

From Martial Arts to Wushu, The Dynamic Formulation of a Physical Education Related Concept

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Abstract. Chinese martial arts, Wushu or Kungfu are usually used to describe Chinese fighting skills, however, it does not accurate. Based on the confusion of those conceptions, the purpose of this study is illustrating the dynamic procession of the shift from martial arts to Wushu, analysis its history, problems and give relative advice to its future. The research show :1) As an ancient and mysterious oriental combat skills, Chinese Wushu has a long history, colossal range of fields and profound culture roots. 2) As a substitution term of Chinese martial arts, Wushu is more accurately, more in step with international practice and help the improve the culture confidence of Chinese. 3)there is a contradiction between traditional martial arts and contemporary Wushu. For example, the function of contemporary wushu is much simple than traditional martial arts. Besides, there is a split between practice and use in contemporary wushu which isn't exist in traditional martial arts. In conclusion, the instead of wushu to martial arts was a process of dynamic formulation of a physical education related concept.

Keywords: Martial Arts ; Wushu ; Kungfu ; Chinese.

1. Introduction

When talk about the symbol of China,you may refer a lot of items such as panda,Peking opera,Chinese characters and so on. However, whether you admit or not ,Chinese martial arts would be among them. According to a survey conducted by China Travel Page.com, Chinese martial arts raking first on the list of top 10 cultural symbols of China.[1]To the foreigners ,although Chinese martial arts are popular, they always confused by the relate conceptions.For example, what is the concept of Chinese martial arts, wushu ,Taichi, and kungfu ? And what is the relationship between those concepts? It seems familiar but quite difference . the main purpose of this research are 1)give a brief introduction about Chinese martial arts.2)retrospect the development of the conception of Chinese martial arts.3)discus the contradiction between traditional martial arts and contemporary Chinese kungfu. 4)confirm the reasonable of wushu as new concept of Chinese fighting skills.

2. Chinese Martial Arts,an Ancient and Mysterious Oriental Combat Skills

As one of the numerous combat skills,Chinese martial arts has its unique culture. Firstly ,Chinese martial arts or Chinese kungfu have a long history. Despite of some western combat skills like boxing , wresting , fencing have a long history, But none of them are as ancient as Chinese martial arts. Due to the Chinese martial arts are source in the Chinese original daily life , so Chinese martial arts are as long as Chinese history . According to a research by William G. Boltz , the earliest known written records of the history of China date from as early as 1250 BC, from the Shang dynasty,[2] it means that Chinese martial arts are birth around 1250 BC . Secondly , there is a colossal range of fields about Chinese martial arts. Numerous schools , families , styles or sects have been created during the past thousands years . Base on technological difference , Chinese martial arts can be split into various categories to differentiate them: For example, external and internal.[3] While external master concentrate on the power and speed , the internal practitioner pay more attention to theirs mind and soul .From the study of geology , it also divided into two schools , as in northern and southern as well, referring to what part of China the styles originated from, separated by the Yangtze River; Chinese martial arts may even be classified according to their province or city. [4] To northern residents , they prefer to use leg rather than arms in fight . Due to there is a huge plain in northern China and the common transportation to them was either ride horse or walk , as a result the northern martial arts are more like use kick with big movement ranges .On

the contrary , southern individuals are tend to use fist with a stationary lower limbs position . This may caused by the special public traffic in ancient . Thousands of rivers dotted in the southern lands , therefore , people need by boat when they go out . Consequently , it formed a unique southern martial arts like Wing Chun . Besides , from the horizon of folk and novel or films ,we can classify it in Shaolin , Wudang , Emei and so on . In addition , according to a survey which conducted during 80s last century ,there are 129 Chinese martial arts styles . [5] It is hardly to find anther martial arts which has rich styles as Chinese martial arts . Thirdly , Chinese martial arts have a strong connection to China culture or oriental philosophy . The main fields of Chinese traditional culture and philosophy are Confucianism and Taoism .According to the research by Pro. Qiao Fengjie , a famous scholar at Tsinghua University , Confucianism can make a huge contribute to Chinese martial arts . The effects of Confucianism to Wushu involve two aspects of the construction of consciousness in experience and appearance of spirit exceeding experience . In the field of experience construction ,Confucianism remarkably display in valuable ideas and behavioral standards .[6] It provide a a moral systems to Chinese martial arts . Taoism has been one of the most influential philosophies and religions during the past 2,500 years in China, and it affects every aspect of Chinese life .[7] The ideas of YIN , YANG , soft or nature directly effect the origin of internal martial arts style like Taichi .

