



# Innovation and Development of Chinese Traditional Culture under the Perspective of Cultural Self-Confidence

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**Abstract.** Cultural self-confidence is an ability to integrate both cultural understandings and practices, which can facilitate the development of society and enhance the country's soft power. Chinese traditional culture is the deepest spiritual pursuit of the Chinese nation, which provides the Chinese nation with a strong spiritual impetus and a supporting faith. As China's international status continues to improve today, the issue of the development of Chinese traditional culture has received widespread attention. This paper analyzed the dilemmas and shortcomings of Chinese traditional culture from the perspective of cultural self-confidence. This paper concluded that Chinese traditional culture can be better disseminated to the outside world through creative and innovative development regarding audience groups, dissemination methods, and communication efficiency. This paper has proposed the following suggestions: First, the audience group should be enlarged. The state should introduce related policies regarding study abroad and international students to increase the number of study-abroad students. Second, the innovation of cultural and creative products should be emphasized. Integrating traditional culture into people's daily lives through cultural and creative products. Third, traditional promotional methods should be combined with science and technology by utilizing VR, AI, and other technologies to innovate communication methods.

**Keywords:** Cultural Self-Confidence, Chinese Traditional Culture, Creative Development, Cultural Soft Power

## 1 Introduction

Cultural self-confidence is a goal that every country pursues in this era. In China, after the Sino-Japanese War, the Chinese people suffered a "hundred years of humiliation," and their cultural self-confidence was destroyed. It was not until the middle of the 20th century that China entered a new socialist era and began to rebuild its cultural confidence. Chinese culture has a long and profound history that has never been interrupted. Fostering the creative development of outstanding traditional Chinese culture is a necessary choice to develop an advanced socialist culture, build a strong

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cultural country, and cope with multiculturalism's impact <sup>[1]</sup>. In this globalization period, the status of international education is also becoming more important. The significance of international education grows as it equips students with the ability to participate fully in the global workplace, and it is also an important force for social change worldwide <sup>[2]</sup>. Studies have already shown that increasing national pride and connections to cultural values can significantly improve adolescents' mental health <sup>[3]</sup>. This suggests that there is an interaction between cultural self-confidence and traditional culture. However, in today's era, international communication is affected by various aspects such as time, geography, and channels <sup>[4]</sup>. The external development of traditional culture has also entered a bottleneck stage. Therefore, this paper is devoted to studying the innovation and development of Chinese traditional culture from the perspective of cultural self-confidence.

## **2 Cultural Self-Confidence and Traditional Chinese Culture**

### **2.1 Definition of Cultural Self-Confidence**

Cultural self-confidence consists of three constituent elements: cultural subject, cultural faith, and cultural content. The cultural subject is the nation, country, or political party that creates the culture. Cultural faith is the confidence and conception that the cultural subject holds about its culture, and finally, from the viewpoint of cultural content. Culture, as a spiritual outcome formed by a country, nation, and political party in the process of social practice, not only summarizes the cultural essence of its nation over the past thousands of years but also learns from the advanced experience of other nations.

### **2.2 Cultural Self-Confidence and Traditional Chinese Culture**

Since the Sino-Japanese War, Chinese people have been filled with a sense of inferiority to their own culture deep in their hearts after a hundred years of national humiliation. In recent years, with the continuous maturation of the Belt and Road Initiative and the rapid growth of China's national power, China's status in the international community has been continuously growing. Based on this, while developing hard power in science and technology and national defense, China should not let go of the building of national cultural self-confidence. Cultural self-confidence helps to strengthen the self-confidence of the country and the ethnic nation, and it helps to facilitate the development of cultural diversity. Strengthening cultural self-confidence can break down cultural barriers, reduce cultural conflicts, and boost the prosperity of cultural diversity. Cultural self-confidence is a goal that a country should pursue in today's globalized era. It contributes to the self-confidence of the country and the people and the development of cultural diversity, inheritance and innovation, and international education.

