

NEW EXPLORATION ON THE PHILOSOPHICAL EXAMINATION OF CHINESE SPORTSMANSHIP



Peng Jia

School of Physical Education, Jiangxi Normal University, Nanchang, 330022 - China.

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4999-415X> |  jiapeng@jxnu.edu.cn

Xinqi He

School of Physical Education, Jiangxi Normal University, Nanchang, 330022 - China.

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1616-7941> |  13507096169@163.com

JIA, Peng; HE, Xinqi. New exploration on the philosophical examination of Chinese sportsmanship. *Trans/Form/Ação: Unesp journal of philosophy*, Marília, v. 47, n. 5, "Eastern thought 2", e02400156, 2024.

Abstract: Chinese sportsmanship is the essence of Chinese sports and national spirit, and the soul and essence of Chinese sports. In reality, people understand the sportsmanship as a form of exercise that is detached from the spiritual level, neglecting the spiritual value comparable to physical exercise, concealing its deep spiritual connotations and placing the spirit of sports in a corner, away from the "bravery of the soul and the vitality of the body" of sports. The philosophical foundation and historical development of Chinese sports spirit have been explored and examined, aiming to understand the profound connotation and value of Chinese sports spirit. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the spirit of Chinese sports has played a special leading role in China, and has been widely recognized and affirmed by the Party Central Committee and various social classes. However, people's understanding of it is not deep enough and is only in the preliminary research stage. In order to adapt to various needs, the in-depth exploration of the philosophical examination of Chinese sportsmanship has significant theoretical value and practical significance. The Chinese sports spirit is not only about physical exercise, but also emphasizes physical and mental harmony, both internal and external cultivation, and the pursuit of a state of physical and mental pleasure and comfort. The Chinese sports spirit is in line with traditional Chinese philosophical thoughts, such as "harmony between heaven and man" and social harmony.


Keywords: Chinese Sportsmanship. Philosophical Examination of Thought. Confucianism. Taoism.

JIA, Peng; HE, Xinqi. Nueva exploración sobre el examen filosófico de la deportividad china. *Trans/form/ação: revista de filosofia da Unesp*, Marília, v. 47, n. 5, "Eastern thought 2", e02400156, 2024.

Resumen: La deportividad china es la esencia de los deportes chinos y el espíritu nacional, y el alma y la esencia de los deportes chinos. En realidad, la gente entiende la deportividad como una forma de ejercicio desligada del nivel espiritual, descuidando el valor espiritual equiparable al ejercicio físico, ocultando sus profundas connotaciones espirituales y arrinconando el espíritu deportivo, lejos de la "valentía" del alma y la vitalidad del cuerpo" de los deportes. Se han explorado y examinado los fundamentos filosóficos y el desarrollo histórico de la deportividad china, con el objetivo de comprender la profunda connotación y el valor de la deportividad china. Desde la fundación de la República Popular China, el espíritu de los deportes chinos ha desempeñado un papel de liderazgo especial en China y ha sido ampliamente reconocido y afirmado por el Comité Central del Partido y diversas clases sociales. Sin embargo, la comprensión de la gente al respecto no es lo suficientemente profunda y se encuentra sólo en la etapa de investigación preliminar. Para adaptarse a diversas necesidades, la exploración en profundidad del examen filosófico de la deportividad china tiene un valor teórico y una importancia práctica significativos. La deportividad china no se trata sólo de ejercicio físico, sino que también enfatiza la armonía física y mental, el cultivo tanto interno como externo, y la búsqueda de un estado de placer y comodidad físico y mental. La deportividad china está en consonancia con los pensamientos filosóficos tradicionales chinos como la "armonía entre el cielo y el hombre" y la armonía social.

Palabras clave: Deportividad china. Examen filosófico del pensamiento. Confucianismo. Taoísmo.

Received: 07/09/2023 | Approved: 14/11/2023 | Published: 18/04/2024

 <https://doi.org/10.1590/0101-3173.2024.v47.n5.e02400156>



This is an article published in open access under a Creative Commons license.

NEW EXPLORATION ON THE PHILOSOPHICAL EXAMINATION OF CHINESE SPORTSMANSHIP

*Peng Jia*¹

*Xinqi He*²

Abstract: Chinese sportsmanship is the essence of Chinese sports and national spirit, and the soul and essence of Chinese sports. In reality, people understand the sportsmanship as a form of exercise that is detached from the spiritual level, neglecting the spiritual value comparable to physical exercise, concealing its deep spiritual connotations and placing the spirit of sports in a corner, away from the “bravery of the soul and the vitality of the body” of sports. The philosophical foundation and historical development of Chinese sports spirit have been explored and examined, aiming to understand the profound connotation and value of Chinese sports spirit. Since the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the spirit of Chinese sports has played a special leading role in China, and has been widely recognized and affirmed by the Party Central Committee and various social classes. However, people’s understanding of it is not deep enough and is only in the preliminary research stage. In order to adapt to various needs, the in-depth exploration of the philosophical examination of Chinese sportsmanship has significant theoretical value and practical significance. The Chinese sports spirit is not only about physical exercise, but also emphasizes physical and mental harmony, both internal and external cultivation, and the pursuit of a state of physical and mental pleasure and comfort. The Chinese sports spirit is in line with traditional Chinese philosophical thoughts, such as “harmony between heaven and man” and social harmony.

Keywords: Chinese Sportsmanship. Philosophical Examination of Thought. Confucianism. Taoism.

