to establish the correct conditioned reflex. At the same time, it is necessary to improve the response ability and actual combat ability for different opponents and the changes of both sides, so as to achieve the role of self-defense and security.

4.4. *Competitive viewing, enrich life*

Chinese wrestling has a high ornamental value. In the competition, the wits, courage and skills of the athletes on both sides can give the audience great enthusiasm for watching, which shows that the Chinese wrestling match is not only exciting and fierce, but also has a high ornamental value, and enriches the social life of the people.

5. Conclusion

In the new era, the promotion and development of Chinese wrestling ushered in a new opportunity. Especially since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, cultural confidence has formed a favorable environment for the revitalization and promotion of Chinese wrestling. The so-called geographical location means that Chinese style wrestling is a traditional national sports rooted in the soil of Chinese traditional culture. As the main folk fitness and leisure activities, Chinese style wrestling has a broad mass base. It not only has a strong practical and ornamental, but also can be practiced anytime, anywhere, according to local conditions. The "field, factory, mine, or workshop" all are the right place, and cold or heat is the right season. The so-called "harmony" means that more and more people with insight in society have realized the social, cultural, fitness, entertainment and competitive value of Chinese wrestling, and are willing to devote themselves to the development of Chinese wrestling.

Under the guidance of the concept of healthy China and cultural confidence, it will surely usher in new development opportunities for Chinese style wrestling and push it to a new development stage.

Author Contributions

All of the works are made by Zhu Jianliang.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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