There are two significant aspects to the dissemination of traditional Chinese culture to the outside world. First, external publicity can enhance the inheritance and publicize Chinese traditional culture, improving China's cultural soft power and interna-

tional status. The excellent moral qualities embedded in traditional culture can be combined with modern ideas and serve a profound and direct role in forming the national spirit. Therefore, people should bring more outstanding traditional culture to the international arena to build up the cultural self-confidence of Chinese people and let the world better understand the charm of China. Secondly, external communication can foster a common cultural prosperity, absorbing foreign outstanding culture and demonstrating the charm of Chinese culture to the world. When different cultures exchange and learn from each other's traditional cultures, it is beneficial to increase mutual understanding, reduce cultural barriers, stimulate new creativity and inspiration, and spur innovation and development of traditional cultures.

### **2.3 The Dilemma of the Development of Cultural Self-Confidence**

With the economic and social development, coupled with the continuous creation and development of outstanding traditional Chinese culture, the cultural self-confidence of contemporary youth, especially college student groups, has increased significantly. Besides recognizing the overall upward trend of cultural self-confidence, it is necessary to note that the turbulence of international diversified social thoughts will impact the development of cultural self-confidence among students in the new era. Globalization, marketization, and networkization have become three important factors affecting cultural self-confidence. They are interconnected and interact with each other, bringing new opportunities, challenges, and crises to cultural self-confidence simultaneously. Cultural exchanges under globalization have had a certain impact on domestic cultures, and the significance of cultural identity has become more prominent. Hegemony and cultural colonialism have greater penetration into Chinese culture and influence the thoughts of college students, while multiple cultures accumulate, creating a strong deconstructive force on China's mainstream values. Under the background of marketization, China's cultural industry has been developing rapidly, but at the same time, it has also brought a greater impact on China's cultural market and cultural industry. Under the background of networkization, the connotation of China's socialist culture with Chinese characteristics in the new era has been greatly enriched, the dissemination power of culture has been significantly enhanced, and the cultural influence has been enlarged. Yet, to a certain extent, it also makes China's mainstream ideology suffer from the impact and brings difficulties and challenges to developing cultural self-confidence that should not be ignored.

## **3 Integration and Innovation of Chinese Traditional Culture in International Education**

### **3.1 The Application of Traditional Chinese Culture in International Education**

**Educational Philosophy: Taking "Teaching Based on Students' Abilities" as an Example.** Confucianism, as an orthodox thought in China for more than 2,000 years,

some of its educational concepts have been used to this day and have been recognized in the field of international education. One of the most important points is "teaching students based on their abilities". Teachers are required to tailor their teaching to the student's needs and abilities. Teaching based on students' abilities is a precious legacy of traditional Chinese culture and education and a good example for modern education.

In the United States, a school called "AltSchool" utilizes the educational concept of "teaching based on students' abilities." First of all, "AltSchool" has different teaching methods. Each student learns at their own pace. Students in the same class do not have to learn at the same pace. Each teacher creates a personalized learning plan based on each child's specific understanding of the curriculum. Second, AltSchool classes are organized differently - students in the same class are not in the same grade. This division of classes makes sense. Each class is a symbol of a small society. A child's role within the team is also constantly changing, from follower to leader. This organizing form is very beneficial to the development of children's learning and leadership skills and strengthens children's self-confidence. As demonstrated above, traditional Chinese education concepts such as "teaching according to one's abilities" have been recognized and applied in international education.

