

# Discussion of the Difference Between China and the West and the Teaching of Foreign Martial Arts

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**Abstract**—With the rapid development of China and the increasing frequency of international exchanges, the global demand for Chinese culture is growing, and the enthusiasm for martial arts learning is also increasing rapidly. Through the practical experience of foreign martial arts teaching, combined with the combing of literature, this paper probes into the relationship between Chinese and Western differences and foreign martial arts teaching, and holds that it is of great significance to recognize the differences between China and the West in foreign martial arts teaching, which should focus on recognizing the differences in cognition and behavior between China and the West. Recognizing the differences provides the theoretical reference for teachers who teach the martial arts abroad, the compilation of foreign martial arts teaching materials, teachers' training and international martial arts development.

**Keywords**—differences between China and the West; martial arts teaching; foreign martial arts teaching

## I. INTRODUCTION

Under the influence of economic globalization, various cultures communicate, conflict, infiltrate and integrate with each other on a global scale. Since "popularizing martial arts actively and steadily to the world" was formulated by the National Martial Arts work Conference in 1982, and the first Martial Arts International Invitational Competition held in Xi'an in 1985, up to now, martial arts has become a global sport. More and more foreigners learn and practice martial arts through books, film makings and television production, stage performances, cultural activities, martial arts courses, lectures and so on. After over 30 years of international promotion, martial arts have laid a good mass foundation in foreign countries. [1] As of 2009, the number of foreign martial arts members has reached 139, and only Taichiquan is widely accepted in more than 150 countries in the world.

With the rapid development of China and the frequent development of international exchanges, the global demand for Chinese learning and the enthusiasm for Chinese culture are increasing rapidly. In order to enhance the soft power of Chinese culture and accelerate the Chinese people going out to the world, the Confucius Institute headquarters has promoted its national language experience from drawing lessons in France, Germany, Britain and the West. Since 2004, we have been exploring the establishment of a non-

profit educational institution, the Confucius Institute, aiming at teaching foreigners and spreading Chinese culture. Over the past decade or so, Confucius Institute has developed rapidly and has become a platform for people all over the world to understand Chinese culture and learn Chinese. Middling the bridge of foreign cultural exchanges and the sincere cooperation between Chinese and the world have been widely welcomed. With the joint efforts of Chinese and foreign parties, more than 1600 Confucius Institutes and Confucius classrooms have been established in 146 countries.

In this context, martial arts, as the carrier of Chinese culture, have strong vitality, and its "going global" strategy coincides with the purpose of Confucius Institute to share Chinese culture. As a course in Confucius Institute, martial arts can be said to be popular, that is to say, in line with the developmental needs of martial arts itself, Chinese culture affects the world and meets the needs of the world.

Today, martial arts have become one of the courses of Confucius Institute. For example, the Confucius Institute in Bergen, Norway, was formally established in Bergen on August 29, 2007 by the Universitetet I Bergen in Norway and the Beijing Sport University. Beijing Sport University gave their strong support and sent volunteers and public teachers. The college was officially launched in January 2008 and characterized by martial arts. There are martial arts routine, free combat, Taichiquan, Wing Tsun, Qigong and other courses. In addition to normal teaching and martial arts cultural activities, Bergen Confucius Institute has been successfully held "Bergen International In addition to Norway, martial arts summer camps" for 10 times since its establishment, which also enjoys a good reputation in neighboring countries.

But opportunities also pose challenges. For instance, through the interview with some martial arts teachers who work overseas in front-line teaching positions, it is found that martial arts teaching have encountered some problems. Some teachers think that Chinese and Western students are different. *The Art of War* says, "Know the enemy and know yourself, and you can fight a hundred battles with no danger of defeat." Teaching is not a war, but it is also important for educators to understand and master all aspects of students before teaching, compiling textbooks, developing syllabuses and planning.

## II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RECOGNIZING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHINA AND THE WEST TO THE TEACHING OF MARTIAL ARTS AS A FOREIGN COUNTRY

The representative experience differences can be screened out by literature review method, and the teachers with Chinese and foreign martial arts teaching experience can be interviewed. The questionnaire and expert interview questions were filled out by students from Confucius Institute in Bergen and University of Science and Technology Beijing. They also got interviewed by experts with many years of relevant experience. Analyzing the organized data from different angles and exploring the cognitive and behavioral differences between Chinese and western students in martial arts learning provide theoretical reference for overseas martial arts teaching, textbook compilation, teacher training and international martial arts development.