INTRODUCTION

China’s philosophical ideology has a long history and has formed a variety of philosophical thoughts throughout its long history, with a hundred schools of thought competing and a hundred flowers blooming. Chinese philosophy has the characteristics of “harmony between heaven and man” and social harmony. It values both internal and external cultivation, cultural and military skills, and physical and mental harmony. Therefore, the traditional Chinese sportsmanship is not just a simple pursuit of strength and speed, nor is it simply a pursuit of competition and victory. Instead, it is necessary to achieve harmony with inner experience through the movement of limbs, so that both body and mind are in a happy and comfortable state. This article attempts to explore the unique sportsmanship in China,

¹ School of Physical Education, Jiangxi Normal University, Nanchang, 330022 - China. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4999-415X>. E-mail: jiapeng@jxnu.edu.cn.

² School of Physical Education, Jiangxi Normal University, Nanchang, 330022 - China. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1616-7941>. E-mail: 13507096169@163.com.

streamline its development process and affirm its historical significance through the reflection of various academic perspectives.

Some institutions have put forward reasonable arguments, insisting that protecting sportsmanship requires strict measures for athletes to voluntarily agree to sports guidelines, and that correct sports should not deviate from the intended purpose of the exercise, nor should it cause or force athletes to suffer physical or mental pain (Geeraets, 2018, p. 255). Personnel, involved in sports events, would include prohibited drugs in the prohibited list, and the prohibited drugs must, at least, meet the following requirements: the substance has the potential to improve or enhance sports performance; it represents the actual or potential health risks to athletes; it goes against the sportsmanship. Athletes should preserve the sportsmanship conditions in a better way (Gordon; Connie, 2023, p. 63).

Modern sports are a form of competition among people, including both non-instrumented and instrumented sports. The modern athletes' moral issues are also related to harsh environments and economic reasons. The athletes' moral consciousness, attitude and sportsmanship have a significant impact on their psychological environment. In order to achieve a fair and just competition process, it is necessary to overcome unethical issues by emphasizing the restoration of ethics that are reasonably recognized in ideology and logic (Han, 2021, p. 119). With the holding of the Beijing Olympics, the importance of sports spirit, in society, is also constantly increasing, and the role of sportsmanship in people's ideology is becoming increasingly evident. The sportsmanship has been promoted to contemporary people (Zhu, 2022, p. 696). The sportsmanship includes positive mental states and qualities, such as diligence, progress, unity, cooperation, fair competition, patriotism and dedication. By integrating the sportsmanship into physical education, students can form a correct understanding of the sportsmanship, fully utilize the role of sports in shaping character, impart knowledge and cultivate skills (Lu, 2021, p. 20). The sportsmanship represents people's active awareness in sports and plays a positive role in the development of sports and competitive activities. It is the driving force for promoting the development of sports and the athletes' comprehensive development.

China's history tells people that the emergence and development of ancient sports far exceeded what people saw. Analyzing the emergence and characteristics of Chinese sports spirit must be based on a philosophical examination of thoughts. The sportsmanship is rooted in traditional Chinese culture, with the absorption of philosophical thoughts as its main content. At the same time, it is an innovative spirit created by introducing, digesting and absorbing philosophical examination thoughts. Therefore, it has its unique characteristics (Chen; Liu, 2022, p. 207). The sportsmanship has always been a highly anticipated, but controversial, topic. Therefore, studying the sportsmanship and philosophical examination of thoughts is of great significance. Through in-depth research on the historical development of

Chinese sports spirit, how its philosophical foundation is formed can be better understood. The impact of different historical periods and events on sports spirit, as well as how to draw philosophical elements from traditional Chinese culture, has been considered. The evolution of Chinese sports spirit in different social and political contexts, and how political and social changes affect the concept and values of sports spirit, has been considered, which helps to understand its philosophical background.

1 SPROUTING OF CHINESE SPORTSMANSHIP

1.1 FOUNDATION FOR THE FORMATION OF CHINESE SPORTSMANSHIP

(1) FUNDAMENTALS OF NATURAL ECONOMY

Marx once said that the geographical environment is not only the humans' inorganic body, but also the humans' natural existence (Liu, 2018, p. 1). It is a place for human growth and also a place for limiting human behavior. Therefore, every culture in the world would be deeply imprinted with the geographical environment. Chinese civilization originated in the Yellow River Basin and has distinct inland cultural characteristics, which is a culture with regional characteristics. Geographically speaking, China is located at the eastern end of the world's largest Eurasian continent, with the Huangyang Plateau to the west, the vast ocean to the east, endless deserts to the north, and a scorching sun to the south. China's environment is relatively closed, belonging to continental climate, with suitable temperature, flat terrain and fertile fields. It is like a huge geographical unit. The agricultural economy is the main focus, with agriculture, animal husbandry and fishery.

This characteristic not only has a direct impact on the Chinese nation's way of life, but also has a significant impact on national culture. Therefore, the ancient Chinese culture, rooted in individualism, with patriarchal families as the background, and Confucianism as the core, was formed. This culture cultivates the Chinese people's simple and natural national character, emphasizing morality and ethics (Sun, 2018, p. 186).

Under the influence of this culture, traditional Chinese sports attach great importance to sports ethics and social values. That is to say, fitness and wellness, with the ultimate goal of health and longevity, are emphasized. Spiritual emotions are placed first, which is the highest level of their spiritual form and thought. In terms of the relationship between humans and nature, there has gradually been a worship of nature and the concept of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature. For example, in traditional sports, it is emphasized that humans maintain balance with the outside world through breathing adjustment, which is a good example. The Chinese nation lives on the rich alluvial plain, and has been living a self-sufficient agricultural life for generations, without external needs. Therefore, their tribes rely on nature, but lack the desire to expand abroad. The spirit of

harmony determines that ancient Chinese traditional sports presented a different form and characteristic from the West. This cultural form also determines a series of spiritual and cultural characteristics of ancient Chinese sports, such as internal development as the core, pursuit of oneself, pursuit of harmony, constant self-improvement, no struggle and physical self-enjoyment.