**Educational Content: Traditional Chinese Culture.** The traditional Chinese culture has been integrated into Chinese language teaching. While learning Chinese, international students also learn about traditional Chinese culture, customs, and values. For example, some international schools have offered courses on traditional Chinese culture. These courses include Chinese history, literature, music, painting, and calligraphy. For example, the Chinese Guqin culture already has corresponding courses abroad. In addition, some international schools organize handicraft activities related to traditional Chinese culture, such as traditional painting, paper-cutting, pottery, and so on, so that students can experience the charm of traditional Chinese culture first-hand. They also regularly organize traditional Chinese cultural festivals, such as Spring Festival celebrations and Mid-Autumn Festival Moon Appreciation Party. Many Chinese students wear traditional Chinese costumes to participate in Chinese traditional cultural festivals. Chinese traditional literature has also begun to spread gradually to the outside world. Chinese poems are highly attractive, and many foreign translators have begun studying how to translate them into their language. For example, translating the Longshu folk songs, featuring the regional culture, to the English-speaking world is a useful attempt to disseminate Chinese voices and culture under the background of the "Belt and Road Initiative" [5].

For international students learning Chinese, facing unfamiliar Chinese knowledge and culture, they are likely to have psychological uneasiness and anxiety, having less desire and opportunity to express themselves independently. Including some traditional culture-related courses can increase students' motivation to learn and relax their tension [6]. With the help of these carriers, students can be helped to understand the rich connotation of the existence of Chinese culture and bring the traditional Chinese culture to the international stage. At the same time, it continues to expand the influence of Chinese culture and realize the cultural inheritance and development [6]. In the process of Chinese external communication, China's traditional culture has always

played a medium role, so students from more countries will recognize that the Chinese language has a complex system because of the deep history and culture behind it [6].

### **3.2 Challenges and Difficulties Encountered by the Traditional Chinese Culture for International Education**

There are four main challenges and difficulties encountered by the traditional Chinese culture at the moment. The first is the definition of traditional culture. There are two views regarding the scope of development and the current inheritance of traditional culture. The first view is to "take the best and discard the worst." A part of traditional culture should be eliminated in this era, and only the part that can still be adapted to the times should be selected and preserved. The second view is that there is nothing wrong with traditional culture. It is all correct and should be carried forward. With each of these two views, traditional Chinese culture has no clear definition or range. This can confuse cultural and artistic practitioners when they spread the traditional culture.

The second difficulty is that the current dissemination of traditional culture is overly concerned with formalism. Ceremony should be emphasized in special circumstances, but not at the expense of the essentials; if too much emphasis is paid to formalities, formalism will lead to misunderstanding and distortion of the traditional culture. "Confucius Institutes were an early vehicle for disseminating traditional Chinese culture. However, more and more voices are reacting to the fact that the teachers of Confucius Institutes are not good enough and the curriculum is not reasonably designed. "The Confucius Institutes have gained international fame, but they are full of loopholes. Such an approach is certainly not correct. Sometimes, the government concerned only focuses on the formalities but does not work on the concrete things.

The third problem is the proliferation of traditional Chinese studies and fake cultures. The China trend has made many people smell business opportunities. Some use the Chinese identity to do some bad things. For example, because Hanfu's (Han-style clothing) popularity is influential today, many study-abroad students wear Hanfu abroad to get attention but don't love traditional culture. Because Hanfu has cultural significance, it can have the opposite effect if not worn properly. It is important to understand how to wear Hanfu, but it is even more important to understand the cultural background behind Hanfu. In addition, many school principals and teachers do not study traditional culture and blindly pursue formalities and profits. They spread the so-called "traditional culture" to others when they do not know enough or are unsure. They put unproven traditional culture into books, squeezing students' study time and misleading others. Some teachers use a test-oriented approach to disseminate culture, disregarding the actual physical and mental development of students and chasing after the number of classics to be memorized in a very robotic manner, contrary to the way of education. These discordant voices may cause the revival of traditional culture to go off the rails.

The last point is the impact of the global environment. The downturn of the world economy will have a long-term negative impact on the overall scale of international

students and the total trade in education services worldwide<sup>[7]</sup>. International students themselves are an important pathway for cultural exchange and international education development. The export of traditional culture relies heavily on this pathway. If the number of international student programs decreases, the promotion of traditional Chinese culture will inevitably suffer a certain blow.

