

The Present Situation Analysis and Countermeasure Research of Chinese Education in Europe

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Abstract: In the last century, Chinese education in Europe grew out of nothing and gradually established. Especially in the past thirty years, Chinese schools in many European countries have a certain scale, and Chinese education in Europe has entered a period of rapid and stable development. However, funds, teachers, teaching materials and overall cooperation are still the key factors restricting its development. Under the background of the new era, European Chinese education should seize the historical opportunity, meet the challenge, fully coordinate various internal and external factors, and solve the practical problems that restrict its development, so as to promote the better development of Chinese education.

Keywords: European Chinese education, development history, current situation analysis, countermeasures and suggestions

Introduction

Chinese education is the main form of Chinese language and traditional culture education for overseas Chinese to their children. Since the 1980s, Europe has blown the 'Chinese style', and its Chinese education has developed rapidly. The problem of Chinese education has become increasingly prominent. The contradiction between the limited supply capacity of Chinese schools and the strong learning needs of learners has become increasingly prominent. Problems such as shortage of education funds, limited school venues, lack of professional teachers and large fluctuations in student sources restrict the future development of European Chinese schools.^[4] This paper focuses on the general situation of Chinese language education in Europe. On the basis of restoring and analyzing the overall appearance and basic contradictions of Chinese language education in Europe in the new era, this paper puts forward some countermeasures and suggestions for Chinese language education in Europe.

1. Summary of the development of contemporary European Chinese education

The development of Chinese education in Europe has gone through three stages : trial, foundation and development.

1.1 Attempt stage

Before the 1950s, it was an attempt period for overseas Chinese in Europe to establish Chinese education within their own group. During this period, although there were various Chinese classes in Britain, France, Holland, Germany and other countries, most of them were not long, almost all of them were tasted and had little effect. In 1919, the Chinese Association in Leiden, the Netherlands, a group of ethnic Chinese, opened the first 'Chinese class' in the history of overseas Chinese in Europe for ethnic Chinese to learn Chinese. In the 1920s, in the flourishing work-study movement in France, students studying in France also set up "Chinese Workers' School" for Chinese workers in France. In the 1930s, almost all 'Chinatowns' in France, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands set up Chinese classes for Chinese children, such as

'French Overseas Chinese Primary School' in the western suburbs of Paris, 'Chinese Chinese School' in London Pence Street, and 'Overseas Chinese Children Literacy Class' in Rotterdam Carden District. The Second World War interrupted all the efforts of overseas Chinese in Europe. In the post-war reconstruction stage, European Chinese had tried to run several short-term Chinese classes. In short, in the first half of the 20th century, the attempt of overseas Chinese in Europe to set up Chinese education was only a flash.

1.2 Foundation stage

The 1960s and 1970s were the important foundation stage of Chinese education in Europe. With the improvement of China's international status, many European countries have established diplomatic relations with China. The children and relatives of returned overseas Chinese in mainland China have gone to European countries through Macao and Hong Kong to inherit their father's business or open up new economic undertakings.^[1] Until the middle and late 1960s, the population base of overseas Chinese in Europe continued to increase. In order to meet the needs of overseas Chinese children to learn Chinese, overseas Chinese associations in Europe have established many Chinese schools or Chinese literacy classes, such as the "Chinese Disciples School" founded by the "Hamburg Chinese Association" in Germany in 1961, and the "Belgian Overseas Chinese Zhongshan School" in Brussels in 1965.

1.3 Development stage

After the 1980s, the number of overseas Chinese in Europe increased significantly, which led to a new period of rapid development of Chinese education in Europe. From 1980 to 1986, nearly 20 Chinese schools were founded in Britain, France, Holland, Belgium, Germany and other large and medium-sized cities. These schools have a certain scale, but the development of Chinese education in Europe during this period was not balanced.^[2]

From the 1990s to the beginning of the 21st century, Chinese education in Europe developed rapidly, and the number of Chinese schools in Europe reached its peak. At present, there are more than 600 Chinese schools founded by overseas Chinese associations and ethnic Chinese in Europe, and the UK ranks first, with about 200 to 300. Followed by France, Germany, each with more than 100; finally, there are 60 in Italy, more than 50 in Spain, 38 in the Netherlands, 16 in Switzerland, 15 in Hungary, 6 in Belgium and 3 in Austria.^[4]

2. The current challenges faced by Chinese education in Europe

Although there are gratifying achievements in the development of Chinese education in Europe, there are also problems that hinder the development of Chinese education. On the one hand, the understanding of Chinese education is not enough. Although most Chinese community members care about and support Chinese language education and are eager for their children to receive Chinese language education, there are still limitations. Even some parents and children do not realize the importance of receiving Chinese education. Some Chinese children in remote small cities still have no way to learn Chinese, and students' autonomous learning ability is not strong. On the other hand, Chinese education has some specific problems that are difficult to solve, such as funding, teachers, teaching materials, and overall collaboration.

