

Research on the Path of Red Culture Empowering High-Quality Development of County-Level Industries from the Perspective of New Quality Productive Forces

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ABSTRACT

Within the theoretical framework of "New Quality Productive Forces," this paper explores the logic and pathways through which Red Culture empowers the high-quality economic development of counties. The article first posits that New Quality Productive Forces require a profound transformation of the county-level economy characterized by structural renewal, optimized factor allocation, and green development models. In this context, Red Culture is identified as a key strategic resource. Its endowments can integrate business formats such as cultural tourism and educational study tours to build characteristic industrial platforms; meanwhile, its brand value enhances regional reputation and competitiveness. Through a threefold transformation process—internalizing the value of "Red Symbols" into development momentum, materializing cultural heritage into industrial factors, and marketizing cultural products to ascend the value chain—a leap from soft power to hard power is achieved. Red Culture serves as a critical instrument for counties to cultivate New Quality Productive Forces and achieve differentiated high-quality development.

KEYWORDS

New quality productive forces; Red culture; County-level economy; High-quality development

1 Introduction

Red Culture is not merely a spiritual symbol detached from economic activities, but a unique strategic resource that can be deeply excavated and transformed into key elements of New Quality Productive Forces.

2 The Connotation of New Quality Productive Forces and Requirements for the County-Level Economy

To deeply analyze the internal logic of Red Culture empowering county-level industrial development, the primary task is to accurately grasp the contemporary context and theoretical framework. This section will first systematically explain the theoretical connotation and characteristics of the era regarding New Quality Productive Forces, and then deeply analyze the specific requirements posed for the transformation and upgrading of the county-level economy. This lays a solid theoretical foundation for subsequent discussions on how Red Culture integrates into and drives this process as a key element.

2.1 Theoretical Connotation and Characteristics of the Era

New Quality Productive Forces represent an innovative development of Marxist productivity theory in contemporary China, marking a new height in our understanding of the laws of productivity development. The theoretical core lies in the fact that it is not a simple linear extension of traditional productive forces, but a contemporary advanced productive force spawned by revolutionary technological breakthroughs, innovative allocation of production factors, and deep industrial transformation and upgrading. The introduction of this concept profoundly responds to the urgent need for China's economy to break away from dependence on traditional growth modes and achieve connotative high-quality development in a new stage.

(1) Theoretical Connotation: New Quality Productive Forces present three distinct characteristics. First, the core driving force is technological innovation, requiring disruptive and frontier technologies to spawn new industries, new models, and new momentum, rather than relying solely on the scale expansion of factor inputs. Second, the key carrier is a modern industrial system, emphasizing the advancement of industries toward high-end, intelligent, and green development [Yang Meiqin&Tang Ming, 2024]. As relevant studies point out, the carrier of New Quality Productive Forces is industry; combining county-level resource endowments with technology-led initiatives to develop industries according to local conditions can inject high technology into traditional industries, promote emerging industries, and facilitate deep transformation, thereby driving high-quality county-level economic development [Han Xiping&Ma Lijuan, 2024]. Finally, its essence is advanced productivity, with the ultimate goal of achieving a significant increase in total factor productivity (TFP) to meet the people's growing needs for a better life.

(2) Characteristics of the Era: The proposal of New Quality Productive Forces possesses profound historical inevitability and realistic urgency. It is a strategic choice for China to seize the commanding heights of development and gain the initiative amidst the unfolding global technological revolution and industrial transformation, and the profound evolution of international competition. It marks a fundamental shift in China's economic development momentum from traditional

"demographic dividends" and "land dividends" to "innovation dividends," "talent dividends," and "data dividends." Therefore, vigorously developing New Quality Productive Forces, continuously enhancing innovation momentum, adhering to the integration of technology and industry, actively guiding local technology enterprises to cooperate with universities and research institutions, and striving to build a batch of high-tech, high-growth industrial projects to form high-quality industrial clusters, has become an inevitable requirement for promoting regional economies, especially county-level economies, to achieve leapfrog development. This theory provides not only guidance for macroeconomic development but also fundamental adherence and an action guide for micro-subjects, especially industrial innovation and kinetic energy conversion at the county level.

2.2 Core Requirements for County-Level Economic Development

As the basic unit of the national economy, the county-level economy is a critical link in organically combining new urbanization and comprehensive rural revitalization. Therefore, whether the county economy can successfully cultivate and embrace New Quality Productive Forces directly impacts the overall situation of national modernization. Facing universal challenges such as a monolithic industrial structure, weak risk resistance, and shortages of talent and innovation capacity, embracing New Quality Productive Forces implies that the county economy must break away from over-reliance on traditional factor inputs and shift towards innovation-driven development [Qian Jiarong, Zhao Zhijun&Mao Shiping, 2023]. This is specifically reflected in three levels:

(1) Structural "Novelty" (New Structure): This requires promoting industrial transformation towards high-end, intelligent, and green directions. It involves moving away from low-end dependency to climb the value chain, reshaping production modes with digital technology, and proactively cultivating strategic emerging industries to build a more resilient and competitive modern industrial system. This is not a simple industrial replacement but requires promoting the existing industrial system to the high end of the value chain. On this basis, counties must combine their own endowments to proactively cultivate emerging industries such as new energy, new materials, and biotechnology to accumulate momentum for long-term development.

