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Longxian Shehuo: Two-thousand-year-old folk customs gestated from eight hundred miles of loess

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Abstract: Shehuo originated from a kind of entertainment activity in the square of "Hundred Dramas", which was gradually combined with other acrobatics in the activities of sacrificing to the Earth God and the Valley God in ancient China. This activity was widely spread in China, and it was one of the folk ways of social sacrifice to seek good fortune and avoid bad luck. Later, it gradually evolved into an entertainment activity for the Spring Festival. As one of the birthplaces of Chinese culture, the Weihe River Basin in Shaanxi Province has bred ancient national culture. The Shehuo in Longxian County is one of the unique cultures bred on the 800 mile plain. In the 21st century, there are still many problems in the inheritance and protection of the community fire culture in Longxian County. To actively solve these problems, we need to promote the inheritance and innovation of traditional folk culture through government guidance, mass participation and other ways.

Keywords: Longxian Shehuo; Folk culture; Intangible cultural heritage.

1. Introduction

Shehuo originated from a kind of entertainment activity in the square of "Hundred Dramas", which was gradually combined with other acrobatics in the activities of sacrificing to the Earth God and the Valley God in ancient China. This activity is widely spread in China. The "Shehuo" in the north is also known as "Shooting Tiger", which is one of the ways of social sacrifice to seek good fortune and avoid evil. Later, it gradually evolved into an entertainment activity to welcome the Spring Festival.

As one of the birthplaces of Chinese culture, the Weihe River Basin in Shaanxi Province has bred ancient national culture. The Shehuo in Longxian County is one of the unique cultures bred on the 800 mile plain. The earliest Longxian Shehuo can be traced back to the Spring and Autumn Period: according to the old records of Longzhou, as early as the Qin and Han Dynasties, there was a "hundred operas" tour in Longzhou. It was developed in the Sui and Tang Dynasties, flourished in the Song, Ming and Qing Dynasties, revived after the founding of New China, and developed with the prosperity of Chinese agricultural civilization for thousands of years. It has a history of more than 2000 years.

2. The imprint left in the hearts of contemporary people is the vitality of Longxian Shehuo

In 2007, the "Longxian Shehuo" was included in the intangible cultural heritage protection list of Shaanxi Province, and the Longzhou Shehuo Festival was known as "the carnival on the loess land". The relevant national departments also attach great importance to the protection and research of this intangible cultural heritage. In 2011, the "Longxian Shehuo Art Festival" was successfully held. In 2013, the "Longzhou Shehuo Festival" was published, which gave a panoramic display of Longxian Shehuo. The community fire in Longxian County gradually radiates new vitality.

However, although Longxian Shehuo has a certain popularity in the Guanzhong Plain, efforts should be made to make more people approach Longxian Shehuo.

Chen Shuo, a lecturer of the Party School of Longxian County Party Committee of the Communist Party of China, published an article in the New Silk Road magazine (The Integration and Development of Social Fires and Tourism Industry in Longzhou from the Perspective of the Silk Road) in September 2019. According to the published data, Longxian County, known as the "Hometown of Social Fires in China", has at least 100000 people watching and performing social fires every year, accounting for more than one-third of the total population of the county, It is incomparable to any county in China. There are more than 300 "community fire clubs" in more than 200 administrative villages in Longxian County. The masses are more enthusiastic about community fire than any activity. Many villages still retain the props and performance styles of the Qing Dynasty. Stilts, horse club fire, etc. are suitable for performing in places with large slopes; It is necessary to pull out and lift social fires with complicated costumes in places with relatively small slopes. Longxian County, located in the western mountainous area, has a large terrain change. Because of this unique geographical advantage, a wide variety of community fire styles have been preserved in Longxian County, such as horse community fire that reappears the ancient battlefield, rough and fierce back community fire, various types of high cores, seesaw community fire with parading fun, bloody and horrible blood community fire, stilt community fire that dances while walking, swing, lion and dragon dance, big head play, bamboo horse, dry boat, knife dance There are more than 20 kinds of stick dance, Yangge dance, waist drum dance, etc. It is one of the counties and cities with the most complete types of social fires in China.

After the Longxian Shehuo was installed, it was played from the second day of the first month to the fifteenth day of the first month, and each village gradually played it. From the second day of the first month to around the twelfth day of the first month, each village will set up a community fire and stay in the village for a day or two. On the 15th day of the first month, the local county cultural bureau will score the community fire of each village and award awards.

On the day of the social fire performance, it usually starts to make up at 3:00 a.m., and starts to move from house to house around 7:30 a.m. There is a strict and complete set of rules for the community fire in Longxian County. An important part of the performance is called "stepping on the village". No matter how bad the rain and snow weather is, the community fire team must complete the "stepping on the village" ceremony. In the form of "stepping on the village", the community fire team will send blessings on peace and beauty in the New Year to every family. In addition, the "inviting the gods" and "sending the gods" of Longxian Shehuo must be carried out in the temple. Through a series of ceremonies, the actors completed the process of "stepping down" in the temple. The complete preservation of these strict rules and ceremonies may be one of the reasons why Longxian Shehuo has been passed down to this day.

