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THE STUDY ON THE SPREAD AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE WUSHU IN ASEAN COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

By field research, questionnaire, expert interview, mathematical statistics and logical analysis, this study on Philippine Wushu gymnasiums and schools reaches the following conclusions: Wushu gymnasiums and schools in the Philippines are small in scale, limited in number and only concentrated in the economically developed regions; Participation in Wushu competition and developing Wushu Duanwei system are effective management means for sustainable development of Chinese Wushu in the Philippines; the loose management, insufficient promotion and rare excellent coaches are the main obstacles to the spread of Wushu in the Philippines. Considering the above problems, the author provides the official promotion department of Chinese Wushu with several suggestions including: increasing the targeted studies on the overseas spread and promotion strategy of Chinese Wushu, developing a group of highly-skilled Wushu talents with international mindedness, reinforcing talent training for overseas gymnasiums and schools, developing the top-level design, strengthening friendly exchange, increasing resource sharing between gymnasiums and schools and widening promotion channels.

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INTRODUCTION

China and ASEAN countries are joined by common mountains and rivers and influenced by each other's culture. Since the establishment of China-ASEAN dialogue relations in 1991, the two sides have achieved fruitful results. (Liu Jun and Ke Yuping, 2016) In 2003, China-ASEAN relations were upgraded to strategic partnership ushering in a new era of bilateral cooperation. In October of 2013, Chinese government proposed the initiative of jointly building the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road with other key partners including ASEAN countries with cultural exchange and sharing as one of their cooperative themes. (Jin Rong, 2014) As one of the well-known cultural legacies of 5,000 years of Chinese history and culture, Wushu should show its own unique fascination under the background of the "Belt and Road Initiatives". In the year of 2014, the China-ASEAN Cultural Exchange Year was successfully held. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang fully affirmed that people of both sides have created rich and world-renowned civilizations as well as the unique regional multi-

cultures offering spiritual support and nutrition on the sustainable development of all partners. Culture builds a bridge for mutual communication, opens a window for mutual understanding, strengthens the ties of friendship between people of the two sides and plays a positive and irreplaceable role in the development of China-ASEAN relations. The Philippines is one of the ASEAN countries. Although Separated by sea, China and the Philippines are neighbours, partners and friends who are closely related and mutually dependent on each other. Since the times of Emperor Salтанah Sulu and Zheng He's voyages in the 14th century, the two sides had started friendly exchange. As the saying goes in China, the relation between two countries is based on the friendship between their people, thus the China-ASEAN mutual exchange between their people plays a positive role in developing their friendship. After entering the 21st century, three million Chinese Filipinos, accounting for two percentage of Philippine population, now is scattering all over the Philippines. As the tie of Sino - Philippine relations, Chinese Filipinos and oversea Chinese contribute greatly to the widely-spread of Chinese Wushu in the Philippines. As a way for health keeping, entertainment and competitions, the Chinese Wushu, has gained fruitful achievements and much popularity

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among Chinese Filipinos and oversea Chinese throughout the Philippines.

Study Object and Method

Study Object

Based on deep investigation and systematic analysis on some Wushu gymnasiums and schools in four major cities of the Philippines including the capital Manila, Cebu, Baguio and Cavite, this study explored the establishment process and current situation of Wushu and then analyzed the problems in its development (Situation & Policy Editors, 2014).

Study Method

Field Research

During the six years in the Philippines, the author has been working on Wushu teaching, thus several exchanges of teaching ideas were made at Wushu gymnasiums and schools in Manila, Cebu, Baguio and Cavite. After several field researches, a large amount of relative materials were collected including thousands of pictures, more than 100 hours of videos and about 50 hours of tape-scripts for interviews.