Spiritual form is the product of human thinking and cultural activities, which reflects a society's mental outlook and way of thinking or of a culture. Thought refers to human cognition, belief, philosophical views and thoughts, which are manifested in the ability to think, understand, explain and evaluate the world.

Cultural productivity is used to describe the ability to generate, create and use social and cultural resources, including knowledge, skills, technology, education, cultural industries, media and other elements.

Sports soft power is a country's or society's ability to enhance its international image and influence through sports activities and sports culture, emphasizing the role of sports in international relations and cultural exchanges, including international sports competitions, Olympic sports and cultural exchanges.

(2) POLITICAL FOUNDATION

Although Marx's ideological system does not provide a specific discussion on sports, its guiding role in sports is self-evident. Firstly, Marx believed that human thought (which is a spiritual connotation) is a guide to human action. Therefore, behind any sports phenomenon or behavior, there is a certain spirit of sports, guiding it. Socialism emphasizes that material plays a decisive role in the spirit, and the spirit plays a counterproductive role in the material. Therefore, it can be seen that Marx's political ideology has a very significant impact on sports spirit. Secondly, in Marx's perspective, an important concept has emerged, which is cultural productivity. In his view, human consciousness is the driving force for the country and society's development at all levels, as well as the driving force for human progress, namely the "conscious productivity". Culture is a broad ideology that also plays a driving role. It divides social production into material and spiritual productions, while culture belongs to the spiritual realm. Therefore, culture can transform the concepts in the field of sports spirit into productive forces in material form, which is called "cultural productive forces".

The view of cultural productivity is the rudiment of the consciousness of sports competitions. To a certain extent, cultural productivity is also a kind of sports soft power. The proletariat's cultural consciousness and spiritual connotation have played a huge role in promoting China's cultural construction. The development of contemporary Chinese sportsmanship is an innovation carried out to meet the people's needs in the new era, based

on inheriting the achievements of excellent traditional sportsmanship. The latest swimming suits and running shoes that enhance the athlete's performance by milliseconds not only lead the audience of a sports event to believe in an athlete's physical superiority, but also the nation's research and technological superiority competing in the event.

1.2 VARIATIONS OF MODERN CHINESE SPORTSMANSHIP

In modern China's century long history, the Chinese people have suffered a lot, and China's sports industry has also struggled to develop in this turbulent situation. After the Opium War, under the oppression of "strong ships and cannons", the invasion of foreign powers and the corruption of the Qing court gradually reduced China to a semi-colonial and semifeudal society, and Chinese society also underwent tremendous changes. Since modern times, in order to save the country and realize national liberation, all walks of life in China have actively carried out activities, such as the "Westernization Movement", the "Reform Movement", the "Revolution of 1911" and the "May Fourth Movement". National consciousness has been surging in people's hearts. Chinese people are not willing to be eliminated. They place their hope on Western sports. Since the late Qing Dynasty, Western sports have been introduced and included as official courses, making them a natural means to enhance national consciousness and enhance national sentiment. In this way, ancient sports, which have been passed down for thousands of years, and modern sports, introduced from the West, intertwined and blended with each other in a war torn society, and, finally, modern sports became the mainstream. During this period, there has also been a great exchange and integration of sportsmanship between China and the West, which is reflected in the interpretation of the basic content of modern sportsmanship. Western culture emphasizes individualism, while China's sports spirit emphasizes collectivism. This cultural difference can be regarded as the opposite side of China's sports spirit with Western thoughts. However, the Western concept of individualism also has an influence on China sports, especially on some individual ones.

The cultural differences between China and Western countries are one of the fundamental reasons for the differences in sports spirit. China traditional culture emphasizes collectivism, family values and social harmony, while Western culture emphasizes individualism, independence, and freedom. This cultural difference is reflected in the spirit of sports. China's philosophical elements, such as Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, have a far-reaching influence on China's sports spirit, while Western philosophical views, such as enlightenment and individualism, are also reflected in the Western countries' sports spirit.

(1) CONFUCIAN RITES, MUSIC CULTURE AND SPORTSMANSHIP

In the world's understanding, Confucian etiquette and education have nothing to do with sports. There is a saying in "Shuowen" that "Confucianism is gentle", which means that the victory of Confucianism has never relied on external forces. As the inheritor of Zhou culture, Confucius' thoughts mainly focus on the inheritance of Zhou culture, emphasizing the exploration and improvement of human cognition and morality, while the improvement of physical fitness is rarely mentioned. The "cultural and martial doctrines" is an invention of Confucianism. "Culture" was originally King Wen of Zhou's posthumous title, Jichang, and "war" was originally King Wu of Zhou's posthumous title, Jifa. King Wen and King Wu have inherited each other in history, achieving great achievements in attacking King Zhou of Shang and establishing the Zhou Dynasty. Although Confucius praised the achievements of literature and martial arts, he made subtle differences in their behavior. Today, "culture" and "war" have been translated into two opposite meanings. "Culture" is a peaceful way, and "war" is a powerful way. The latter has evolved into an emphasis on the body and strength, which is the foundation of sports. Obviously, Confucius respected the side of "culture" more, believing that "war" lacked moral perfection compared to "culture". There are historical reasons for Confucius' reverence for "culture". In the late Spring and Autumn period, the etiquette and music collapsed, and the feudal lords fought for hegemony year after year, with frequent wars. Therefore, they all valued military force. Confucius' reverence for literature aimed to rectify the situation, save the etiquette and music civilization of the Zhou Dynasty, and eliminate the negative effects of war and military force.

