

# The Evolution and Future Development of Emei Martial Arts Culture

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**Abstract:** *The development of Emei Martial Arts culture has undergone a long process of transition from uniformity to diversity, collision, fusion, and finally, transformation into a distinctive regional martial arts culture. Starting from the perspective of immigrant culture, this study explores the historical trajectory of the development of Emei Martial Arts culture through research methods such as documentary analysis, fieldwork, and logical reasoning. The research suggests that the evolution of Emei Martial Arts culture has gone through three stages: introduction, assimilation, and innovation, with a trend of diverse integration and the absorption of strengths while discarding weaknesses. The future development will show two directions of development: from the overall Emei Martial Arts to the individual martial arts schools of Emei Martial Arts; the whole and the individual being causal and interdependent.*

**Keywords:** *Culture, Martial Arts, Emei Martial Arts, Boxing*

## 1. Introduction

Emei Martial Arts is a culmination of both immigrant martial arts and local martial arts in Sichuan province, representing a unique combination of local martial arts and the integration of external martial arts influenced by the Bashu culture [1]. Due to regional cultural factors, immigrants actively incorporated elements of the local Bashu culture to ensure the preservation of these external Martial Arts, ultimately giving rise to a new emerging martial arts genre with distinct Bashu characteristics. Since the late 1970s, when the State Sports Commission issued a notice to preserve and consolidate martial arts heritage, Emei Martial Arts has gained significant attention from the government, academia, and grassroots organizations. From the compilation and publication of the comprehensive book “Sichuan Martial Arts Encyclopedia” in the 1980s to the successful application for inclusion in the World Cultural Heritage list in 2008, and its subsequent inclusion in the “14th Five-Year Plan for Cultural Development and Reform of Sichuan Province,” individuals from all walks of life have made outstanding contributions to the research, preservation, development, promotion, and dissemination of Emei Martial Arts culture. However, the construction of the Emei Martial Arts cultural system has not yet formed a definitive shape, and the ongoing dispute over its “designation” remains unresolved, calling for further in-depth exploration and discussion. Against the backdrop of the nation’s high regard for cultural development, the development of Emei Martial Arts culture is facing unprecedented opportunities. Reviewing the status and phenomena of Emei Martial Arts culture during different periods, outlining the overall picture of its development trajectory, and looking forward to future trends has become increasingly urgent. Therefore, this study attempts to provide an insightful analysis of the emergence, development trajectory, and future prospects of Emei Martial Arts culture, aiming to contribute as a valuable contribution to the field of research in this area.

## 2. Naturalization: Martial Arts Techniques from Single to Multiple

Bashu (referring to Sichuan and Chongqing) has always been a land of immigrants, with the early settlers migrating from other regions. Throughout the dynasties, immigrants have continuously settled in Bashu. These immigrants not only brought diverse production and lifestyle customs but also introduced different cultural elements, martial arts being one of them. Although historical records referring specifically to Emei Martial Arts before the Ming Dynasty are difficult to find, it cannot be ruled out that Emei Martial Arts existed prior to the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Under the influence of prolonged warfare, it is inevitable that certain skills would have been transmitted to the folk, albeit to varying degrees. Of course, there was no specific mention of Emei Martial Arts during that time. Whether it is an

introduction or an influx, the emergence of these situations is an inevitable trend in the development of things. Therefore, dismissing such possibilities is not plausible. Towards the end of the Ming Dynasty and the beginning of the Qing Dynasty, Bashu experienced frequent natural disasters and man-made catastrophes such as warfare, droughts, famines, and epidemics, resulting in a sharp decline in population and the devastation of cultivated lands. In order to restore this strategic region, the rulers of the Qing Dynasty implemented a series of effective measures, one of which was the “recruitment policy” aimed at promoting the massive migration of people from Hubei and Guangdong to Sichuan. Immigrants from various regions brought their skills to Bashu, resulting in the convergence of various martial arts techniques and the formation of a region where different Martial Arts coexist. This tradition has continued to the present day and is commonly known as Emei Martial Arts. However, there is a lack of historical records documenting this phenomenon.