(3) Allocative "Optimization" (Optimal Allocation): Traditional county economies often face the dilemma of a net outflow of advanced factors. New Quality Productive Forces require reversing this trend, promoting the agglomeration and efficient allocation of advanced factors such as data, technology, talents, and capital towards the county level [Su Tongmin&Dong Miao, 2025]. The core is to break down barriers to factor flow, and through optimized business environments and innovative mechanisms, achieve synergistic efficiency among factors, providing solid support for industrial upgrading and innovation drives. The optimized combination and efficient synergy of these four elements are the basic guarantee for the formation of New Quality Productive Forces in the county economy.

(3) Modal "Greenness" (Green Mode): This transcends the old concept of viewing environmental protection as an external cost, internalizing the concept that "lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets" as a fundamental rule of development. It requires integrating ecological civilization into the entire process of economic and social development. The core is to transform ecological advantages into economic advantages, strictly observe ecological red lines, develop ecological industries, build a green, low-carbon circular system, and achieve harmony between humanity and nature. In practice, this means strictly adhering to ecological protection red lines and making environmental capacity and resource carrying capacity prerequisites for industrial access.

Developing New Quality Productive Forces places higher demands on the county economy: not only to achieve economic growth but also to drive social progress, cultural prosperity, and ecological improvement, forming a comprehensive, coordinated, and sustainable development pattern. This precisely provides a broad space for the deep integration of Red Culture.

3 Value Implications of Red Culture as an Element of New Quality Productive Forces

Traditionally, culture is often viewed as soft power. However, from the perspective of New Quality Productive Forces, advanced culture represented by Red Culture can be transformed into "hard power" that promotes development, becoming an important component of New Quality Productive Forces. Its value implications are mainly reflected in three levels:

3.1 Spiritual Driving Force: Shaping Regional Innovation Culture

The core spirit contained in Red Culture—such as the "Two Bombs, One Satellite" spirit (the spirit of the atomic bomb, hydrogen bomb, and artificial satellite projects), hard work, selfless dedication, and the courage to scale heights—can provide powerful spiritual motivation and value guidance for county industrial development. This spiritual force is not an empty slogan but can be deeply internalized into regional entrepreneurship and craftsmanship, inspiring market entities to courageously overcome difficulties in technological innovation and market expansion. When this spiritual pursuit becomes a social consensus, it cultivates a unique regional innovation culture that advocates innovation, tolerates failure, and pursues excellence—precisely the most fertile soil for the germination and growth of New Quality Productive Forces. Specifically, the spirit of "self-reliance and hard work" nurtures the determination of enterprises to invest in core

technologies over the long term; the spirit of "vigorous coordination and courage to scale heights" promotes close cooperation among industry, academia, and research, forming a synergy to conquer key core technologies. This cultural atmosphere effectively reduces institutional transaction costs in innovation activities, such as trust and cooperation costs, accelerating the spillover and diffusion of knowledge and technology. More importantly, it attracts and retains high-quality talents who identify with these values, forming a virtuous cycle of talent and industry. Therefore, the spiritual driving force constitutes the "underlying operating system" of New Quality Productive Forces, providing the indispensable cultural environment and value support for the efficient operation of hardware elements like technology and capital.

3.2 Resource Integration Force: Constructing Characteristic Industrial Development Platforms

Red Culture resources themselves, such as revolutionary sites, memorial halls, and historical stories, are scarce and non-replicable strategic resources. Through systematic protection, development, and utilization, they can be integrated from scattered historical remnants into a comprehensive industrial platform combining education, tourism, cultural creativity, and study tours. This platform effectively attracts the agglomeration of key production factors—people, logistics, capital, and information—maximizing resource value. It is not only a physical carrier for industrial development but also a bridge connecting history with reality and culture with the economy, laying a solid foundation for building a distinct and competitive industrial system [Journal of Central Plains Culture Research, 2018]. This integration force is reflected in its powerful industrial "linking" and "catalytic" roles. Taking a core red site as an example, it is a tourist attraction, but its value extends far beyond that. It can extend into a study tour base, driving the education and training industry; its historical stories can serve as blueprints for films, animation, and games, spawning the digital content industry; its spiritual symbols can be designed into cultural creative products, driving creative design and manufacturing; and surrounding needs for catering, accommodation, and transportation activate modern service industries. In this way, Red Culture acts as an "industrial kernel," linking originally isolated industrial modules to form a mutually empowering and symbiotic industrial ecosystem, transforming static "stock" cultural resources into dynamic "incremental" economic value.