The pre-Qin Confucianism, after Confucius, was represented by Mencius and Xun Zi, whose ideas had similarities and differences, and their understanding of Confucianism also differed. Xun Zi advocated knowledge and inherited Confucius' aspirations. Mencius' theory of benevolence was also inherited from Confucius, but it tended to be more centered on the heart. From the perspective of physical development, "inward" tends to focus on the cultivation of psychological qualities, while relatively neglecting the exercise of physical qualities. Seeking outward attention to practical behavior and ensuring physical fitness have promoted the development of sports. During Emperor Wu's reign, of the Han Dynasty, Confucianism became the most influential official doctrine of the dynasty and was held in high esteem by successive kings. Therefore, the views of Confucianism on sports have also influenced China's sports industry for over 2000 years.

Overall, the Confucian culture of etiquette and music is an important component of traditional Chinese sports spirit, which has specific methods and contents in terms of "education", such as archery and driving skills in the "Six Arts" of the pre-Qin period. At the same time, in Confucian culture, the spirit of sports has strong practicality. The sports, which it advocates, not only can be used for war and daily life, but also do not explicitly guide it

to the level of personal physical fitness. This is the unique feature of Confucian sports spirit, which also shows differences from modern sports spirit. As for the prosperity or decline of sports in history, due to the swing of “culture” and “war”, this phenomenon is due to the differences among various schools of thought in Confucianism.

(2) THE HEALTH PRESERVATION CULTURE AND SPORTSMANSHIP OF TAOIST SCHOOL AND TAOISM

Taoism is a major sect originating from China, which differs greatly from Western and Indian religions. Taoist school does not have the concept of an afterlife, but rather aims to prolong life and practice in the world. On the one hand, it has developed the traditional Taoist concept of the unity of heaven and man, and on the other hand, it has promoted the development of Chinese medicine. The fusion of these two concepts has formed the development of the “health preservation” sports spirit. Most Taoist believers are in the mountains and forests. They stand aloof from the world and do as they please. This way of life allows their bodies to be well protected, and Taoism gradually creates fitness sports with gymnastics characteristics through observing and understanding nature. The most famous is the Taijiquan, created by Zhang Sanfeng of the Wudang Sect School. It is different from the traditional martial arts. This kind of martial arts is different from the fighting techniques that are simply displayed externally.

The essence of Taoism is not limited to defeating enemies with strength or self-defense, but rather focuses on self-cultivation, which can allow people to exercise their whole body. Taijiquan has formed multiple schools throughout the history of inheritance, but its basic principles of health preservation have not changed. It has still been widely promoted and widely recognized among the general public, and continues to have good effects. As early as the last years of Han Dynasty, Hua Tuo realized the importance of exercise in treating diseases. He also imitated the movements of animals’ limbs and created the “Wu Qin Xi”. This type of sports can activate the meridians of the entire body, ensure smooth circulation of qi and blood, and also make the body stronger. Different from the pragmatism and utilitarianism of Confucianism, the sports concepts, from Taoism to Taoism, emphasize that “health preservation” is the goal of sports in terms of sports spirit. Both Taoist school and Taoism emphasize the unity of body and mind, but its core is not the “cultivation” centered on Confucianism, but rather the pursuit of a peaceful state of integration with the nature’s Tao. The Taoist concept of health preservation must be combined with traditional Chinese medicine, which leads to the creation and invention of sports programs that promote disease control, fitness and longevity, such as “Wu Qin Xi”, “Eight Section Brocade” and “Taijiquan”. They are still popular today.

1.3 CHINA SPORTS SPIRIT AND WESTERN SPORTS SPIRIT

Similarities between China sports spirit and Western sports spirit:

Competition and cooperation: whether in China or the West, sportsmanship includes competition and cooperation. Competition in competitive sports is the key factor to promote the athletes' individual and team progress, while cooperation plays an important role in team sports and team competition.

Perseverance and tenacity: in China's and West's sports spirit, tenacity and perseverance are common values. No matter what challenges they face, athletes need to persevere, overcome difficulties and pursue excellence.

Morality and sports ethics: in China and the West, sports ethics and moral principles are both important, including values, such as fair competition, respect for opponents, honest competition and compliance with rules and regulations.

The differences between China sports spirit and Western sports spirit:

Cultural and philosophical foundation: China's sports spirit reflects China's traditional culture and philosophical thoughts to some extent, such as Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. Western sports spirit is influenced by Western culture and values, including individualism, competition, and pragmatism.

Team and individual: China's sportsmanship usually puts more emphasis on team cooperation and collective honor, which is especially evident in group sports, such as group gymnastics and group competition. In contrast, Western sports culture emphasizes individual achievements, such as performance in individual competitive events.

Status and importance of sports: China regards sports as a part of national construction and international image, especially in the Olympic movement. Sport plays an important role in China society and is supported and encouraged by the government. In some Western countries, although sports are still highly valued, their status and influence may not be as prominent as in China.

Development and structure of sports: there may be differences in sports system and development mode between China and Western countries. China usually has a more centralized and state-led sports system, while in some Western countries, sports are more decentralized and market-oriented.

2 CHARACTERISTICS OF SPORTSMANSHIP

(1) THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORTSMANSHIP

According to Marxist philosophy, humans are a social existence. From the essence of human reality, humans are not “abstract objects inherent in a single individual”, but “the sum of all social relationships”. Sports are not only a social lifestyle and activity, but also a social and cultural phenomenon (Hu, 2020, p. 5).

Firstly, the social attributes of sportsmanship are determined by its basic form. In terms of its substantive form, it is a spirit condensed in the field of sports, and sportsmanship is human beings’ spiritual form. Spirit is a special social phenomenon that is a concentration of social consciousness generated by humans in the process of understanding and transforming the world. Sportsmanship is a social thought and behavior, which is both a social behavior and a community behavior. Sportsmanship plays an important role in team sports, which encourages cooperation, team cohesion and the pursuit of collective goals. Through team sports, society’s members can work together and experience the importance of teamwork, which helps to strengthen social cohesion.