### ***2.1 Local martial arts survive to this day***

The earliest recorded literature and historical documents on Emei Martial Arts can be found in the Ming Dynasty work “Jiangnan Jinglue” compiled by Zheng Ruozeng. It states: “There are seventeen forms of spear: including the Yang family’s Thirty-Six Flower Spear... Emei Spear.” However, during the same period, a poem titled “Emei Daoist Fist Song,” which was widely regarded as describing Emei Martial Arts, has been extensively studied by Cheng Dali and is found to be a poem that deeply depicts Shaolin boxing techniques, rather than exclusively focusing on Emei Martial Arts [2]. Subsequently, during the late Ming Dynasty and early Qing Dynasty, Wu Shu, in his work “Shou Bi Lu,” included the “Emei Spear” by Cheng Zhenru, stating: “Master Puen from Mount Emei in western Sichuan learned exceptional spear from an extraordinary individual... I have documented his techniques and named them the Emei Spear Method” [3]. Similarly, in the official historical records of the Qing Dynasty, the “Qing Shigao,” it is mentioned: “Jiang Zhitong ..... His kung fu is profound, Yu Dao, Cheng Bang, Emei Eighteen Staff Technique, which mainly draws on the techniques of the Hongmen and is used to fight strong opponents with speed and agility” [4]. Apart from these aforementioned records, there is no further documentation on other martial arts techniques related to Emei Martial Arts. The singular techniques gradually evolved and diversified after the Qing Dynasty, and the martial arts associated with Emei gradually emerged in Bashu. In the 1980s, numerous styles of Sichuan martial arts were documented and compiled in the “Sichuan Martial Arts Encyclopedia” , which, upon examination, were found to have been brought to Bashu by immigrants during the Qing Dynasty, carrying their respective skills.

### ***2.2 Foreign martial arts enter Bashu***

#### ***2.2.1 Background of the entry of foreign martial arts into Bashu***

Bashu, located in the southwest corner of China, has a long history of continuous immigration, ranging from small to large-scale migrations. From the legendary “Three Shu Kings” in ancient history to the later arrivals such as Du Yu and the Kai Ming Dynasty, all were immigrants from outside the region. Even after the unification of Bashu by the Qin Dynasty following the annexation of the Kai Ming Dynasty, the influx of immigrants from outside the region continued, varying in scale and reasons for migration. During the late Ming Dynasty and early Qing Dynasty, starting with Zhang Xianzhong’s uprising and the establishment of the Daxi regime in Sichuan, to the subsequent conquest of Bashu by the Qing Army, the population of Bashu reached its historical lowest point. The upheaval during the “Three Feudatories Revolt” further aggravated the plight of the region, as reflected in numerous historical records. For instance, the Jiaqing edition of the “Shifang County Annals” states: “The population is scarce, and the landscape is desolate. The government office is nothing more than a few thatched cottages, and there are traces of tigers and leopards in the city ruins.” The Guangxu edition of the “Yongchuan County Annals” states: “The households are scattered, and overgrowth fills the eye.” Similarly, the Tongzhi edition of the “Longchang County Annals” states: “The smoke and fire from the residents resemble the stars of the Chens.” Such records can be found abundantly in local annals. To revive the prosperity of Bashu, the Qing government proposed policies to encourage migration and land reclamation. As a result, the region witnessed one of the largest waves of migration in Sichuan’s history. Among the migrants, the majority came from Hubei and Guangdong provinces (referred to as Huguang), while other provinces accounted for a smaller portion. This led to the well-known saying “Huguang Fills Sichuan.” During the Anti-Japanese War, Sichuan became a natural refuge for many people as central China was in turmoil while Sichuan was stable and safe. Although their numbers were not as substantial as during the Ming and Qing dynasties, they still had a certain influence on Sichuan’s martial arts, education, culture, and other aspects.

### 2.2.2 Cases of Martial Arts Flowing into Bashu

According to the records in the “Complete Collection of Sichuan Martial Arts” and the information obtained from interviews with folk martial artists, the preserved martial skills in Bashu are mostly introduced from outside the region.