Questionnaire

The contents of the questionnaires mainly involved the basic information about trainees, coaches and heads at Wushu gymnasium and schools, such as nationality, gender, age, job, past experiences of participating in competition and years of learning Wushu, and also trainees' purposes of learning, their understanding about the Wushu categories and cultures, the recruitment scale and channels and structure of trainees (Meng Tao *et al.*, 2012). During the field researches, trainees, coaches and heads finished 150 questionnaires, of which 94 percent (141) were effective under the supervision of the author and the heads of the Wushu gymnasiums and schools.

Expert Interview

In this study, several detailed and unstructured interviews were made with coaches, heads and relative experts to know the real situation about teaching, operation, promotion and trainees recruitment of the involving Wushu gymnasium and schools.

Mathematical Statistics

Data processing and analysis of all effective questionnaires in this study were made by the statistical software of spss18.0.

Logical Analysis

The data of field researches and questionnaires are analyzed and reorganized by logical analysis.

Findings and Analysis

Basic Situation Analysis

Background and Recruitment of Trainees

Based on the data analysis of field researches and expert interviews, this study reaches the following conclusions: first,

up to now, Wushu gymnasiums and schools in the Philippines are still limited in number and only concentrated in the economically developed regions such as the capital Manila, Cebu, Baguio and Cavite; second, trainees' background and scale of recruitment of different gymnasiums and schools are quite different, for example, some schools have almost one or two hundred trainees, while only twenty or thirty trainees can be found in some small schools and gymnasiums; third, there are obviously different tuition payment methods, including the free tuition in Wushu Federation of the Philippines and membership fee in others often charged by year, quarter, month and class hour, among which the quarterly fee is most common. Based on the results of the mathematical statistics, this study has the following findings: male trainees comprising 65% of those investigated, are much more than female trainees accounting for only 35%; as for the age structure, 67% of trainees are teenagers and the rest are the middle-aged and the elderly; in terms of job, 61.7% of the trainees are students from primary school, middle school, senior high school, colleges and universities and the rest 38.3% of trainees are retirees, businessmen, employees, teachers, IT staff, a few religious persons, journalists and government officials. From the above data, the majority of trainees in Philippine Wushu gymnasiums and schools are school students, which shows the limitations of trainee structure and indicates the inadequate development of Wushu in the Philippines. As for the recruitment channels, this study finds that 35.52% of trainees are from the introduction of friends; 20.12% of trainees get to know Wushu through Philippine National Games; 18.83% of trainees become interested in Wushu through films and Kongfu shows; 15.73% of trainees are learning Wushu through on-the-spot teaching. This study shows that the spread and promotion means of Chinese Wushu in the Philippines, such as introduction of friends, shows, on-the-spot teaching, are still traditional. However, considering the fast development of information in the 21st century, the promotion, development and popularity of Wushu can't be achieved without modern media.

The Trainees' learning Purposes

The result of this study shows that the majority of Philippine trainees learn Chinese Wushu mainly for health and personal interest, and then for entertainment, which indicates while leaning Wushu, Philippine Wushu trainees also have some knowledge about its functions of health preservation, bodybuilding and entertainment. What's more, the study also finds that some of the middle-aged and elderly who have the experience of learning other Martial Arts, finally choose to learn Chinese Wushu such as TaiChi, TaiChi Fan and Sword. The reason is that as they become older, they find some of the Wushu exercises are no longer fit for them. This shows the unique advantages of Chinese Wushu such as various types and functions, suitable for different groups of people and long-time learning. Moreover, it is common to find in Wushu Federation of the Philippines, a large number of trainees learn Wushu not only for competitions but also to improve their understanding of Wushu culture and techniques. Wushu Federation of the Philippines is one of the sectors of Philippine Sports Commission, in which the trainees aims to participate in competitions and have already obtained good result both at home and abroad due to their persistent practice and solid Wushu techniques. According to the data collected from the involving trainees, the author finds: 89.81% of trainees want to know more about Chinese Wushu culture by learning Chinese

Wushu; 52.21% of trainees want to find the relations between Wushu and body health; 43.12% of trainees hope to learn the basic theoretical knowledge of Wushu; 40.23% of trainees expect to acquire the Wushu techniques for attacking; 30.53% of trainees wish to get familiar with historical figures, stories about Wushu as well as some modern Wushu stars. Intertwined with oriental civilization for five thousand years, Wushu, as a quintessence of China, has developed its unique and endless fascination. In conclusion, learners should try various ways to reach the highest level of Wushu learning-the union of the Wushu and human beings.