As a long-lived folk custom that has passed on for more than 2000 years in the community fire system, the Longxian community fire has accumulated the cultural connotation of many stages of human society in the long history of development. Those cultural genes deeply hidden in all aspects of Longxian community fire performance are waiting for our rumination.

Through publicity and marketing, let more people get close to Longxian Shehuo, or even into Longxian Shehuo. In fact, it is only to open up more space for the development of Longxian Shehuo, provide more possibilities, and determine whether it can grow savagely. The more important factors are the policies of relevant government departments and Longxian Shehuo itself.

3. The Longxian Cultural Center pushes the social fire of Longxian County, which is handed down from generation to generation

In 2001, Longxian Shehuo participated in the "German Culture Festival"; In 2003, Longxian County held the "China's First Shehuo Art Festival" and was awarded the title of "Hometown of China's Shehuo Culture" by the China Folk Art Association. In the same year, Longxian County was named "Hometown of Folk Shehuo" by Shaanxi Province; In 2013, Longxian County was awarded the title of "Hometown of Chinese Folk Fire Art", and Longxian Platform Fire was awarded the "Chinese Folk-Art Mountain Flower Award" and the "Gold Award for Folk Etiquette Performance".

These developments are closely related to the Longxian Cultural Center. Longxian County People's Cultural Center was established in July 1949 and renamed as "Longxian County Cultural Center" in 1953. Since its establishment, Longxian County Cultural Center has played an important role in organizing, coordinating, planning and implementing all mass cultural activities in the county, including community culture, square culture, enterprise culture, campus culture, and military camp culture. It is committed to studying the mass culture and art of Longxian County and collecting, sorting, developing, and studying intangible cultural and artistic heritage.

The development of community fire in Longxian County has experienced countless twists and turns in the long history, but today we see that the appearance of community fire in Longxian County is still fresh. Longxian Shehuo, like many Chinese folk customs, has encountered a series of problems, such as the serious aging of Shehuo artists, insufficient performance funds, and the difficulty in mining and carrying forward the cultural connotation in contemporary society. It has fallen into the dilemma that some hand handed down Shehuo skills are difficult to continue to inherit. However, since 2011, some folk community fire romance companies have emerged among the people of Longxian County. After learning this situation, the cultural center also began to encourage them irregularly, and gradually urged the county, town and village governments to increase their financial support. Up to now, five folk community fire romance companies have been developed in Longxian County. After supporting folk community fire romance companies to promote the inheritance of community fire in Longxian County, the serious problem of aging of community fire performers has been solved to some extent. In the past, community fire performers were mainly middle-aged and elderly people. Now, community fire performers organized by community fire romance companies are gradually turning to middle-aged people, and young people are also more willing to participate. This change is mainly due to the normalization of community fire performance by community fire romance companies. In the past, the Longxian community fire performance was traditionally held only during the Spring Festival, from the fifth day of the first month to the fifteenth day of the first month. After the emergence of Shehuo Romance Company, the scene of Shehuo performance expanded to the opening ceremony, performances in tourist attractions, and performances invited by businesses from other provinces. The performance team generally has 30-60 people, and the composition of the staff has also become fixed. Some of the performance teams organized by Shehuo Romance Company have chosen to take Shehuo performance as their main business, and some young people have begun to take the initiative to approach Shehuo and learn about Shehuo.

In addition, the problem of insufficient funds has also been solved to some extent. In the past, the social fire performances during the Spring Festival were mainly carried out by villagers in the form of fundraising. Later, the young people in the village gradually became unwilling to participate in and watch the social fire, which severely affected the enthusiasm of the village to hold social fire, and fewer and fewer people were willing to raise funds to do it. Even the county, town and village governments began to encourage and give certain subsidies to social fire performances, It is also difficult to arouse the passion of the village private community fire. However, after the commercialization of social fires by the folk social fire romance company, on the one hand, the social fire performance funds can be basically self-sufficient by virtue of the commercial performance remuneration, and on the other hand, the county, town and village governments give certain financial subsidies, which makes the social fire performance no longer a "pure self hi" cultural activity of folk self-entertainment.

Compared with the first two problems, the problems faced by Shehuo in the contemporary excavation and development of its cultural connotation have not been significantly improved due to the emergence of folk Shehuo Romance Company. Secretary Yang Bingquan said that in recent years, Longxian Folk Shehuo Romance Company has been closely following the market economy, trying to give new era connotation to the plays, roles, masks and forms in Shehuo performances. On the basis of inheriting the tradition, Longxian Cultural Center also held a creative social fire contest, a gongs and drums contest, a minor singing contest,

etc., combining contemporary life and current politics, and promoted social fire as an important business card of Longxian. These measures have played a certain role in promoting the popularity of the community fire in Longxian County. Many tourists come to Longxian County in response to the community fire, especially during the Spring Festival, which has also produced a direct and powerful economic pull force and influence on the tourism industry in Longxian County. However, due to the shortcomings of folk art, some cultural connotations and performance forms in the Shehuo culture that are not consistent with the ideas of contemporary people, and are not appreciated by contemporary people, as well as the rich and complex contents of Shehuo, and the mixed historical figures of various dynasties in the performance, young people cannot really understand the Shehuo, and their understanding of Shehuo is superficial, and they have no strong interest in understanding the cultural connotation of Shehuo, Thus, the cultural connotation of Longxian Shehuo is difficult to be deeply excavated and truly carried forward in the contemporary era.