**Case 1:** Sengmen martial arts, known as one of the four major local martial arts in Sichuan, has various claims regarding its origins. Scholars have conducted series of research and arrived at different conclusions. Currently, the most comprehensive summary of the legends surrounding the origin of “Sengmen” martial arts can be found in the “Sichuan Martial Arts Encyclopedia” The related research is also based on it, providing a retrospective review and verification of “Sengmen” martial arts. The “Sichuan Martial Arts Encyclopedia” records that there are eight legends regarding the introduction of this martial art within Sichuan. These legends include individuals such as Yuntan, Ma Chaozhu, Yang Shuntang, Deng Hewei, Wu Zhizan, a wanderer (real name unknown), Li Fazhen, Xiong Hongju, and Peng Zirong, who taught their respective boxing techniques in places such as Emei Mountain, Xindu, Hongya, Neijiang, Yunyang, Daxian, Ya’an, and Rongchang at different times. From the aforementioned list, it can be determined that the formation of the “Sengmen” martial arts system is the result of collective efforts by multiple individuals. From the end of the Sui Dynasty to the early Qing Dynasty, “Sengmen” martial arts continuously infiltrated, encompassing not only Shaolin martial arts but also various other martial arts schools. This is because there were individuals among the monks who either became monks halfway or returned to secular life after becoming monks, and they learned martial arts that extended beyond Shaolin martial arts. However, in Sichuan, any martial arts transmitted by monks were collectively referred to as “Sengmen” martial arts. After many people have imported and accumulated, experienced changes and innovations, and gradually formed a complete system with unique regional characteristics. Different eras, different masters, and different introduction locations contributed to the continuous dissemination and expansion of the influence of Sengmen martial arts, covering a large area in Sichuan and Chongqing, as well as surrounding regions.

**Case 2:** Zhaomen Martial Arts. According to contemporary scholars’ explanations, many people falsely claim that Zhaomen martial arts were created by Zhao Kuangyin and named after his surname. According to folklore, in the mid-Qing Dynasty, a man named Zhang Tianhu from Zhili attempted to assassinate Emperor Xianfeng of the Qing Dynasty but failed. He fled to Sanyuan in Shanxi province and started teaching the Zhaomen Martial Arts to his disciples [5]. After his identity was exposed, he sought refuge in Sichuan and continued to pass on his martial arts skills to the local people. Several years later, four of his disciples came to Sichuan in search of their master, only to learn of his passing, which filled them with profound sorrow. To commemorate their master’s teachings, two of them returned to Shanxi and established a martial arts school called “Zhili School,” named after their master’s place of origin. The other two stayed in Sichuan and established a martial arts school called “Sanyuan School,” commonly known as “Sanyuanmen,” to carry on their master’s martial arts techniques that were taught in Sanyuan County [6]. Nowadays, within Sichuan, their techniques are commonly referred to as “Zhaomen (Sanyuan School)” martial arts. Sometimes, in certain articles and among martial artists, you may also come across the term “Emei” being used to refer to these martial arts, such as “Emei Zhaomen Martial Arts.”

**Case 3:** Sunshi Martial Arts is widely believed to have originated from the Shaolin Temple in Fujian province and was introduced by Zhang Chenghu during the late Ming Dynasty. Zhang Chenghu spread the Shaolin martial arts extensively in Sichuan, and throughout the transmission process, there were several instances of hiding and reemerging, adding to the sense of mystery surrounding these martial arts. The mystery lies in the fact that there are no historical records or related documented evidence discovered by contemporary researchers. The available information mainly comes from oral legends that have been passed down among the local communities to this day. Although there is a lack of supporting written materials, the oral traditions suggest that it is an externally introduced martial arts. While it is connected to the Shaolin Temple in the folklore, it is not classified as a Buddhist martial art, and the exact reasons for this remain unknown. Numerous examples like these illustrate the constant influx of martial arts from outside the region and their widespread dissemination within the region. This has laid a solid foundation for the emergence, development, and maturation of Emei Martial Arts, and created a richly diverse space for the convergence of various martial arts cultures.

