

*Original Paper*

# Problems of Cultural Confidence in the New Era and Countermeasures

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## **Abstract**

*The confidence of the nation comes from the confidence of culture, while culture is the spirit and soul of a nation, and the development of culture is related to the politics and economy of the whole country in many aspects. Taking the excellent traditional Chinese culture as the basic perspective, this paper will analyze the problems faced in developing the cultural confidence of socialism with Chinese characteristics from the basic connotation, ideological origin as well as the existing problems and the reasons of constraints, with socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era as the background of the times, and put forward suggestions and countermeasures according to the problems. This paper adopts a combination of literature research, abstract and concrete, history and reality to start from the ideological origin of socialist cultural self-confidence with Chinese characteristics, analyze some representative outstanding traditional cultures of the Chinese nation, and combine their role in contemporary society with their significance to the cultural construction of contemporary society, and explore a socialist cultural self-confidence path with great Chinese characteristics by linking theory with practice and concrete analysis of specific problems in the context of the new era.*

## **Keywords**

*cultural self-confidence, cultural soft strength, socialism with Chinese characteristics*

## **1. Introduction**

Since the founding of the country, especially after the reform and opening up, China has made remarkable achievements in all aspects, including economy, politics, culture and society, and its influence in the international arena has been expanding, and the prospect of Chinese cultural prosperity is undeniable.

At present, we have made remarkable achievements in promoting the realization of the Chinese dream, the cultivation and practice of core socialist values, the development and innovation of traditional

Chinese culture, and the Chineseization and modernization of Marxism, which shows that our cultural soft power is continuing to grow and our comprehensive national strength is being strengthened.

## **2. Cultural Confidence Ideological Origin**

### *2.1 Buddhist Thought of Self-Awareness*

Throughout the long history, it can be seen that the wisdom of self-conscious thought also shines in our Buddhist thought and is preserved to this day with the development of history, which has played a great role in promoting the establishment of socialist cultural confidence with Chinese characteristics in the new era. Buddhism is based on the idea of self-purification and self-analysis based on the truth of what is inherent in the human being's wisdom and potential abilities, which are brought from the mother's womb from birth. This shows that the focus of enhancing cultural confidence is to awaken the consciousness of the subject of cultural confidence itself and make people see the importance of cultural confidence. In Buddhism, self-awareness in the thought of self-awareness is positioned as the foundation of life, and "no-self" is a symbol of enlightenment and the highest realm of life, so in the process of realizing the practice of cultural confidence, it must also follow a gradual development process from low to high.

### *2.2 Confucianism's Idea of Self-reflection*

The idea of self-reflection first appeared in a series of ideas in Confucianism in China, and this idea is dominant in the current practice of cultural self-confidence. The idea of "self-reflection" found in the Analects of Confucius and Mencius plays a leading role in the daily behavior of social subjects and is crucial to the development of a sense of self-confidence and self-improvement among the entire population. Only when we understand and follow the principles of "materialism, knowledge, sincerity, righteousness and cultivation" can we spontaneously serve and contribute to the society. In turn, it will promote the realization of the value of "family, state, and world" and achieve a state of identification, recognition, and confidence in the culture and ideology of the nation. These excellent traditional cultures preserved in the long history are of great practical significance for us to establish moral confidence and cultural confidence in the new era, strengthen national self-confidence and enhance our own self-discipline.

### *2.3 Traditional Chinese Values Thought and Values Confidence*

Traditional Chinese values are central to Chinese culture, and the best parts of them are the ones that dominate our ideology. And these outstanding parts are important inspirations for the current enhancement of socialist cultural confidence with Chinese characteristics. According to the traditional values of our country, since ancient times, there has been the idea of "the debate between righteousness and profit"; from the way of thinking, people advocate "harmony and difference"; in terms of life interest, it is the affirmation of "sacrificing life for righteousness", and in terms of life, it is the recognition of "harmony and the middle". Our Chinese nation is a people who pay attention to values and moral cultivation.