With the rapid development, more and more Confucius Institutes have martial arts courses and set up a special Chinese international martial arts teacher training center in Beijing Sport University. The overseas development of martial arts has brought great opportunities, but also encountered series of problems. From Guoqiang Long's research, [2] the number of participants in European martial arts competitions is declining.

Mr. Xianlin Ji said: "what exactly do I think of Eastern and Western culture? It seems complicated to think about, but actually very simple. I think the fundamental reason for the cultural differences between the East and the West lies in the way of thinking." So what is the thinking difference between Chinese and Western students in martial arts learning? Do teachers need to adopt different teaching methods? When writing martial arts textbooks, does the training of western martial arts teachers need to be different? There are cultural differences, cognitive differences and educational differences between China and the West. This paper studies and clarifies the cognitive and behavioral differences between Chinese and western students in martial arts learning, which may be caused by culture, nationality, customs and so on, then provides a reference for the overseas martial arts teaching and the compilation of foreign martial arts teaching materials and materials for teacher training, and ultimately help the development of international martial arts.

## III. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHINA AND THE WEST SHOULD FOCUS ON RECOGNIZING THE DIFFERENCES IN COGNITION AND BEHAVIOR BETWEEN CHINA AND THE WEST

### A. *The Difference Between Chinese and Western Cognition and Behavior*

#### 1) *Related concept definition*

The word cognitive (eognition) originates from the Latin *oc*, that is, *ito* (theaetionorafeulty of knownigorelamnig), which is one of the important fields of psychological research, is not only the process of acquiring knowledge, but also a part of psychological process. The behavior and ability of the brain reasonably identify things and acquire

knowledge about psychological activities, such as emotion, motivation, and will. [3]

In short, cognition is the acquisition and use of knowledge, a purposeful and controllable internal psychological process. It involves operations such as perception, type recognition, visual representation, attention, memory, knowledge structure, language, thinking, decision making, problem solving and so on. From "dream daydreaming" to abstract thinking to solve problems, it can be included. [4]

Jianshe Shi [5] summed up the cognitive differences between Chinese and Western people in at least two aspects: first of all, in the relationship between family and individual, Chinese thinkers can be summarized as "family standards", and western thinkers can sum up "individual-centered egocentrism" in their cognition. Secondly, among the interpersonal relationship, the understanding of Chinese culture can be summarized as "excellent, orderly and top-down". In an equal society, freedom has always been the goal the Westerners pursued.

Behavior refers to all purposeful activities of people. Xinling Wang [6] refers to the differences in worldview and values between China and the West and their behavioral performance, which refers to the different worldviews and values between China and the West. There are significant differences in the behavior patterns among the three "family concepts", "time concepts" and "role culture".

#### 2) *Differences in cultural background*

According to the explanation in "Ci Hai", "in a broad sense, culture refers to the sum of material wealth and spiritual wealth created in the historical practice of human society. In a narrow sense, it refers to the ideology of society and the compatible institutions and organizations." [7]

From Tong Shao's [8] opinion, China and the West have formed the values of different civilizations of "harmony between man and nature" and "separation of people" on the basis of difference between farming and marine civilization. The philosophy of oriental people is "the unity of nature and man" which pays attention to people's worship of the universe and strictly abides by the laws of nature. It is believed that people's lives should be arranged according to the natural gas conditions of reciprocating circulation so that they can live in harmony with nature. Western philosophy advocates the separation of characters. Since ancient times, western philosophers have looked at the universe from the point of view of opposition, and believed that matter and spirit, man and nature, society and nature are essentially separated, but man can transform and dominate nature.

In the social and historical process of feudal China, Chinese people have always taken the way of self-esteem as the way of life. People wait for things to pick up people, speak and behave humbly, and oppose overexposure and expression. Therefore, Chinese culture reflects a large number of characteristics. At least during the Renaissance, western values gradually formed and shaped, of which humanism is the guiding ideology and individualism is promoted and self-development is emphasized. Therefore,

Western civilization reflects the characteristics of individual culture. [9]

Lijuan Zhu and Zhongli Hu [10] mentioned in the study: "individualistic values believe that: first, individual is the end, and the value is the human experience. All the values are people-oriented, having the highest value. Second, against authoritarianism and individual dictatorship, all people are equal. Third, there are first individuals then groups. While collectivism values, on the other hand, hold that: one, collective value of human beings is the highest value of society, and the value is the experience and creation of human beings. Two, the individual interest is bound by the collective interest, and the individual is a member of the collective. Three, there is first a group then an individual.