Source of Coach

The results of investigations show that coaches in Philippine gymnasiums and schools are mainly composed of Chinese, Chinese Filipinos, and a few native Filipinos. As for the Wushu Federation of the Philippines, coaches are mainly native Chinese, who are reemployed every two-years after strict assessment, which can ensure the leading Wushu techniques and training methods of the coaches, introduce the latest Wushu rules and finally provide trainees with necessary game information. Some of Wushu gymnasiums and schools introduced several Chinese volunteer teachers as coaches, for example, from 2011 to 2016, Confucius Institute at Angeles University Foundation employed three Chinese volunteer Wushu coaches successively. Most Wushu coaches are overseas Chinese and Chinese Filipinos who learned Wushu from childhood and have great passion and profound understanding for Chinese Wushu, which makes them good at communicating and introducing Chinese Wushu culture in English and in detail. Thus, overseas Chinese and Chinese Filipinos are playing an inestimable role in the spread of Wushu. A Few Filipinos also started learning Wushu from Chinese Wushu coaches from Childhood and have participated in several Chinese Wushu competition at home and abroad, through which they have developed excellent understanding for Chinese Wushu. Due to their efforts, Chinese Wushu finds its popularity in the Philippines and realizes the localization of coaches, which prepares the further development of Chinese Wushu in the Philippines.

Source of Head and Fund

Effective management and sufficient funds are the precondition of normal operation of Wushu gymnasiums and schools. The author finds that the management modes of Philippine Wushu gymnasiums and schools are similar, that is, coaches are also heads being responsible for trainees' recruitment and schools' operation (Zhang Qi, 2015). A few gymnasiums and schools have boards of directors, for example, Wushu Federation of the Philippines has the chairman of the board, vice chairman, secretary general and other heads. However, this management mode in which the coaches are the key heads has obvious limitations, thus, it is necessary for Wushu gymnasiums and schools to learn the management mode of modern enterprise to make themselves more vibrant and competitive. The study shows that most of the funds of Philippine Wushu gymnasiums and schools are mainly from the membership fees of trainees, but trainees in some Wushu gymnasiums and schools are free to learn, for example, funds of Wushu Federation of the Philippines are from government grants, donations of the board of directors and free sponsorship of friendly people.

Discussion on Relative Problems in the Spread and Development of Chinese Wushu in the Philippines

Overseas Chinese and Chinese Filipinos are the key players of the spread of Chinese Wushu; Chinese Wushu movies are the main Promotion Means

According to relevant documents, Chinese Filipinos started running Wushu gymnasiums and schools and recruiting students at the beginning of the 20th century with the aim of building body, improving Wushu techniques, and self-defending as well as protecting their legitimate rights and interests. At that time, the phenomenon of clique in some Wushu gymnasiums and schools in Manila brought certain negative impacts, for example, at that time some Chinese Filipinos refused to learn Wushu in gymnasiums and schools in old Chinatown-Wang Bin Street in Manila. Together with the negative influence from politics, economy and culture, it was impossible for Chinese Wushu to spread widely and develop well. In 1960s, the rise of Hongkong Wushu movies, especially the popularity of some famous Wushu stars such as Bruce Lee, started the new era of Philippine enthusiasm for Chinese Wushu. What's more, the good relations between China and the Philippines as well as the constant exchange between people in the two countries all contribute to the spread of Chinese Wushu during the era of Philippine president Marcos. In 1970s, under the policy of China's Reform and Opening-up, Wushu Administrative Center of China started promoting Wushu in other countries which also want to develop Wushu. At the same time, Wushu Federation of the Philippines was established. Moreover, the Reform and Opening-up policy made more and more Chinese people go abroad and settle down there. With superior geographical location and cultural environment, the Philippines is an ideal home for Chinese people. Therefore, People with Wushu skills also came to the Philippines and started teaching Wushu and found Wushu schools there, becoming a driving force for the spread and development of Chinese Wushu in the Philippines.