### **3. Concepts Related to Socialist Cultural Confidence with Chinese Characteristics**

#### *3.1 Cultural self-awareness and Cultural Confidence*

Cultural self-awareness is the awareness and awakening of the people of a country or the country as a whole to their own culture, which is concretely reflected in the mastery of the laws of culture, the sense of identification with the cultural mission, and the reasonable judgment of the history, process, and prospects of cultural development. Cultural confidence is an inherent cultural consciousness, and is the primary task to promote cultural prosperity and development in the new era. We often associate “cultural awareness” and “cultural confidence” together today, in order to highlight the close relationship between the two.

#### *3.2 Cultural Self-reflection and Cultural Confidence*

Cultural self-reflection is the self-evaluation, self-reflection, and self-regulation of cultural subjects in the process of their own cultural development in terms of their own state, value, strengths, and shortcomings. In the whole process of cultural development, cultural self-reflection is an indispensable and important part of it. This process of self-reflection can effectively prevent irrecoverable and directional mistakes and avoid irreversible losses. A people who are constantly self-reflective is a people whose culture is always new, who can identify their own flaws and respond and reposition themselves in the midst of an intricate cultural development. On the one hand, cultural self-reflection is an important part of cultural self-confidence, which is built up in the process of cultural self-assessment. On the other hand, through cultural self-reflection, it can adjust the state of culture and avoid over-confidence in culture in the process of development. However, it is important to point out that cultural introspection has to have its own orientation, and placing it only in the assessment system of others can lead to a lack of self-confidence and a sense of cultural inferiority. Socialist cultural self-confidence with Chinese characteristics is a kind of cultural reflection based on the national standpoint, a socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, which is a kind of self-assessment, self-reflection and self-adjustment.

#### *3.3 Cultural Inferiority and Cultural Confidence*

Cultural inferiority complex is a cultural mentality that has a colonial view of one’s own culture, which leads to belittling, doubting, and even denying one’s own cultural values. In modern times, especially after the Sino-Japanese War, China has suffered repeated setbacks on the battlefield, which has created a sense of “cultural inferiority” among the people. In time, this sense of inferiority grew so strong that many people developed a sense of inferiority to the language of their own country. From technological inferiority, institutional inferiority, and ideological backwardness, modern Chinese have a growing sense of inferiority to Chinese culture. A sense of cultural inferiority is the opposite of a cultural confidence, and it can have a certain impact on people’s cultural confidence. In the process of counteracting the sense of cultural inferiority, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, a socialist cultural confidence with Chinese characteristics is gradually being formed and is becoming more and more solid.

### *3.4 Cultural Conceit and Cultural Confidence*

Cultural conceit is a kind of cultural mentality of blind optimism and blind confidence. The psychological unhealthiness leads to a series of undesirable behaviors in the actual operation of the person due to conformity. People with cultural arrogance tend to disdain the value of other cultures and fail to take a dialectical view of foreign cultures, thus missing out on the best parts of other cultures and plunging society into a state of self-imposed isolation. “Cultural conceit” and “cultural confidence” are two different concepts. Cultural confidence rooted in cultural self-awareness, an objective and rational understanding of one’s own culture, and the ability to accept culture from other countries. Therefore, in order to establish socialist cultural self-confidence with Chinese characteristics, we must avoid taking the wrong path of “cultural conceit”.