### 2.3 Symbiotic space taking shape

The immigration and migration into Sichuan Province was not achieved overnight but rather through multiple periods of gathering and overlapping. The immigrants unconsciously brought their own martial

arts and cultural traditions from all directions, converging them into one place. This laid the foundation for the coexistence, blending, and inclusiveness of martial arts cultures from different regions and ethnicities, creating a space where these cultures intermingled and thrived, known as the “Mixed Symbiotic Space for Martial Arts and Culture”. The migration of immigrants to Sichuan with their own martial arts cultures broke the previously monolithic martial arts cultural space in the area and gradually created a fusion of diverse elements. Different martial arts cultures encountered, collided, interacted, and influenced one another in this shared space. The dissemination of various martial arts cultures gradually gained acceptance among the people of Sichuan [7], resulting in a mixed coexistence. Until modern times, the opening lines of the Emei Martial Arts Manual, “One tree blossom with five flowers, five flowers and eight leaves support...” mention the “eight leaves” as a depiction of the formation of the mixed symbiotic space of Emei Martial Arts culture. The martial arts cultures that successively entered this space have grown and assimilated other cultures, giving rise to a completely new regional martial arts culture.

### **3. Integration and uptake: drawing on multiculturalism for survival**

The schools of martial arts that accompanied the migration into Sichuan were influenced by the regional culture, geographical environment, and local customs related to production and daily life. In order to adapt and survive, these martial arts continually absorbed elements from other cultures and gradually transformed as a means of “survival.” As a result, there have been changes in their technical characteristics. Some martial arts schools have preserved certain original technical features, but through the assimilation of other cultures, they have undergone additions, deletions, and modifications, resulting in alterations to some of their technical characteristics.

#### **3.1 Uptake**

Since ancient times, Sichuan has been a city of immigrants. The early ancestors of Sichuan migrated from the upper reaches of the Min River to this area, establishing the capital and their livelihoods. With the frequent changes in political power, large numbers of immigrants settled in Sichuan. Each wave of immigrants brought their own native cultural customs to the land of Sichuan. The collision, convergence, and fusion between the indigenous culture and the migrating culture gave rise to the post-Sichuan culture, which was conducive to communication, survival, and development. The formation of the region-specific culture influenced the growth and development of people, events, and objects within the Sichuan region, while also catalyzing the emergence of various cultural branches. With the influx of martial arts from outside the region into this culturally diverse environment, it became inevitable for them to absorb elements of the local culture. Religion, customs, and foreign martial arts cultures, among others, became the objects from which various martial arts drew nourishment and continued to thrive.

Absorbing elements of religious health culture. Both Taoism and Buddhism selected Sichuan as their base. The unique lifestyle, attitudes, distinctive personality traits, and the inclination towards values in the people of Sichuan attracted Zhang Ling, Zhang Heng, and Zhang Lu to establish their teachings in Sichuan rather than elsewhere. In the prevailing folk beliefs in witchcraft and spirits, the concept of achieving immortality through cultivation was propagated, emphasizing the path of health preservation. The integration of the health preservation mechanisms from Buddhism and the Daoist principles, combined with their own teachings, led to the emergence and promotion of health cultivation practices in the world. The principles and practices of health cultivation circulated vertically and horizontally in society, reshaping people’s values and ideological consciousness. They were also incorporated into various martial arts systems, such as the existing Emei Martial Arts, which include health cultivation techniques in their content system.

Absorbing the local folk culture. The immigrants forged the “chivalry culture” and the “Paoge culture”. Since the time of the Qin Dynasty, the chivalrous culture from the Central Plains continuously flowed into the Sichuan region, blending with the original chivalrous spirit of Sichuan and gradually forming a distinct cultural area of chivalry in Sichuan. Under the oppression of rulers, it developed independently and appeared more vibrant compared to the chivalrous culture of the Central Plains. Examples such as the description in “Shu Dufu” vividly portray the passionate atmosphere of chivalry in the Sichuan region, depicting the heroic figures, their social interactions, and their contributions [8]. Additionally, “Tong Dian” records: “The people of Sichuan are relatively carefree and indulge themselves easily. When the monarch’s authority is weak, arrogance arises first” [9]. These descriptions fully demonstrate the lively atmosphere of chivalry culture in the Sichuan region and have always influenced many people who