In a word, based on agricultural culture and marine culture, the Chinese and Western cultural traditions make considerable cultural differences between Chinese and Western cultures in terms of values, mode of thinking, way of life and code of conduct.

### 3) Differences in thinking mode

A series of experiments carried out by Richard Nisbitt, a famous American sociologist, in the Map of thinking showed that the differences in thinking patterns between the East (mainly in Chinese, Japanese and Korean) and the West are mainly manifested in the following two remarkable characteristics: the first is the individual and the whole. The second is the difference between the East and the West in dialectics. Those who inherit this way of thinking think that the problem is right or wrong has no intermediate form. Chinese are influenced by the mean and often think that everything is a unified contradiction, so the perception of things usually has the right intermediate value. Even oriental people think that logical form is useless solving questions. In fact, those who focus too much on logic will be seen as too naive.

As far as the understanding of the world, Chinese think that everything in the world is interrelated, that the relationship between them is quite complex, and that the universe is an inseparable whole.[12] Westerners believe that the world is made up of many individuals. [13]

These are two basic differences. The way of Chinese thinking is to reorganize, emphasize the whole, emphasize significance and classify the relationship. Attention is paid to the dialectical thinking. The thinking mode of Westerners represented by the United States is to analyze, emphasize the personality, emphasize the physical objects, and classify them according to the actual category. Focus on formal logic, etc. [14], [15], [16], [17].

Shuoneng Lian[18] classifies Chinese and western thinking as follows: one, cognitive to theoretical; two, integrity to analysis; three, fuzziness to accuracy; four, intuition to logic; five, introverted to extroverted; six, intentionality to object; seven, inductive to deductive; eight, inductive to deductive; nine, intentionality to positivity; ten, feedback to transcendence. First, cognitive to theoretical; second, integrity to analysis; third, fuzziness to accuracy;

fourth, intuition to logic; fifth, introversion to extroversion; sixth, intentionality to object;

In a word, the differences between Chinese and Western thinking modes are mainly reflected in: the image thinking and abstract thinking, comprehensive thinking and analytical thinking, circular thinking and linear thinking are different. The Chinese prefer the former while the West prefer latter.

### 4) Differences in educational ideas

The difference between Chinese and Western education is an indisputable fact. In study, Meijun Wang discussed that China's preliminary understanding of "education" is "discipline", which is based on the hypothesis of "human nature". [19] In other words, the educator in mind is not worthy of respect and trust. The preliminary understanding of the educational significance of western countries is "guidance", the purpose of which is based on the assumption of "good human nature". In other words, educators should be respected and trusted.

China and the West see education as "the influence" and "guidance". "The goal of education is to establish social standard and individual standard", "students' point of view-passive recipient and active learner", "teacher view-authority and equality", "teaching view-unity and pluralism".

Hui Guo [20] pointed out that "The values of Chinese and Western educational content affect the evolution of sports." The content of Chinese traditional education focuses on morality, while the content of western traditional education emphasizes on the knowledge of skills, the content of Chinese emphasizes the unity of groups, while the content of western emphasizes personality and independence, the content of Chinese emphasizes the unity of groups, while the content of western emphasizes personality and independence, the content of Chinese emphasizes the unity of groups, while the content of western traditional education emphasizes personality and independence, the content of Chinese traditional education pays attention to spirit and harmony, while the content of western traditional education emphasizes body and competition, and the teaching mode of Chinese traditional education emphasizes indoctrination, experience, synthesis and cognition.

Xueli Mao [21] discussed the differences of Chinese and western education, family education and social education in the paper. In the aspect of school education, the western schools pay more attention to the development of the imagination and innovation ability of children, while China attaches great importance to the cultivation of the basic knowledge. In the stage of higher education, in China higher education is a centralized management system. Western universities have a high degree of autonomy, and schools have full autonomy in the development of regulations and the recruitment of students.