## **4. Problems of Cultural Confidence in the New Era**

### *4.1 Weak Awareness of Citizen Cultural Participation*

As of now, public awareness of public culture and participation in public cultural activities are still not high. In theory, the general public is not only the main force in enjoying the fruits of social and cultural development, but more importantly, it is important to realize that the general public is also the broadest social participant of social public culture. However, at present, the general public in China shows weak awareness and low enthusiasm for public cultural participation. The reason for this is that there are differences in the public’s perception of public cultural subjectivity, resulting in uneven development of the people’s ability to participate, and at the same time, when analyzing the state of the people’s awareness of cultural participation, we should differentiate between urban and rural areas. With the development of the dual structure of urban and rural areas, there is not only a gap between urban and rural areas in terms of economic income, but also a huge difference in terms of cultural development and the level of access to cultural education, especially for the majority of farmers, who lack the ability to actively express their thoughts and cultural needs. Since the current rural population is still basically at the level of the demand and pursuit of material life, there is still a lack of spiritual and cultural needs. As stated in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs theory, spiritual needs are temporarily set aside or suppressed because material needs have not been adequately met. This has directly or indirectly led to problems such as low participation of the majority of farmers in public cultural services and related cultural activities.

### *4.2 Cultural Soft Power Lags Behind*

After the reform and opening up, China’s economic strength has soared, its comprehensive national power has been greatly improved, and its hard power has increased dramatically. However, in terms of culture, a soft power, it is still lagging far behind compared to our country’s hard power. On the cultural level, such corrupt Western cultures as ultra-liberalism and ultra-individualism are having a huge impact on China’s excellent traditional culture and pose a huge threat to the country’s cultural security. Secondly, the low level of industrialization of Chinese culture has weakened its influence in economic

development and also made it lose its influence in the world. In terms of the development approach, with the rapid economic development, what has been brought about is the imbalance between environmental pollution and development, which has also taken a huge toll on our country. Soft power is built on hard power, but an increase in hard power does not necessarily lead to an increase in soft power. The development of a country cannot rely solely on hard power, and when hard power is developed to a certain extent, it is necessary to make full use of soft power to promote the development of the country, so that hard power and soft power can play their best role to enhance the strength of the country and accelerate the realization of the Chinese dream.

It is because of the low level of development of our country's cultural soft power that there is still a gap in our cultural output compared to the strong economic hard power. At present, China's cultural export goods mainly exist in the form of handicrafts, design, visual artwork and new media, while the number of exports for cultural products such as film and television dramas and music, which require a lot of innovation, is relatively small and uncompetitive.

#### *4.3 The Impact of Western "Foreign" Culture is Serious*

Today's ideological and cultural market is a state of intricacy, diversification of social trends, westernization of cultural discourse and other problems, which makes it urgent to enhance the practice of socialist cultural confidence with Chinese characteristics. In China today, there is an increasing trend of diversified socialist culture, and various cultures are entwining and colliding with each other as never before. Among the many cultural trends, the influence of the two major ideologies on enhancing socialist cultural confidence cannot be ignored. One is the corrupt capitalist ideology, which is mainly manifested in: individualism, money-worship, hedonism, and selfishness. This intellectual and cultural corruption inevitably leads to a loss of faith and confusion of values among the population. The second is the ideology of feudal society. China's feudal society has a history of more than 2,000 years, and feudal ideas and culture can be said to be deeply rooted, some of which are expressed in traditional ways and some of which still remain in people's minds. In addition, after China's reform and opening up, with the continuous opening of the country's doors, some Western ideas and cultures poured into China and were widely spread, and in this series of interaction activities, some Western discourse systems also gradually entered our field of thought. At the beginning, domestic scholars' discourse awareness was not strong enough, and they often lost their initiative in academic discourse, only accepting and absorbing blindly. The result is that some people would have wanted to introduce and promote the advanced technology, theories and ideas of the West in the context of the opening up of these technologies, theories and ideas. In reality, however, Western values and discourse have been used directly in our intellectual community and even in textbooks.