## **4 Suggestions on Facilitate the Innovation and Development of Traditional Culture**

### **4.1 Cultivating the Audience Group**

The traditional Chinese culture is not static and unchanging. It needs to be constantly innovated and transformed. Audience participation is an important force to promote cultural development. In this regard, many TV stations have already made attempts. For example, on December 25, 2020, "Go Online! Huacai Junior" was launched, and the program team selected 35 Huacai Juniors among 50,000 applicants from home and abroad, including inheritors of non-heritage skills, fellows from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan, as well as teenagers from overseas regions<sup>[8]</sup>. With the theme of young people exploring creative and innovative ways of expressing traditional culture in contemporary times, the program demonstrated the teenagers' hardworking spirit of inheriting traditional culture and being brave in artistic innovation.

The extensive participation of the audience enables traditional culture to gain a greater range of influence and spread. The country can introduce welfare policies for international students. Encourage more Chinese students to study abroad to publicize the traditional Chinese culture. At the same time, it will also help to bring more international students to China to experience the depth and richness of Chinese culture. This allows young Chinese people to understand their own culture better while also drawing the interest of the overseas Chinese population to the traditional Chinese culture. It will enable infinite possibilities to re-create and re-innovate the traditional Chinese culture.

### **4.2 Cultural and Creative Products**

Cultural and creative products have developed very rapidly in recent years. Cultural and creative products can, in the form of fashionable modern rhetoric style, neutralize the sense of historical weight and, in a daily form into people's lives, play an extended role in the museum's social education function<sup>[9]</sup>. For example, the cultural and creative products of the Forbidden City came out with six different lipstick colors. The shell of the lipstick incorporates traditional Chinese elements. The traditional Chinese colors were also used in the choice of color numbers. It has gained the favor of many young girls. When telling Chinese stories or expressing emotions, the Chinese nation's unique aesthetic concepts and means of expression should be utilized in the artistic creation. In this way, the artworks will present more characteristics of Chinese culture<sup>[10]</sup>. Therefore, some historical monuments and attractions with deep culture

can launch more innovative cultural and creative products. More research into the young people's market can integrate more modern popular elements into cultural products.

### 4.3 The Power of Science and Technology

The progress of the time also needs to be treated with a developmental perspective. Thus, China should seize the opportunity of the new technological revolution and explore ways to spread traditional culture to the world by using advanced technologies such as 5G, AI, AR/VR, and so on. In 2021, Henan TV's Spring Festival Gala's Night Banquet in the Tang Palace utilized the technology of 5G+ AR, combining the virtual museum scene with the real song and dance stage, and as of February 14, 2021, in less than a month, the individual video of "Tang Palace Night Banquet" has already accumulated more than 10 million views on Weibo<sup>[9]</sup>. This shows that combining science and technology with culture can cause good publicity. Integrated media enhances the vividness of the expression of cultural relics. In the communication environment of integrated media, the expression of cultural relics follows the media logic of "the storytelling narrative is the key," the story of cultural relics features symbolization, visualization, and an online media feeling<sup>[10]</sup>. Therefore, cultural and art workers can use AI or VR technology to restore ancient Chinese scenes or styles of cultural relics to create a more intuitive visual effect. This new way can improve communication efficiency and make the traditional Chinese culture spread to the world more vividly.

## 5 Conclusion

This article examined how traditional Chinese culture should be developed innovatively in the context of cultural self-confidence. The article has analyzed the existing problems of cultural self-confidence and the existing difficulties of traditional culture and has made suggestions for future innovative development. There are three points worth noting to achieve the innovative development of traditional Chinese culture while enhancing cultural self-confidence. First, the direction of innovation should be clearly defined. Instead of blindly excluding foreigners, people should cherish their cultural roots and learn from other cultures to enrich the traditional culture. Secondly, combining with the means of science and technology can break through and innovate in the communication approaches. Third, attention should be paid to cultivating audience groups. Increasing the base of people interested in traditional Chinese culture will enable a better spread of traditional Chinese culture to the rest of the world.

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