3. Wushu ,a New Conception of Chinese Martial Arts

Although Chinese martial arts have a glorious history , immense contents and profound culture , some problems are inevitable . For instance , we always confuse by the concept of Chinese martial arts and Wushu or Chinese Kungfu . What is the difference among them ? Martial arts exist in every corner of world , but Chinese martial arts only origin in China ,and there is a big difference between Chinese martial arts and other martial arts . Actually, the term of martial arts are traced to European. It is from the Latin that we actually derive the English term “martial arts ”-from “arts of Mars”the Roman god of war .[8] So , it is quite inappropriate to continue use the term of Chinese martial arts . We need an alternative item . Kungfu is another term that use to describe Chinese martial arts which first used by Bruce Lee .“What is kungfu, Bruce? asks Martin to what Lee replies: “Well, kungfu is a Chinese form of combat. [Martial] arts like karate and jiu-jitsu derive from Kungfu.”[9] Despite Bruce Lee had learned some Chinese martial arts in his early ages , he absorbed splendid source from other martial arts . Bruce was constantly studying , analyzing and modifying all available relative information ; his principle source was his personal library which consisted of over 2,000 books dealing with all forms of physical conditioning , martial arts , fighting techniques , defenses and related subjects . [10] He also created his own martial arts , Jeet Kune Do which it quite different from Chinese martial arts . And Bruce lee also been considered as the frontier of MMA , so ,when people discuss kungfu ,they prefer argue something related fight or combat skills . However , Chinese martial arts if not only fight or combat skills , it also include some routine practice . According the the defined by Li Yindong , Chinese martial arts also called marital arts sports , it was a national folk fighting sports which based on Chinese traditional martial arts , the contents include routine practice , fight and other kinds of sports . [11] It is evident that there are more things besides fight skills in Chinese martial arts . As a result , Kungfu is not suitable to define Chinese martial arts .

Recently , a growing number of researchers prefer use Wushu to describe Chinese martial arts in their study . There two reasons : firstly ,the term wushu is easy than martial arts . secondly , the influence by the increasing comprehensive power of China . Wushu is the term which derive from the latinization of original Chinese charters “武术”,the Bopomofo of Chinese . It was developed in 1949 in an effort to standardize the practice of traditional Chinese martial arts . [12] There lots of name to address Chinese martial arts , however , since the established of People`s Republic of China , we describe it by Wushu .

The shift from Chinese martial arts to Wushu can bring huge benefits to itself . First and foremost , it provide an appropriate term to this conception . As discussed above , Wushu is a better

term compare with Chinese martial arts or Kungfu . Next , it is the international practice to name a sport from its original region language . For example , Judo or Karate are named from Japanese and Silat may named from Malaysian language . Last but not least , it can strengthening culture confidence of China . President Xi Jinping has called upon artists in the country to consolidate the confidence in Chinese culture , serve the people and create more inspiring and classical works to revive the nation . [13] Apparently , compare with martial arts Wushu can improve the pride and satisfaction of Chinese . All in all , the changes from marital arts to wushu is a smart selection of Chinese , it is the choose by history and people .

4. Contradiction ,the Split between Traditional Martial Arts and Contemporary Wushu

Although modern wushu origin from traditional martial arts ,there is a huge gap . Traditional martial arts is the root of sport wushu and has a long and diverse history. [14] Traditional Wushu have a comprehensive function ,for fight , health and culture . For instance , Taichi is a typical representative of traditional martial arts . Tai Ji Quan serves multiple functions , from the traditional practice of self-defense to its contemporary uses for promoting public health , enhancing quality of life, and facilitating cultural exchange .[15] However ,the function of contemporary wushu is much more simple . The main form of contemporary wushu is routine practice (also called Taolu) and fight practice (also called Sanda) . For routine practice , the main target is performance . Practitioner training for competition or health but not fight . For fight practice , individuals practice for improve their combat skills so that they can win in the competition or true fight , but not for health or performance . Despite of both routine practice and fight practice are belong wushu , it is difference. Individuals who choose routine practice can not fight , on the contrary , people who prefer fight practice can not performance . Specifically , there is a big contradictions between two forms of contemporary wushu . But it not exist in traditional martial arts. That meas there is a huge chasm between traditional martial arts and contemporary wushu . Two factors may owing to this phenomenon . Firstly , the requirements for Olympic Games . Learning from gymnastics , judge score via scientific methods . so , contemporary wushu routine emergence . Learning from boxing , contemporary wushu fight appearing . Secondly , the changes of lifestyle have wipe out the foundation of traditional martial arts .Due to the rapid lifestyle and huge pressure , modern individuals can not training as long time as ancients . so , wushu have to simplify to cater for the needs of contemporary society .

5. Conclusion

As it is discussed above, compare with traditional martial arts, contemporary wushu prefer to a typically sports rather a style of culture or philosophy .Wushu attract a plethora of teenagers interesting all over the world, however, contemporary wushu face lots of challenges. The critical problem was the confusion among range concepts like martial arts , kungfu, wushu and so on. In order to conquer it , we have to take a retrospect the development of wushu as well as evolution to its conception. In the viewpoint of a physical education related concept, wushu was more suitable to needs of modern definition of Chinese fight skills. Only in this way , can wushu be enrolled by Olympic Games and accepted by residents in western countries .

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