In the process of development, the community fire in Longxian County has solved some difficulties faced in the past, but also encountered some new problems. In the process of constantly emerging problems and solving problems, the community fire in Longxian County has achieved a spiral development. For such a folk custom of more than 2000 years old, which has experienced several times of extreme poverty and also experienced several times of bright future, its vitality cannot be underestimated.

4. Inheriting the "core" of Longxian Shehuo is the insistence of every folk artist

The inheritance of excellent local art and folk culture requires generations of cultural successors, and these folk culture successors do not just refer to those cultural elites and officially designated successors. They actually include our ancestors and fathers to a large extent. These popular old artists are an important force and a living carrier of folk culture inheritance. The gene of folk culture that is imperceptibly injected into our blood line from the family is the bottom line that must be kept to prevent the loss of various folk cultures.

The performances of the main characters of the traditional community fire are all in the form of self-compilation and self-performance. They are all festive and educational, and there are inherent characters. They are drawn from historical characters and fairy tales handed down by the people. They also use civil singing to interpret the minor songs that they have compiled and performed themselves. The traditional community fire performances mainly express the joy of harvest and the wish for a bumper harvest in the coming year. They are held only during the Spring Festival. Now the country is promoting the normalization and industrialization of traditional culture, and the root of enterprise survival is to make profits. The profits of the Shehuo Performance Company mainly come from the invitations to commercial performances in various scenic spots across the country, various opening ceremonies and opening performances of large conferences. Therefore, various aspects of the Shehuo Performance will be adapted to different degrees on different occasions to attract more modern people's attention.

In today's fast consumer era, after Shehuo has embarked on the road of industrialization and commercialization, only profits can make more people pay attention to this industry. The commercialization of folk custom endows it with value, which is more conducive to inheritance. With the rapid development of economy, if it is not economical, it may be forgotten or even replaced. Folk custom is a long-term cultural formation of a nation, representing a nation's belief, culture and life message, so it can be preserved after thousands of years of vicissitudes. Whether the inheritance of folk custom can be combined with modern civilization tacitly depends on whether it is suitable for the development of modern economic civilization.

Will commercialization lead to the loss of cultural connotation of folk culture such as Shehuo and aggravate the fault of its cultural connotation in the process of inheritance? How can we keep the balance between inheritance and development? Ren Jie's opinion is: "If commercialization develops into a performance situation instead of the original festival expression, the strong human feelings in the middle will be much less. To maintain the balance between the two, we need to promote cultural beliefs, carry out project inheritance from the national essence, and arouse people's ideological resonance. Only in this way can we get the recognition of modern civilization and be effectively inherited. What we do well in this regard, such as the Yellow Emperor Mausoleum sacrifice Fuxi Sacrifice, in such sacrificial activities participated by Chinese all over the world, often performs our ancient sacrificial dance. Such performance is to identify with our traditional culture and improve the status and position of traditional culture in the hearts of the whole people. Like the bench dragon we shot in Fujian before, it is endowed with mythical color as an auspicious celebration during the Spring Festival, so it has become a part of people's belief, so that people will not forget it. "

The social fire artists with flesh and blood are the foundation for the inheritance and development of social fire in Longxian County. Their actions of not promoting the continuous inheritance of social fire in Longxian County for profit may also have another educational significance for the younger generation. The insistence of generations is the blood that makes the social fires in Longxian County endless. Longxian County is a fertile land of folk culture.

The inheritance of folk culture such as Shehuo in Longxian County is an activity that extends the material civilization and spiritual civilization achievements accumulated by the nation for a long time to the next era and the life of the next generation through a certain carrier. Folk customs and folk activities are inseparable from our lives, and are needed in our material and spiritual life. Longxian Shehuo is a kind of folk culture, and China's extensive folk culture also contains local art, folk beliefs, traditional festivals, etc., which are our spiritual home.

In the 21st century, we have entered the information age. We have also entered the era of foreign thoughts pouring out, the era of cultural diversity, and the era of Chinese people's questioning and forgetting about the local culture, their inferiority and self-mutilation of the national psychology, and even the era of complete loss of the national spirit. At present, the Chinese culture full of individuality is experiencing the dual loss of material and spirit, and our folk culture has unprecedented challenges.

In the face of various challenges, in the protection and development of folk culture, only folk artists stick to their

faith in folk culture, folk organizations find out the appropriate path for the commercialization of folk culture, and relevant national institutions provide more favorable policy support and publicity guidance for the development of folk culture, can folk culture regain its vitality in today's society and have a broader development prospect in the future.

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