Through field researches and interviews, the study found that the heads of the Wushu gymnasiums and schools in the Philippines were divided into three categories including the Chinese Filipino (Coach), the Filipino (Coach), and the Board of Directors. The Chinese Filipino coaches in this study have lived in the Philippines for at least 20 years. They have adapted to the local living environment, which enables them to directly communicate with local Filipinos in their local languages, and communicate with people from other countries in English. In language respect, they have a unique advantage in the process of teaching, because they can clearly explain the Wushu connotation and movements. However, only very few of them have received Wushu training since childhood, and just a few of coaches will regularly go to Chinese professional Wushu schools for further training. Therefore, most Wushu coaches lack Wushu techniques and their understanding of Wushu culture is not comprehensive. Besides, they can't keep updated with the changing Wushu rules either. The second type of Wushu coaches are local apprentices from Chinese Wushu School in the Philippines, who begin teaching Chinese Wushu after gaining certain Wushu experience. The problem for them is the lack of knowledge of Chinese Wushu culture, therefore, in the teaching process, they only focus on Wushu movements, while the theoretical and cultural part are almost never involved. The third kind of coaches, all from mainland

China, are in charged by the board in the form of a two-year contract. They have solid Wushu professional skills and are familiar with the latest rules of Wushu competition and Wushu skills training methods, but as they are new to the Philippines, their understandings of the local cultural background are very little. Other problems include language communication. In the teaching process, it is difficult for them to explain the important and difficult points of Wushu techniques clearly. At present, regarding the spread of Chinese Wushu in the Philippines, talents with high cultural quality, excellent Wushu techniques and a full understanding of the Philippine customs are rare.

Participation in Wushu competition and developing Wushu Duanwei System are effective management means for sustainable development of Chinese Wushu in the Philippines

“Participate in Wushu competition” is the most important and effective management means of Wushu Federation of the Philippines. One of the main purposes of Wushu Federation of the Philippines is to train young people in the Philippines to participate in international, domestic and China’s Wushu competitions. The teaching content is mainly based on the competition project and the actual situation of the trainees and is finally decided by discussion between trainers and trainees. The study shows that most trainees choose to learn Sanda (free-sparring). The trainees are divided into different groups according to age, gender, to participate in international and domestic competitions. The Taolu (routines) teaching includes Changquan (Long boxing), Nanquan (Southern boxing), Taijiquan (Chinese shadow boxing), and spear techniques, cudgel techniques, broadsword techniques and so on. “Chinese Wushu Duanwei System”, is also known as the “Grading system” or “Ranking system”, which is the evaluation of the Wushu practitioners’ levels based on Wushu movements and combined actions. The Wushu gymnasiums and schools in the Philippines are relatively independent with little exchange in teaching. The examination contents are mainly decided by Wushu gymnasiums and schools. Most gymnasiums and schools use belt with color to grade the practitioners’ Wushu technique levels. For trainees, this is a means of encouragement by recognizing trainees’ past Wushu learning. It is also a way to encourage trainees to acquire new techniques and get belt of higher level. The research shows that the Wushu practitioners in the Philippines are mostly learning traditional Wushu, and only learn a little about Wushu competition, thus difficult movements or techniques are seldom practiced among trainees. Besides, Chinese Wushu Dunawei system although has been promoted and applied for over a decade, is barely recognized in the Philippines. The reason is that the coaches’ level of Wushu boxing and Wushu techniques have not yet reached the corresponding level. Besides, as Chinese Wushu Duanwei system updates fast, coaches also need some time to understand and master new knowledge. Therefore, Competitive Wushu and standard Wushu Duanwei system are rarely taught by the coaches.