entered or left this area, such as Sima Xiangru, Li Bai, Du Fu, and others. The culture of chivalry in Sichuan gradually extended into modern times and gave rise to an associated culture known as the “Paoge” culture. What is “Paoge”? As mentioned in the Book of Songs, there is a saying: “How can it be said that we have no robes, when we wear the same gown?” or it can be said: “People of different surnames treat each other as brothers, addressing each other as elder or younger brother, taking ‘brother’ and ‘robe’ as homonyms” [10]. The meaning behind it is the formation of a brotherhood organization that stands together in difficult times, treating each other as family, and sharing prosperity and adversity. This organization originated in the immigrant society of Sichuan and is a product of the social disorder of modern times [11]. During the Qing Dynasty, people from more than ten provinces in the country migrated to Sichuan, bringing their own respective cultural collisions. Coupled with social unrest, the mutual assistance group known as the “Paoge” organization emerged and gradually infiltrated every corner of the Sichuan region. Both the chivalrous culture and the “Paoge” culture were absorbed and assimilated by martial arts that flowed into the region, integrating into their own respective cultures. By assimilating folk culture and enhancing themselves, they were able to effectively spread, inherit, and develop in this region.

Absorbing the strengths of foreign martial arts. The introduction of foreign martial arts and their coexistence with local martial arts led to curiosity from both sides, resulting in inevitable exchanges and sparring. During this process, consciously or unconsciously, they would adopt techniques different from their own to compensate for their deficiencies. However, over time, the mutual learning and compensation became a common practice among martial arts practitioners, with the aim of improving their own martial arts systems and showcasing the greatness and uniqueness of martial arts, attracting enthusiastic individuals to inherit and promote them. Even today, glimpses of this practice can still be seen in various styles of Emei Martial Arts that exist in the world.

### **3.2 Add, delete, modify**

“The Huayang Guo Zhi” states: The land of Ba extends eastward to Yufu, westward to Bodao, northward to Hanzhong, and southward to Qianfu [12]. The land of Shu is connected to Ba in the east, to Yue in the south, divided by Qin in the north, and bounded by the majestic Emei Mountains in the west. The region of Ba and Shu is characterized by a scarcity of plains and a predominance of high mountains and hilly terrain. Rivers and streams flow through the mountains, creating a picturesque scenery reminiscent of a fairyland. The barrier of high mountains and steep ridges has led to a relatively closed and stable region, flourishing with a self-sufficient and distinct cultural area. What sets this area apart from other mountainous regions is the abundance of water sources, rare natural disasters, and a lack of disturbances from warfare, resulting in distinct attitudes, character, and values among the people living in this cultural area. The benevolent creator, in His wisdom, promotes various cultures without suppressing them. The natural terrain presents both benefits and drawbacks to martial arts from outside the region. The benefit lies in the fact that this place serves as an ideal harbor for the growth of martial arts, while the drawback lies in the mismatch between the technical characteristics of external martial arts and the natural terrain. Consequently, in order to adapt to the geographical environment of Ba and Shu, certain movements unsuited for the local terrain were eliminated, while new techniques suited for display were added, resulting in a change in the traditional content framework. This adjustment leaves evident traces in the construction of martial arts content, such as the changes in techniques seen in Panpomen, Sengmen, and Huanglinmen, which are closely related to the unique geographical environment of Ba and Shu. The purpose of these changes is to ensure survival and continuation. After the introduction of external martial arts to Ba and Shu, for the purpose of adaptation, a process of assimilation, elimination, modification, and replacement took place, actively absorbing diverse cultures and conforming to the local ecological environment. This marked the birth of martial arts that embody multiple cultures and represents a fresh start with distinctive characteristics.

## **4. Innovation: the co-existence of differences and similarities in the characteristics of techniques**

In the space of blending and symbiosis, martial artists practice multiple styles and learn from various teachers [13], abandoning the specialization in a single skill and instead embracing the strengths of different schools. Grounded in regional culture, they integrate, replace, synthesize, and add elements, giving birth to martial arts that possess unique regional characteristics and stand tall in the realm of Chinese martial arts. As mentioned earlier, the culmination of this assimilation marks the beginning of innovation. After innovation, the technical characteristics of martial arts vary, rather than being uniform. The common factor is that they undergo modification based on the same geographical environment. Take

