

Chinese Wushu Going Global

Chinese Wushu has gone through three stages since the 1950s:

I. Closing stage: from the 1950s to 1960s. During this period, the Chinese Wushu circle had no connection with the international fight circle. A few Wushu delegations gave performances abroad accompanying the country's leaders.

In 1960, the China Youth Wushu Team along with the China sports delegation attended the second annual Czechoslovakia National Games Friendship evening party performance, opening the prelude to the foreign exchange of Wushu. In the same year, the Chinese Wushu team, along with a delegation to visit to Myanmar led by Zhou Enlai, went to Myanmar to perform, and won a warm welcome from the Myanmar people.

II. Demonstration stage: from the mid-1970s to mid-1980s. The Chinese Wushu circle gave public shows to various countries in the world, allowing foreigners to learn the charming nature of Chinese Wushu from the aspects of Kungfu or dancing.

In June 1974, Chinese Wushu team delegation was invited to visit Mexico and the United States. U.S. President Richard Nixon met with all the delegation members and watched a Wushu performance in front of the White House, drawing huge international attention.

In June 1974, the Japanese shadow-boxing delegation visited China. In September, the Chinese Youth Wushu delegation visited Japan.

Starting in 1982, at the invitation of some countries and regions, the Chinese Wushu Association constantly sent its best martial arts athletes and coaches to Mexico, Canada,



the US, the United Kingdom, Singapore, Australia, Italy, Thailand, Hong Kong, Macao and other countries and regions for assistance in teaching, fostering a large number of martial arts backbones for them.

III. Combat exercise stage: from the mid-1980s. The foreign fight circle began assigning Chinese Wushu masters to attend international knockout tournaments or match plays. Chinese Kungfu masters are always challenged by foreign boxers when they visit abroad.

In March 1987, the first China-Japan Shadow-boxing Competition Exchange Conference was held in Beijing.

Starting from the 1990s, international Wushu competitions became increasingly frequent, greatly promoting the wushu exchange and dissemination around the world.

According to statistics, Chinese Wushu practitioners are always challenged by Japanese judoists or karate masters the most, followed by American boxers. The Japanese challenge Chinese Kungfu the most.

China and Japan are neighboring countries separated by a narrow strip of water, and both countries have made cultural exchanges for nearly a thousand years. Japan's judo and karate were deeply affected by Chinese Wushu and have earned a high reputation in the international fight circle. In addition, Shaolinqun and Taijiqun are also very popular in Japan. Japanese people are known for their strong character and being good at studying and learning from others' strong points to offset their weaknesses. Many Japanese come to China to learn Wushu. In addition, they have made many videos of masters performing different forms of Wushu, and have translated and published many books on Chinese Wushu. By studying the Quanshu (Chinese boxing schools) of Chinese Wushu, some Japanese





Photo of Putin visting Shaolin Temple, accompanied by Abbot Shi Yongxin

On Mar. 22, 2006, Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Shaolin Temple and exchanged experiences in martial arts with monks. It is well known that Putin is a black-belt judo expert.

boxers have greatly improved their skills. Some Tai Chi masters can even compete against some famous Chinese Tai Chi players. Therefore, Japanese people are the most threatening challengers to Chinese Wushu. For the past few years, Japanese teams have challenged Chinese Wushu many times but were defeated.

Muay Thai is famous for violent forms and Muay Thai masters possess a strong anti-beaten capacity. It is said that Bruce Lee, one of seven combat masters globally, had not participated in much professional combat with Muay Thai masters. Thailand has sent Muay Thai teams to China





Taiji Quan experts from 15 countries performing Taiji Quan in Xingtai

On Nov. 3, 2006, Dong Zengchen, grandson of Dong Yingjie, Chinese Taiji Quan expert, held a martial arts exchange with more than 60 foreign and Chinese apprentices in Xingtai of Hebei province in memory of the 108th anniversary of Dong Yingjie's birth. Dong Zengchen's apprentices were from 15 countries and regions including the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada.



twice, but both events have ended in failure for them. In August 2003, the Chinese team went to Thailand and defeated the Thailand team in Bangkok.

The Western boxer is noted for their strength. To date, there are no historical records on the early combat between the Chinese Wushu master and the world boxing champion. But according to some, Chinese Wushu and Western boxing have no apparent disadvantages in the fist position, so it is difficult to say which is better. In the past, when fighting the Western boxer, the Chinese Wushu master often tried to avoid the punch and moved with the opponent using flexible footwork. After outdoing the opponent's footwork, the Chinese Wushu master attacks and finally defeats the opponent using Wushu techniques. But, it is suggested if the two only combat fist strength, the Western boxer may win.

Combat is an international sport. Apart from Japan, Thailand, South Korea, many countries have their own combating techniques. For example, many countries including France, Greece, Russia, Brazil and India are famous for their combating techniques. Particularly, French leg attack techniques and Indian attack techniques have become world-famous.

In recent years, the Occident combat circles have innovatively combined Judo, Karate, Taekwondo, Muay Thai and Western boxing techniques, and this has enabled them to display enormous strength in actual combat.

Since Chinese Wushu is quickly going global, the exchanges between China and foreign countries in Wushu have greatly increased. More foreigners have come to China to learn Wushu. At the same time, some masters in Wushu have immigrated to foreign countries and taught Chinese Wushu to foreign students. The styles, skills and



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Qi promoting methods have been completely exposed. Honor is simply a record of the past, not of today, nor the future. In order to brave the third challenge, Chinese Wushu circles have made many preparations.

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