Loose management, lack of promotion and excellent coaches are major obstacles to the development of Wushu in Wushu gymnasiums and schools

According to this study, Philippine Wushu gymnasiums and schools are mainly distributed in relatively large regions or cities. However, in terms of number, scale and their impacts,

there are still some gaps between Chinese Wushu gymnasiums and schools with those of taekwondo, karate and fencing. The main reason is that Chinese Wushu is still not included in the Olympic programme. Besides, the Philippine schools are unable to provide scholarships to Chinese Wushu students to enter universities or get even higher education. For example, in the annual sports competition of University Athletic Association Philippines, taekwondo, karate and fencing are all formal events, while Chinese Wushu has never been added to it. Due to different location and public recognition, Wushu gymnasiums and schools are much different. For example, in Manila some Wushu gymnasiums center offer specialized fitness services in which the trainees are mainly the middle-aged and the elderly; some Wushu gymnasiums mainly focus on Competitive Wushu and their trainees comprises students from university, secondary and primary schools. Others specialize in teaching traditional Wushu boxing. In general, the trainees includes both teenagers and adults whose age varies greatly. And most trainees are Filipinos, which shows that Chinese Wushu has gained some popularity among local people. As for the distribution of the Wushu gymnasiums and schools, they are relatively concentrated in some areas, but in different scales and without a unified management model. In addition, the Chinese Wushu gymnasiums and schools are relatively isolated to each other. Except the Wushu competition, few communication and exchanges are made among them, which is not good for common progress through mutual help.

By this research, the author found that the single promotion means in the Philippines is not conducive to the spread and development of Chinese Wushu. In the 1960s, due to the rise of Hong Kong films, Philippine people developed strong interest in Chinese Wushu through watching TV and films. While today, Chinese Wushu films are too illusional and rarely have English or Filipino dubbings, which undermines people’s interest in Chinese Wushu. Communicating with respondents, the author found the Chinese Wushu film stars like Chen Long, Jet Li, Vincent Zhao, Donnie Yen are very popular among Filipinos. However, in the information and network era, relying on Wushu films or Wushu stars to promote Chinese Wushu culture is far from enough. Only by keeping up with the trend of the time and using various information tools, can we push the spread of Chinese Wushu and national culture to a new height. The lack of excellent Overseas Chinese Wushu coaches has become one of the main factors restricting the development of Chinese Wushu. The Philippines belongs to the third world countries with relatively backward national economy. Although separated from China only by a stretch of water, its ability to attract talents is still not enough. The research found that only Wushu Federation of the Philippines, Confucius Institute, the Chang Kai Shek College and several other gymnasiums and schools in the Philippines regularly hire professional Wushu coaches from China. The Wushu coaches of other gymnasiums and schools are composed of Chinese Filipinos and native Filipinos. On the one hand, language barriers make it difficult for professional Chinese Wushu coaches to better explain Wushu techniques. On the other hand, although with language advantages, the Chinese Filipinos and native Filipinos coaches lack professional Wushu training, which also sets an obstacle for the spread of Wushu and the promotion of Wushu culture in the process of teaching.