3.3 Brand Shaping Force: Enhancing Regional Industrial Competitiveness

Unique Red Culture is excellent material for shaping regional brand images and represents a valuable intangible asset. A resonant Red Culture brand significantly enhances the visibility and reputation of a county, increasing its appeal to talent, capital, and projects. The core of this brand shaping lies in authenticity and emotional resonance. Unlike commercial brands, Red Culture brands are rooted in real historical events and lofty spiritual pursuits, possessing natural credibility and appeal. When this brand value is attached to county products, consumers purchase not just the use-value of the commodity, but also a cultural identity and emotional sustenance [Li Xiaoyuan, 2022]. For instance, agricultural and livestock products from the birthplace of the "Two Bombs, One Satellite" spirit are naturally imbued with qualities of being "reliable, high-quality, and dedicated," thereby gaining a market premium. Similarly, a region with a glorious red history is more persuasive in attracting investment because it represents a stable, predictable social environment and a positive development atmosphere. Ultimately, brand shaping transforms the intangible assets of Red Culture into tangible market competitiveness and value-creation capabilities for regional industries.

4 The Internal Mechanism of Red Culture Empowering High-Quality Development of County Industries

Red Culture empowering high-quality development of county industries is not simply a case of "culture setting the stage and economy singing the opera," but a systematic engineering of deep integration and mutual promotion. Its internal mechanism can be summarized as a "Spirit—Resource—Industry" triple transformation path. These three layers interlock and progress, constituting a complete transformation chain of Red Culture from value form to economic form.

4.1 Internalization of Red Symbol Value and Transformation into Development Momentum

The core of this transformation lies in internalizing the abstract symbolic value of Red Culture into the common belief and conscious action of social members within the region—specifically entrepreneurs, researchers, and laborers—through systematic education and dissemination. This ultimately converges into a powerful momentum driving economic and social development. This process is not instantaneous; it requires building immersive educational scenarios, conducting normalized spiritual lectures, and integrating it into cadre training and national education systems. This transforms spirits like the "Two Bombs, One Satellite" spirit—"love the motherland, selfless dedication, self-reliance, hard work, vigorous collaboration, and courage to climb"—from historical narratives into value coordinates of contemporary society. When this spirit becomes the underlying color of regional culture, its economic effects emerge. It effectively reduces institutional transaction costs in social operations; for example, trust based on shared values simplifies business negotiations and fosters cooperation. More importantly, it shapes a unique regional innovation culture, motivating market entities to show greater resilience and determination in the face of technical bottlenecks and market risks, thereby directly transforming spiritual power into realistic productive forces of technological, managerial, and model innovation.

4.2 Materialization of Red Cultural Heritage and Transformation into Industrial Elements

If the internalization of spiritual value is "casting the soul," then the materialization of cultural resources is "strengthening the body." The key to this transformation lies in converting Red Culture resources from statically protected historical remnants into dynamic industrial elements that can directly enter production and consumption fields through creative transformation and innovative development. This requires breaking the singular, rigid cognition of red resources and re-examining and developing them with modern industrial thinking. For example, transforming revolutionary sites from simple visitation spots into comprehensive study bases integrating red education, national defense experience, outdoor expansion, and ecological sightseeing [Zhang Chaozhi, 2023]; converting historical stories from documentary materials into diversified cultural IPs like film works, animation, games, and digital collectibles; and designing spiritual symbols from abstract concepts into marketable cultural creative products, tourist merchandise, and brand logos. In this way, Red Culture resources are "materialized" into specific industrial elements such as tourism products, educational services, intellectual property, and brand assets. These elements not only create economic value themselves but also act as "adhesives" and "catalysts," integrating flows of people, goods, funds, and information, driving related industries like catering, accommodation, transportation, and retail, forming an industrial cluster centered on Red Culture.

4.3 Marketization of Red Cultural Products and Transformation towards Value Chain Escalation

After completing spiritual internalization and resource materialization, the final transformation lies in converting the immense intangible assets contained in Red Culture into perceivable market value and industrial competitiveness through systematic brand operation, thereby pushing the entire county industry to climb towards the high end of the value chain. The core of this transformation is "branding" and "marketization." A successful Red Culture brand provides value not only in visibility but in its unique credit endorsement and emotional resonance capabilities. It imbues county products and services with a quality association of being "reliable, superior, and noble," allowing them to stand out among homogeneous products and gain a brand premium [Guan Lixin, 2025]. For example, characteristic agricultural products from regions rich in red history gain consumer trust due to their profound cultural heritage. Simultaneously, a strong regional brand is a crucial tool for investment attraction, signaling a stable, orderly, and vibrant environment to the outside world. Ultimately, through brand empowerment, county industries can break away from low-level homogeneous competition, shifting from reliance on cost advantages to reliance on brand and value-creation advantages, achieving a fundamental shift from "selling products" to "selling brands" and "selling culture," thus completing the critical leap in the value chain.

5 Conclusion

In summary, New Quality Productive Forces provide the temporal context and theoretical framework for Red Culture to empower the county economy. By centering on technological innovation and redefining the connotation of economic growth, it elevates soft power elements like culture to the core level of productive forces, opening theoretical space for the value transformation of Red Culture. Concurrently, Red Culture provides the county economy with a unique spiritual core, resource endowment, and brand advantage for cultivating New Quality Productive Forces. These spiritual and material treasures, derived from local history, constitute the endogenous power for regional differentiated competition and represent core competitiveness that is difficult to replicate.

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