Shaolin martial arts as an example. Shaolin martial arts focuses on the practice of legs [14], and the Senmen martial arts that spread in the Ba and Shu regions inherited the routines and main stylistic characteristics of Shaolin martial arts, but adapted their techniques according to the geographical environment of the mountains and hills. It modifies the leg techniques and focuses more on punches (with “breaking punches” as the main technique), thus evolving into a local style with more emphasis on punches and fewer leg techniques. The evolution of Monk Gate Fist can be glimpsed through the hand routines recorded in the “Sichuan Martial Arts Encyclopedia”. This pattern is echoed in other martial arts as well. Commonalities exist, as do differences. This is the current state of Emei Martial Arts, where different styles coexist. For example, the Huo Long Fist of the Huang Lin school and 36 Lu Closed Hands of the Canbimen are two different styles of fists that have similarities as well as certain differences [15]. These differences primarily stem from the retention of their original content structures without modification.

## **5. Towards: the whole-to-individual turn and the mutual reinforcement of the whole and the individual**

Emei Martial Arts is a whole made up of dozens of individual martial arts schools such as the Sengmen, the Zhaomen, and the Yuemen. The term “collective” refers to a higher intrinsic unity that combines various elements into an organic whole, while the term “individual” refers to the existence of a single entity within a category [16]. They are interdependent: the collective exists based on the existence of individuals, and without individuals, there is no collective. Similarly, individuals exist based on the existence of the collective, and without the collective, there would be no individuals. Likewise, the Individual schools of Emei Martial Arts and the overall Emei Martial Arts are mutually dependent. Therefore, the key to the development of Emei Martial Arts lies in whether there are changes in the individual schools, and the development of the individual schools of Emei Martial Arts cannot be separated from the overall Emei Martial Arts. It can be seen that the development of the overall Emei Martial Arts and the individual schools of Emei Martial Arts are always interdependent, mutually beneficial, and mutually transformative [16], but an imbalance exists between the relatively weak development of the overall Emei Martial Arts and the prominent development of the individual schools of Emei Martial Arts.

### ***5.1 The turn of the whole to the individual***

#### ***5.1.1 The whole Gradually slightly***

Emei Martial Arts has gone through the process of individual growth, overall formation, and overall weakness. In the early years, foreign martial arts schools in the Ba and Shu regions, as well as local martial arts schools, influenced each other in order to survive, continuously absorbing, modifying, and replacing techniques and cultural elements. While individual martial arts schools continued to evolve, they also contributed to the diversification of technical skills and cultural connotations. Due to the immigration of people from different regions, individual martial arts schools in the Ba and Shu regions had variations in techniques and cultural connotations, but they gradually found common ground influenced by the geographical and cultural environment of the region. Over time, these individual martial arts schools, when associated with their techniques and cultural connotations, formed a collective whole referred to as Emei Martial Arts. The names “Sichuan martial arts” and “Ba-Shu martial arts” were gradually replaced by Emei Martial Arts, and many sets of forms were compiled based on shared techniques and cultural connotations, such as Emei Fist First Route, Emei Fist Second Route, and Emei Sword. In 2008, Emei Martial Arts was included in the national intangible cultural heritage list, leading to collaborations between folk martial artists and scholars from academic institutions to compile series of weapon forms and rank systems in Emei Martial Arts. During this period, there was limited exploration of the techniques and cultural connotations of individual martial arts schools, mainly due to people’s perceptions that the influence of individual schools within Emei Martial Arts was relatively weak compared to the dominant Emei Martial Arts itself [17]. Nowadays, with an increased recognition of the influence and individual martial arts schools, there has been a shift towards the exploration, compilation, and study of individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts, resulting in fruitful achievements.

#### ***5.1.2 Individual highlighting***

In the current emphasis on individual development, individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts have regained vitality, driven by people’s exploratory attitudes and the psychological motivation to seek originality. Stripping away the adapted elements performed by folk martial artists for

survival, the focus now lies in the exploration of the original techniques and culture of individual martial arts schools, which has become a common endeavor that requires dedicated efforts. As a result, not only have the inheritors of Emei Martial Arts placed greater importance on the exploration, compilation, practice, and transmission of their own styles, but it has also sparked strong interest among scholars, leading to the publication of research findings on individual martial arts schools in journals and dissertations.