The Difficulties in the Spread and Development of Chinese Wushu in the Philippines

As the quintessence of Chinese culture, Chinese Wushu culture wins the love of the people and also has been widely spread and promoted all over the world. There are lots of Wushu enthusiasts in the Philippines. However, the development of Wushu still faces some constraints. First of all, Chinese Wushu gymnasiums and schools in the Philippines are small in scale, limited in number and only concentrated in the economically developed areas. In addition, the mode of promotion is traditional and single without making full use of "Internet" to popularize Chinese Wushu. Secondly, the Wushu coaches in the Philippines are mainly Chinese, Chinese Filipinos and some native Filipinos. The Chinese coaches can't communicate effectively with students because of language barrier, while Chinese Filipino coaches and native Filipino coaches lack the understanding of the Wushu culture. This is leading to a scarcity of qualified and excellent coaches and in a way makes Wushu lose its appeal and popularity. Thirdly, the teaching contents and management modes vary between Chinese Wushu gymnasiums and schools in the Philippines. Besides, there are little interactions between them. In technical level assessment, they each have their own grading systems. The Chinese officially-initiated Wushu Duanwei system hasn't been popularized. Lastly, the lack of top-level design and unified Wushu programmatic document are also major obstacles to the promotion of Chinese Wushu culture for gymnasiums and schools in the Philippines.

Prospects of Chinese Wushu in the Philippines

Greatly Popularizing the Wushu Duanwei System

Chinese Wushu promotion department should make an integrated and feasible overseas Wushu development plan by taking a wide variety of opinions and analyzing the actual circumstances and current development of Chinese Wushu comprehensively. In addition, it is also important to improve the Duanwei examination system and content, which should be timely updated in the Chinese Wushu official website and shared to major overseas Wushu management organizations. Moreover, as one of the participating countries of the Asian Games Wushu competition, the Philippines is supposed to contribute to the promotion of the Wushu Duanwei system and train professional Wushu talents complying with the current international demands.

Improving the Overall Quality of the Philippines' Chinese Wushu Coaches

As the origin of Wushu, China should bear the responsibility of training outstanding Wushu coaches, building Chinese Wushu talent training base and developing talents who are highly-qualified, internationally-minded and adaptable to the multicultural world and regularly sending these talents to overseas Wushu gymnasiums and schools. In addition, the Chinese Wushu management department should set up an international Wushu coaches training center in China, where some excellent coaches and students selected from the Philippines Wushu gymnasiums and schools can be trained. At the same time, regular Wushu training should also be provided in the Philippines and coaches, students and enthusiasts should be encouraged to actively participate in the training activities

so as to effectively improve their Wushu techniques and proficiency.

Strengthening Communication between Wushu Gymnasiums and Schools

Today, with the rapid development of modern science and technology, the distance between people greatly shortened. As the international exchanges have become more frequent and convenient, the whole world has narrowed into a small "village"—"the Global Village". Wushu gymnasiums and schools in the Philippines are relatively independent, so the boxing types, routines teaching and also management modes vary between them. In line with the current trend, the Philippine Wushu gymnasiums and schools should strengthen the link between them, share teachers and teaching resources and increase exchanges between them. Besides, Wushu competition should be regularly hosted between these gymnasiums and schools so that Wushu enthusiasts can learn from each other and improve themselves through these activities.

Improving the Top-Level Design, Strengthening Wushu Promotion and Broadening the Channels of Promotion

Wushu top-level design is both China and the world' highest-level, the most instructive and comprehensive new strategic concept. The existing Wushu's top-level design mainly focuses on the five-year plan for the development of Chinese Wushu (2016-2020), taking the opportunity of "Belt and Road Initiative". The Wushu top-level design needs to be further improved by strengthening international exchanges and cooperation, adequately functioning of Chinese governmental organizations in foreign countries and striving to add competitive Wushu into the Olympic programme. In addition, it is also important to increase the promotion and publicity of Wushu and enhance the connotation of Wushu to meet the diversified needs of enthusiasts. Other strategies include: accelerating the construction of Wushu information network by integrating the whole Philippine Wushu websites, reinforcing the pooling of network resources and building a comprehensive Wushu network, increasing collaboration with Philippine Televisions, video sites and other mainstream media and increasing the popularity of Wushu and the participation of enthusiasts through Wushu stars, Wushu culture tour and Wushu competitions.

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