Secondly, sports is a subjective human behavior and a shaping force that not only develops human natural attributes, but also influences human spiritual attributes. Sportsmanship runs through the entire process of sports, and it is a humanistic spirit that is manifested by people in sports practice. As a “social entity”, human beings engage in social practice, in a certain social relationship, and their life expression is the social life’s manifestation and affirmation. Human spirit is an abstract expression of social reality and a social psychological activity. Due to the widespread existence of human social sportsmanship in society, it is inevitable to carry social imprints. Sports spirit emphasizes fair competition, respect for opponents, honest competition and moral behavior. These values reflect the great emphasis on morality and the positive moral quality in the arena and life.

Sports activities are creative social practice activities, based on sports, as the basic means. Sports have emerged and developed with the human society’s development, and are a special sport that has been derived from people’s lives and, gradually, developed through long-term social practice. As the highest achievement of sports, the emergence and infiltration of sportsmanship play a positive spiritual role in sports. Therefore, sportsmanship is a special form of spirit and also a social spirit (Xin, 2022, p. 43). Sports spirit may have different emphases and characteristics in different countries and cultures, which reflects the values and priorities of a specific culture, such as individualism, collectivism, competition and cooperation.

(2) THE HISTORICITY OF SPORTSMANSHIP

The sportsmanship is not a static and fixed existence, and it is a specific and historical evolution process that is constrained by the human society's production and exchange methods, and is "[...] moving according to the situation and changing with the times" (Ryall, 2019, p. 129). Sportsmanship is closely related to the development of social history, and its manifestations are different in different social history environments. The development of sportsmanship is a process of constantly enriching and developing historical accumulation and inheritance, which gives sports spirit a strong historical color. The historical inheritance of sportsmanship mainly includes the following aspects:

First, it is a category of social history. From the trajectory of the emergence and development of sportsmanship, it can be seen that the sportsmanship of each period is a historical product. Regardless of its subject or itself, it is not a ready-made thing in ontology, but a historical way of existence (Xu; Wang, 2001, p. 35). The sportsmanship is a historical concept formed from the human beings' social history. It is not immutable, once it appears. Its connotation changes and enriches with the development of human social practice, and it plays a guiding and promoting role in the development of sports. Sports spirit is usually closely related to a country or society's cultural traditions. Historical values, beliefs and traditional activities can all be reflected in the spirit of sports. These traditions have a far-reaching impact on the development and values of sports.

The second is to develop and discard past sports ethics. The historicity of sportsmanship also lies in the fact that today's sportsmanship is formed by history, and each era would develop and discard it, critically absorb it and, thus, inherit and continue it. The development of sportsmanship is based on the development of material production and material exchange, which is a fundamental principle and an important historical task in Marx's view of history (Munkwitz, 2012, p. 74). In ancient times, sports ethics emphasized physical fitness, courage, teamwork and honor. Competitive sports are to show the individuals and teams' strength and skills, usually accompanied by strict rules and ceremonies.

For example, in private ownership societies, the "chivalry spirit", as an important manifestation of sportsmanship, has different understandings and interpretations between feudal society and bourgeois rule. The hierarchical system and simple self-satisfaction of the feudal era made people pay more attention to honor and loyalty. The knight spirit of the Middle Ages was centered around honor and loyalty, advocating honor and loyalty, and defending the motherland and the weak. Under the rule of capitalism, the production and exchange of goods are the most important part. The change, in this mode of production and exchange, has led to the dominant ideology becoming "freedom" and "equality". Therefore, in modern society, the chivalry spirit is interpreted as bravery.

In feudal society, chivalry emphasized bravery and military courage. Knights are usually warriors, whose main responsibility is to defend territory and country. In modern society, chivalry may be more related to sports and competition. Chivalry emphasizes fair competition, respect for opponents and perseverance in sports.

Globalization has enabled different cultures and sports traditions to communicate with each other, leading to a greater influence of multiculturalism on the spirit of sports, resulting in new values and concepts. Social media has changed the way sports are spread and interacted. In the future, social media may play a bigger role and have a greater impact on the shaping and dissemination of sportsmanship.

3 PHILOSOPHICAL EXAMINATION THOUGHTS CONTAINED IN SPORTSMANSHIP

3.1 PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW OF THE HUMANISTIC SPIRIT OF PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

Sports spirit is a rich and multilevel concept, which combines elements from many fields, such as morality, culture, philosophy, and sociology. A thorough study of the philosophical basis of sports spirit can better understand the essence of sports and its development in different social backgrounds.

Since the Renaissance, the promotion of human values and respect for human power have become universal moral norms in modern society. The so-called people-oriented humanistic spirit refers to the fact that people are the first element in sports, which respects and satisfies human needs, reflects human values, and promotes the people's comprehensive development. Humanism is the essence of sports spirit, which runs through all aspects of sports activities and sports. Formula 1 is partly driven by machines and technology. No matter how good the driver is, if the car is not good, he or she would never win and, thus, never be recognized as a great sportsman. The sportsmanship related to "people-oriented" is manifested as:

Firstly, it is a reflection of the practical needs of human production and life. Marx linked human needs with human nature, and Engels pointed out, in his book *The Role of Labor in the Transformation from Apes to Man*, that labor is the human life's first fundamental condition, and to this extent, people have to say in a sense that labor creates people themselves. Labor is an important factor in the human society's development, while sports are an important component of human social development. It accompanies human growth and improves the physiological functions of the human body while understanding nature, enabling humans to better engage in white labor. It has also made people's need for their own motor skills increasingly strong, thereby promoting the improvement of physical fitness. In addition, labor also promotes the development of physical movements, making them more

rich, vivid and beautiful. Labor creates human society, and labor provides conditions and guarantees for the development of sports. Sports also sprout in labor.