The accumulation of these achievements has laid the foundation for the derivation and development of techniques and culture in individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts. It has also led to the separate declaration and inclusion of individual martial arts schools into various levels of intangible cultural heritage lists. For example, Qingcheng martial arts, which has been included in the national-level intangible cultural heritage list, as well as Yuemen martial arts, Yujia Shaolin Six Harmony Fist, and Chanbi martial arts, which have been included in the provincial-level intangible cultural heritage list.

Furthermore, in order to expand the scope of technical and cultural inheritance, and increase influence, inheritors of individual martial arts within Emei Martial Arts have cooperated with various schools and educational institutions. Based on the research findings of original techniques and cultural connotations, they have extracted the essence of their martial arts and created a series of rhythmic exercises and weapon forms suitable for students of different age groups, forming teaching materials for promotion and transmission. Derived techniques and culture originate from this process, incorporating and integrating with other techniques and cultures while maintaining a distinct form from the original techniques and culture.

With the empowerment of the evolving times, whether it is being included in intangible cultural heritage lists or undergoing derived expansions, individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts will continue to thrive, becoming a new trend in the development of Emei Martial Arts.

However, the shift from overall Emei Martial Arts to individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts is not like before, where only the overall Emei Martial Arts was emphasized while neglecting the individual martial arts schools. Instead, there is now a focus on the development of individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts while also considering the overall development of Emei Martial Arts. Only through the mutual transformation and support between individual martial arts schools and the overall Emei Martial Arts can the progress of Emei Martial Arts be unimpeded, moving towards a broader horizon.

### ***5.2 Mutual reinforcement of the whole and the individual***

The existence of individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts and the overall Emei Martial Arts are mutually interdependent. Individual martial arts schools are the prerequisite for the composition of the overall Emei Martial Arts, while the overall Emei Martial Arts provide the environmental conditions necessary for the development of individual martial arts schools. Although the overall Emei Martial Arts is composed of individual martial arts schools, individual martial arts schools cannot exist in the present without the framework of the overall Emei Martial Arts. Therefore, individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts cannot be separated from the overall Emei Martial Arts. In terms of their development, individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts are even more inseparable from the overall Emei Martial Arts. Any individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts is a product of and takes root in the background of the overall Emei Martial Arts. The overall Emei Martial Arts serves as the support of individual martial arts schools, ensuring their existence and preventing their demise. Even if there is some decline, it can preserve numerous individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts, ensuring the preservation of such forms without disappearance [16]. Therefore, the overall Emei Martial Arts is crucial to individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts, rather than merely a collection of individual styles. Based on this, it is evident that the overall Emei Martial Arts creates the necessary environmental conditions for the development of individual martial arts schools, making their development inevitable and increasing the probability of full development, driving real progress. At the same time, individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts create conditions for the development and direction of the overall Emei Martial Arts. There is a mutually beneficial relationship between the two. The development of one side shares the experiences of the other side, and both sides are compatible and interconnected. It is essential to promote the development of Emei Martial Arts smoothly and facilitate the development of individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts. Similarly, accelerating the development of individual martial arts schools within Emei Martial Arts is also necessary to inject momentum into the overall development of Emei Martial Arts. Thus, the mutual growth of the overall and individual aspects will be another direction for future development.

## 6. Conclusion

The formation of the content system of Emei Martial Arts has a close relationship with the inflow, assimilation, and innovation of martial arts schools from outside the region. In the transition from a single indigenous martial arts school to a diverse martial arts technique, both indigenous schools and martial arts schools from outside the region have begun to focus on assimilating the strengths of foreign schools to complement their own weaknesses. To adapt to the local ecological environment and folk culture, the martial arts schools gradually shifted from being suitable for their “homeground” in terms of technical characteristics to being suitable for the local environment, without completely abandoning their original individuality. As a result, various martial arts schools that embody diverse cultures and unique regional characteristics were born, forming the present Emei Martial Arts system.

It is beneficial for practitioners and researchers who are enthusiastic about Emei Martial Arts to understand its development process and trends by analyzing and prospecting the trajectory and future direction of Emei Martial Arts. This can also attract more attention to the art form. In the absence of historical records and concrete evidence, exploring the past and present of Emei Martial Arts from the perspective of immigrant culture provides an alternative approach to showcase the brilliance of Emei Martial Arts culture.

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