## **5. Measures to Enhance Cultural Confidence in Socialism with Chinese Characteristics**

### *5.1 Carrying out Core Values Education*

From the perspective of internal elements, educating the general public on the correct values and

making them consciously participate in various cultural creation, cultural cultivation and other practical activities, so that we can constantly experience the advantages of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics in practice, can make the people clear about traditional culture in the context of modernization and achieve to take its essence and remove its dross. It enables the people to strengthen their ability to discriminate against capitalist culture and meet their need for socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, while enhancing their sense of identity. It is necessary to expand the ways of cultural dissemination, enrich practical activities, and improve the carrier of cultural heritage, so that the advantages of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics are reflected. It is also important to involve the public in cultural exchanges and cultural exhibition activities to promote their sense of identity and self-confidence through comparison and identification of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics. In the process of promoting the confidence of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, we should give full play to the role of the main force of the people, and constantly reform and innovate the current cultural undertakings and cultural industries, so as to build socialist culture with Chinese characteristics into a culture that the people truly love and trust. More opportunities should be given to creative talents to fully mobilize their initiative and creativity to create more and better cultural products.

### *5.2 Promote Cultural Communication to Expand External Influence*

Cultural image is the true reflection of a nation's cultural soft power in the globalized environment. In modern international exchange, to some extent, cultural identity is more important than political and economic ties. In the opening ceremony of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, a spectacular program made Chinese culture shine and enhanced the image of China as a great nation. Therefore, the essence of the cultural strategy of attaching importance to the country's cultural image and vigorously promoting "going global" is to promote China's cultural recognition and identity in international exchanges, and to enhance cultural soft power while promoting political, economic, cultural, social and even military power. At present, to broaden the ways of cultural exchange, to constantly enrich the connotation of cultural exchange, to constantly innovate the way of publicity, to do a good job of cultural "going out". Expanding the territory, influence, dissemination capacity and competitiveness of Chinese cultural communication is the basis for taking the road of socialist cultural confidence with Chinese characteristics. As far as the dissemination of content is concerned, it should be as diverse as possible, and not just to target different audiences with different cultural propaganda, but also to vigorously promote both the ancient Chinese traditional culture and the excellent modern culture in the cultural dissemination. According to the different degrees of influence of modern information technology on the cultural exchanges of various countries, we promote the use of new media communication means, including network information technology, so that China's information communication ability can be continuously improved and its voice can be heard in the world, thus gradually improving China's national image and enhancing its soft power. Promote China's foreign exchanges, strengthen cultural diplomacy, adhere to the strategy of continuous cultural export, build

and spread a good international image through effective communication and interaction, and be recognized and accepted by countries around the world, thus laying a solid foundation stone for the overall cultural soft power of contemporary China.

### 5.3 Dialectical View of Western “Foreign” Culture

Socialist culture with Chinese characteristics is an open, globally oriented culture with distinctive national characteristics. In the era of economic globalization and cultural pluralism, our country’s cultural development should take our own excellent traditional culture as the core of development, and introduce advanced technology and culture from the West, and make “using the ancient for the present and the foreign for the Chinese” as the first principle. First of all, we should cherish our fine traditions and cultural heritage. In this vast and fertile land, the Chinese nation has created a glorious Chinese culture, and its national spirit of hard work, wisdom, self-improvement, peace and unity has been passed down from generation to generation, forming the unique cultural personality of our nation. Secondly, it is necessary to get rid of the dregs of feudalism and the limitations of the times and classes. Culture is determined by a specific economic and political level. As society develops, many backward factors are gradually revealed in the process of social development, such as the three rules and regulations, the sense of hierarchy, and the concept of privilege. To look at Western “foreign” culture discriminatively is to look at Western culture with a critical eye. First, learn about those things that are the best in Western culture. Westerners are world-renowned for their cultural achievements in modern society, and they lead the world in cultural trends. Following the idea of “taking the essence and removing the dross”, we absorb the advanced science and technology, ideology and culture of the West that are beneficial to our development. Secondly, the corrupting trends of the West should be resolutely opposed, such as capitalist extreme individualism and extreme liberalism, and in the process of building a socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, these negative factors should be resolutely resisted.

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