In family education, Chinese parents are more concerned about the study of children's growth than the child's independent viability and social adaptability while western parents usually think that a child is the first independent individual.

In social education, in China, family background and experience have a great impact on a person's development. If you don't have a hard family background and no corresponding work experience, it's hard to find a good job. In China, few people can take the supervision of young people as their own responsibility, many people hold the view that "Do your own business and don't involve in others." This attitude ignores the inappropriate behavior of some teenagers, some of whom sell them unhealthy publications, books, etc. The family background and experience of western society are very weak. They refused to sell tobacco and alcohol and other commodities to minors, once finding out that they were young, the inappropriate behavior of teenagers will stop in time.

In a word, the differences between Chinese and western education are mainly reflected in the relationship between teachers and students, educational content, teaching methods, educational effect and educational purpose. From the educational model, Chinese educational model is strictly indoctrinated and emphasizes the inheritance of knowledge. The western education model is restarted, and the innovation and development of knowledge and skills is a kind of creative education. Different educational ideas lead to different ways of learning.

#### *B. The Difference Between Chinese Martial Arts and Western Sports*

Chinese martial arts are not only a sport, but also a culture. Chinese culture pays attention to the harmonious coexistence of man and nature and the nationality of individual cultivation. Western countries advocate personality, take risks and pursue self-challenge.

Liping Zhang [22] pointed out in the article Olympic Games and Chinese Martial that the Olympic Movement and Chinese Martial Arts are outstanding representatives of Chinese and Western sports culture. They have many differences in the birth, values and expression of culture.

"From the point of view of spiritual culture, the difference between Chinese martial arts and western sports [23]" concludes that Chinese martial arts pay attention to "entertainment" while western sports pay attention to "entertaining others" in competitions; the elastic "introversion" of Chinese martial arts and the "introduction" of western sports rigidity; the "balance" of Chinese martial arts has always been the "fusion" of western sports; the "sensitivity" of Chinese martial arts technology and the "rationality" of western sports technology.

Jialing Cao [24] compares the differences between Chinese martial arts and western sports aesthetics, and draws the conclusion that the different manifestations of martial arts and western sports can be summarized as the difference between internal accomplishment and external self-expression.

Yongsheng Zhou [25] pointed out that in the context of different civilizations and cultures, the combination of Chinese traditional martial arts and classical philosophy is very close. The development of western sports is more

focused on its external form, such as strong and body-building rather than in philosophy.

"Analysis and Comparison of Chinese martial arts and Western Sports from the Physical Angle"[26] thinks that different body cognition can make the difference between the form of physical culture, mode of thinking and value of the Chinese and western sports. The difference of body view can affect the performance of the body. The Chinese martial arts tend to exercise restraint, and the western sports are more widely known. The traditional martial arts practice emphasizing the unity of the whole, and the western sports training pays attention to the refinement and integration. The Chinese martial arts reflect the writing, and the western sports performance is realistic. The Chinese martial arts emphasize the "self-oriented" and the western sports emphasize the "others-oriented". It is found Chinese martial arts and western sports at the physical level of the performance difference between the two that is the most urgent and fundamental exploration.

On the difference between Chinese and western martial arts, Jianwei Li [27] in Chinese martial arts and western battles shows the difference between Chinese martial arts and western combat techniques lies in the differences between Chinese and Western cultures. Western culture advocates institutionalization, management, digitization and quantification, while Chinese culture respects humanization and appropriateness, govern by nothing and everything being people-oriented. Western martial arts emphasize breaking through the limit and achieving remarkable results with greater load exercise. Chinese martial arts emphasize the concept of gradual and gradual training, all of which follow nature and the people-oriented.

In a word, there are significant differences in game rules, external forms, internal beliefs and spiritual expressions between western sports and martial arts. Here fully reflects the practicability of martial arts and the expressive force of sports.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Confucius said, "Teaching students according to their aptitude." Understanding the differences between Chinese and Western students in martial arts learning can be more symptomatic and more reasonable to formulate teaching materials, and scientifically train foreign martial arts teachers and solve the major problems of martial arts international promotion. Among the search engines of academic journals such as CNKI, there are still few studies on the differences between Chinese and Western students in martial arts learning or teacher teaching. Therefore, it is particularly necessary and urgent to study the differences between Chinese and western students in martial arts learning.

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