Secondly, the people-oriented sports spirit fully embodies the human beings' subjective value. Marx paid high attention to the human beings' value, believing that the old materialism only saw the subject's objective reality, and should also regard the human beings' subjectivity as practical subjects. Sports activities themselves are the external manifestation of human essential strength, while humanistic sports spirit is the manifestation of human subject value. Sports are a practical activity and, in the early stages of human history, sports were an inevitable necessity for human production, life and practical activities. Through sports, humans improved their physical fitness and were able to better adapt to nature (Sailors, 2020, p. 419). With the continuous development of productivity and the material life's enrichment, people's needs for war and spiritual life have gradually emerged. Early sports practices were mainly carried out through methods, such as war, games, and sports. In modern times, with the invention of science and technology, and the significant improvement of human productivity, people have better requirements for life, health, and practice. Therefore, sports activities have gradually become conscious, purposeful, and planned people's behaviors, and, in sports activities, the value of human subjectivity is also gradually becoming prominent.

3.2 PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW OF THE JOYFUL SPIRIT OF “BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CULTIVATION”

The body is the most precious wealth, the cornerstone of smooth career development and the key to the familiar harmony and happiness. The spirit of physical fitness and happiness refers to the attitude and value orientation of health preservation and happiness that people continuously exercise their bodies, enhance their physique, cultivate their physical and mental health, and promote spiritual harmony during sports activities. In China, as stated in *Lu's Spring and Autumn Annals: Complete Numbers*: “If the form does not move, then the essence does not flow, and if the essence does not flow, then the qi is stagnant.” The traditional Chinese concept of health preservation and wellness is that “movement never fails”. In the long process of historical development, human understanding of death and love for life have led to the creation, cultivation and inheritance of many fitness, health preservation and leisure sports, based on the principles of “calmness to nourish the heart”, “combination of movement and stillness” and “combination of hardness and softness”. These sports can take different measures according to different situations. For example, taking natural heart nourishing sports, as an example, humans have invented various health sports, such as aerobics, fitness dance, Taijiquan, qigong, alternating exercise, aerobic exercise, biomimetic exercise, eye movements, special breathing exercises, etc. (Sigmund; Michael, 2019, p. 325). There are also natural forest camping methods, grassland hiking methods, sunbathing methods,

cave therapy, etc., all of which are good forms of entertainment. In these activities, people actively participate and enhance their love for nature, society and the environment, thereby enhancing their physical fitness, the unity of body and mind, and promoting the society's harmonious development. The sportsmanship of Le Sheng Movement is mainly manifested in the following areas:

The first is to strengthen physical fitness through sports activities. Life lies in exercise, which can improve people's physical fitness and make their bodies healthier. The World Health Organization, the International Committee on Sports Medicine, and the Committee on Sports and Sports Health jointly issued a statement titled "Exercise for Health", which proposed concepts, such as "lifelong exercise" and "all member exercise", and proposed that sports are something people do every day. This is fundamental to a healthy life (Super; Verkooijen; Maria, 2018, p. 173). Under the influence of Le Sheng's spirit, people often engage in activities, such as walking, running, jumping, throwing, balancing and climbing to promote blood circulation, enhance cardiovascular function, prevent arteriosclerosis, accelerate metabolism and nutrient absorption, strengthen bone and muscle fat metabolism, and enhance immunity by strengthening the nervous system. At the same time, these sports invisibly exercise people's speed, strength, endurance, flexibility and agility, thereby fundamentally improving their physical fitness.

The second is to promote physical, mental and intellectual relaxation through sports and leisure activities. Research has shown that resting has an inhibitory effect, and psychologists and psychiatrists believe that physical activity can greatly help with depression. In today's society, people's pace of life is constantly accelerating, and life and work are facing great pressure. It is in this situation that the value of sports and leisure activities is highlighted. Physical exercise not only has a good health effect on the human body, but also has the function of soothing emotions, regulating emotions and improving mental state. Therefore, sports and leisure activities are widely recognized as an important way to regulate and adapt to the pace of life. It is a way to transform negative and passive "rest concepts" into a positive way of engaging in rest, which can not only prevent fatigue, but also relieve emotions. For example, popular physical activities, such as yoga, Taijiquan and meditation that relax the body and mind can effectively relieve stress on the body, while also stimulating the secretion of adrenaline in it, thereby keeping the mind calm and clear.

3.3 PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW OF THE TRANSCENDENT SPIRIT BASED ON "SELF-IMPROVEMENT"

As stated in *The Book of Changes*, it is: "Heaven moves with strength, and gentlemen strive for self-improvement" (Xu, 2019, p. 277). The purpose of the International Olympic Committee is not to triumph, but to strive, and its essence is not to win, but to make humanity braver, stronger, more cautious and more generous. All the above viewpoints tell people

that the ultimate goal of all human behavior, especially sports, is to constantly challenge oneself and surpass oneself. The so-called faster, higher and stronger spirit of transcendence refers to the people's ability to maximize their potential, dare to challenge and, constantly, break through their behavioral values, attitudes and willpower qualities in sports activities, especially, in competitive sports. This faster, higher and stronger spirit of transcendence is manifested as:

The first is to bravely challenge microlimits in sports activities. The life's meaning lies not in victory, but in struggle. A winner's essence is not victory, but courage to move forward. Sports are a comprehensive consideration of human physical fitness, so they require people to continuously tap into their potential, challenge their limits and showcase their strength during the exercise process. They are a challenge to the human body, presented in the form of sports competitions. Before the competition, athletes need to undergo high-intensity basic and specialized training, and during the training process, they face various tests (Mortimer, 2021, p. 533). For example, during the training process, one should constantly adjust their internal reactions, clarify their stress points and breakthrough points, and better understand their strengths and weaknesses. During the competition, players must quickly adapt to the environment, be able to withstand pressure and dare to bear weight. They also should have perseverance, be willing to break through and fully utilize their physical potential for sports.

Internet of Things devices can be used to monitor athletes' physiological indicators, such as heart rate, respiration, and skin resistance. These data can be used to evaluate athletes' psychological state and ability to cope with stress. Coaches and psychologists can provide athletes with personalized psychological training suggestions, based on these data.

The second is to have the courage to surpass oneself in sports activities. The most distinctive feature of sportsmanship is the continuous transcendence of oneself, the exploration of one's own potential and the display of human power. Taking the Olympic Games as an example, its motto is "Faster, Higher, and Stronger", which contains rich connotations. It not only means continuing to strive in the arena, overcoming the various limitations, imposed by nature and allowing people to achieve maximum freedom, but also encourages people to maintain a positive attitude in life, learning and work, constantly surpassing and gaining a sense of achievement in the process of surpassing, in order to realize their own value (Huy, 2021, p. 1034).

The third is that the spirit has been continuously improved during the process of exercise. The significance of sports is not in the outcome, but in the process. During this process, physical and mental integration is achieved (Nagovitsyn, 2020, p. 72). Sports test people both physically and psychologically, so sports spirit emphasizes not only the transcendence of physical form and physical fitness, but also the improvement of psychological quality and spiritual realm. People not only need to surpass opponents, records, but also surpass spirit,

transcend the boundaries of region, race, and country, and pursue the common values of justice, equality, friendship and progress.

3.4 PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW OF THE CHINESE SPORTSMANSHIP BASED ON THE SPIRIT OF HARMONY

When people return to the ancient Chinese view of the body, they would see that the Chinese people's understanding of the body is not only a body that is "trained by life" and "constantly growing", but also a body that is "influenced by parents", that is, a body determined by gender, which is in stark contrast to the "asexual body" that originated from God in the West. Therefore, Chinese culture advocates "harmony but difference", using "harmony" to distinguish from the "same" in the West. Tracing back to its ideological roots does not stem from ancients' philosophical philosophy, but from the Tao, which cannot be separated for an instant. In a way of "approaching various bodies", it is the inherent human nature's restoration and the source of each individual's human life. To be more precise, just like the saying in *The Doctrine of the Mean* that "[...] the way of a gentleman originates from a couple" (Zhu, 2022, p. 696), the "natural combination" of "[...] the way of a couple lies in the way of a couple" (Zhu, 2022, p. 696), is the most natural connection among people. Therefore, as the prototype of ancient Chinese "sports", ancient Chinese ethics adhere to the principle of "[...] using etiquette and valuing harmony" (Li; Zhang; Li, 2019, p. 69).

The same ancient Chinese theory of physical behavior emphasizes movement and stillness, hardness and softness, strength and weakness, progress and retreat, victory and defeat, and so on, all of which are based on the "harmony of yin and yang". Just as the "self-improvement" of Qiandao and the "virtue carrying things" of Kundao can be understood as the "harmony of heaven and earth". The "movement" it understands must be the kind of movement with stillness in motion. "Rigidity" must be a process of combining hardness and softness; "strength" must be a process of not being overpowered by weakness; "advancing" must be a process of being able to advance and retreat; "victory" must be a victory without arrogance or discouragement (Choi, 2012, p. 102). In ancient China, the spirit of "harmony" emphasized was not only reflected in each individual's personal lives, but also in society, as it viewed society as a familial community through the union of men and women. It applied the "harmony of yin and yang" to the entire society, which was also reflected in society. This also provides great inspiration for people today to engage in sports activities, especially group sports activities.

Philosophical training can help athletes deepen their understanding of the spirit of harmony in China's sports spirit. It is not only a theoretical concept, but also needs to be experienced and embodied in practice. Philosophical training can guide athletes to think about how to achieve harmony, coordination and balance in the competition.

China's traditional sports spirit emphasizes teamwork, fair competition and perseverance. However, in modern sports, especially in professional sports with high degree of commercialization, economic and commercial factors often conflict with these traditional values.

Traditional China sports spirit pays attention to tenacity, cooperation and moral behavior. However, modern competitive sports are often strongly influenced by commercialization. For example, in commercial sports, advertising contracts, brand sponsorship and commercial profits become the key. This may lead some athletes to violate moral or competitive rules for commercial interests and conflict with traditional values.

With the increasing commercialization and professionalization of sports, how to maintain the core value of China's sports spirit, under commercial pressure, has become an important issue. It is suggested that measures should be taken to balance commercial interests and sports values, so as to ensure that China's sports spirit is not eroded by commercialization.

China has done well in international sports competitions, but how to convey China's sports spirit and promote China's cultural values, on the international stage, has become a challenge. It is suggested that China's sports spirit should be actively spread through sports diplomacy, cultural exchanges and international competitions.

CONCLUSIONS

Sports are a universal social and cultural phenomenon and expression of thoughts with a long historical background, and also an important manifestation of the development of human spiritual civilization. It not only includes all specific forms of sports activities, but also an internal and abstract sports spirit. Only by combining the development of sports spirit with the development of human body, a complete sense of sports can be formed. Starting from the Confucian culture, Taoism culture, as well as subculture, such as the theory of Yin Yang and Five Elements and chivalrous culture, this paper expounded the characteristics of Chinese sportsmanship and pointed out its positive significance. This article found that people are in a wave of revival of traditional culture, and it is more important to promote the positive significance of Chinese sports spirit and, constantly, innovate with the times' development. Especially the various spirits or qualities, related to sports behavior, are closely related to a nation's development process. This requires exploring the value of sports spirit in future research in order to make use of it. The Chinese sports spirit is integrated into the physical education curriculum of schools and universities to cultivate students' teamwork, fair competition and moral values, emphasizing the importance of sports spirit. Through philosophical examination and sociological discussion, this article provided a useful

perspective and framework for deeply understanding and discussing the importance and meaning of China's sportsmanship.

China's sports spirit reflects China's traditional culture and philosophy, and pays attention to teamwork, collective honor and national image. In China, sports is not only an entertainment and competitive activity, but also plays an important role in national identity and self-esteem. Sports, as a social and cultural activity, would inevitably lead to misunderstandings if they lack the spirit of sports and the soul. The philosophical examination of sports spirit is incorporated into physical education and school education to cultivate students' correct understanding of sports spirit and how to practice these values in sports and life. Physical education should not only pay attention to skill training, but also emphasize the importance of sportsmanship.

REFERENCES

CHEN, Q. W.; LIU, X. R. Cultural Study on the Sports Spirit of the Communist Party of China in the Soviet Area. **Frontiers in Economics and Management**, v. 3, n. 1, p. 207-216, 2022.

CHOI, Y. The Bi-Cycling Mr Hoopdriver: Counter-Sporting Victorian Reviving the Carnavalesque, **Critical Survey**, v. 24, n. 1, p. 102-115, 2012.

GEERAETS, V. Ideology, doping and the spirit of sport. **Sport, Ethics and Philosophy**, v. 12, n. 3, p. 255-271, 2018.

GORDON, E. C.; CONNIE, D. High altitude, enhancement, and the 'spirit of sport'. **Journal of the Philosophy of Sport**, v. 50, n. 1, p. 63-82, 2023.

HAN, D. Modern Pentathlon's Sports Spirit and a Study on Leader's Ethical Exploration. **Journal of the Korea Society of Computer and Information**, v. 26, n. 3, p. 119-126, 2021.

HU, F. On the ideological and cultural basis of China Marxist philosophy-from the perspective of the correspondence between Marxist philosophy and China traditional philosophy. **Journal of Hunan University of Humanities and Science and Technology**, v. 37, n. 3, p. 5-10, 2020.

HUY, D. T. N. Effects of Religions Philosophies and Ho Chi Minh and VI Lenin Ideologies on human education-and Physical Education for Children and the Youth. **Review of International Geographical Education Online**, v. 11, n. 10, p. 1034-1041, 2021.

LI, M.; ZHANG, C.; LI, J. Analysis of the influence of the golden mean on the traditional health-preserving sports culture in China. **Journal of Wuhan Institute of Physical Education**, v. 53, n. 10, p. 69-74, 2019.

LIU, X. The Salvation of Alienation: The Realistic Dilemma and Ontological Transcendence of Sports and Human Subjectivity - Based on the Critical Perspective of Marxist Philosophy. **Journal of Sports Adult Education**, v. 34, n. 6, p. 1-7, 2018.

LU, X. Functional Value of Sports Spirit in Higher Vocational Physical Education. **Education Reform and Development**, v. 3, n. 1, p. 20-24, 2021.

- MORTIMER, H. Values and clean sport. **Journal of Sports Sciences**, v. 39, n. 5, p. 533-541, 2021.
- MUNKWITZ, E. Vixens of Venery: Women, Sport, and Fox-Hunting in Britain, 1860-1914, **Critical Survey**, v. 14, n. 1, p. 74-87, 2012.
- NAGOVITSYN, R. S. Interactive technologies in developing student's motivation in physical education and sport. **International Journal of Applied Exercise Physiology**, v. 9, n. 6, p. 72-79, 2020.
- RYALL, E. S. Shame in sport. **Journal of the Philosophy of Sport**, v. 46, n. 2, p. 129-146, 2019.
- SAILORS, P. R. Transgender and intersex athletes and the women's category in sport. **Sport, Ethics and Philosophy**, v. 14, n. 4, p. 419-431, 2020.
- SIGMUND, L.; MICHAEL, J. M. The 'spirit of sport', WADAs code review, and the search for an overlapping consensus. **International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics**, v. 11, n. 2, p. 325-339, 2019.
- SUN, Y. H. A probe into China's historical Confucian culture and ancient educational thoughts. **Journal of Heihe University**, v. 9, n. 7, p. 186-187, 2018.
- SUPER, S.; VERKOOIJEN, K.; MARIA, K. The role of community sports coaches in creating optimal social conditions for life skill development and transferability – a salutogenic perspective. **Sport, education and society**, v. 23, n. 2, p. 173-185, 2018.
- XIN, Z. Theoretical and Strategic Path of Integrating Chinese Sports Spirit into Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities. **Journal of Shenyang Sport University**, v. 41, n. 1, p. 43-49, 2022.
- XU, J. Constructing the Inner-oriented Multi-dimensional Self-Datura Model Based on the Book of Changes: The Theory of [Heaven and Man Unite Me]. **Research on Local Psychology**, v. 51, p. 277-318, 2019.
- XU, J.; WANG, X. H. On the Identity between the Chinese Sports Spirit and the Thought of the Three Represents. **Journal of Shangrao Normal University**, v. 021, n. 005, p. 35-38, 2001.
- ZHU, W. Z. The Excavation of Sports Spirit of National Southwest Associated University. **International Journal of Social Science and Education Research**, v. 5, n. 6, p. 696-701, 2022.