2.1 The Chinese school is short of funds and the conditions for running schools are limited

Funding is the foundation of running a school, and most European Chinese schools are facing the dilemma of insufficient funds.^[5] Generally speaking, European Chinese schools follow the traditional non-profit school-running model. The Chinese community (overseas Chinese community donations and tuition fees) is the main source of school-running, with multiple funds and insufficient school-running funds. Compared with the schools in the local mainstream society, the Chinese schools in Europe have poor buildings, backward equipment, poor environment and lack of attraction to Chinese teenagers, which is not conducive to the spread of Chinese culture overseas.^[3]

2.2 The shortage of Chinese teachers, the degree of specialization is not high

"Lack of teachers" is another recognized bottleneck restricting the development of Chinese education in Europe. From the perspective of the source of teachers, there are few full-time teachers in European Chinese schools. They are basically housewives or foreign students who teach part-time, and the former's educational level is uneven; the latter has a high level of education but high mobility, so they cannot devote themselves wholeheartedly. Most teachers have not received

systematic professional training and lack of research on teaching methods. Due to the lack of teachers in many Chinese schools, the selection of teachers has repeatedly lowered the standards, which has affected the quality and effectiveness of teaching.

2.3 The types of Chinese textbooks are single and the degree of localization is insufficient

From the perspective of the types of teaching materials, the sources of teaching materials in European Chinese schools are single and lack of diversity.^[5] They mainly rely on the introduction from China, and the most used is the 'Chinese' written by Jinan University. From the perspective of localization, the existing textbooks lack full consideration of cultural differences, language environment differences and other factors,^[5] and lack pertinence and applicability in content and form. It is difficult to meet the actual needs and learning habits of learners in different regions, different cultural backgrounds and different age levels, which is not conducive to the improvement of Chinese cultural soft power.

3. The countermeasures and suggestions for promoting the high-quality development of Chinese education in Europe

3.1 Optimizing the top-level design of Chinese education in Europe, and coordinating the allocation of resources for Chinese education and the promotion of Chinese international education

Both Chinese language education and international promotion of Chinese language are important windows for the "going out" development strategy of Chinese culture. Relevant departments should plan, integrate and coordinate the top-level design of the two resources from the national level and from a strategic perspective, and study resource allocation and resource sharing. At the same time, it has increased support for European Chinese education in terms of textbooks, teachers, and school funding. The two support each other, promote each other, complement each other, share resources, and accelerate the international communication process of Chinese culture and the construction of soft power.

3.2 Raising funds through multiple channels and establishing cooperation with local mainstream schools

The use of multi-channel financing methods, such as applying for government assistance, stimulating corporate sponsorship, church donations, etc., to enhance the operating funds of European Chinese schools. Actively establish cooperation with local mainstream schools and learn from the excellent experience of mainstream schools in the host country. The development of Chinese education is placed in an international perspective, and the development of Chinese school education is realized through internal and external forces.

3.3 Multi-subject participation, strengthening the professional training and construction of teachers

Construct a four-in-one training model of local government departments, universities, Confucius Institutes and enterprises to jointly carry out the professional training of teachers. According to the needs of their own schools, Chinese schools can recommend local excellent Chinese learners who are interested in Chinese education to Chinese education bases in China to receive special Chinese education and teacher education, which is not only conducive to the improvement of Chinese teachers' professionalization, but also conducive to the stability of teachers.

3.4 Strengthening inter-school cooperation, improving the Europeanization of Chinese textbooks, and attaching importance to the construction of local Chinese teaching resources

European Chinese textbooks must follow the path of Europeanization and 'localization'. Chinese schools, especially those in the same country and the same region, should strengthen inter-school cooperation and concentrate superior resources to jointly develop 'localized' higher Chinese textbooks. Conditional regions can also cooperate with Chinese education bases in mainland China to combine the theory of Chinese education in China with foreign teaching practice, so as to enhance the theoretical and systematic nature of Chinese textbooks.

4. Conclusion

As the core way to carry forward Chinese culture, overseas Chinese education is an important part of the construction and development of overseas Chinese societies. The work of maintaining Chinese culture and Chinese education is the main content of national cohesion. As an organic part of overseas Chinese education, Chinese education in Europe needs the support of all aspects. If we can summarize its own characteristics, seize the opportunities for the development of Chinese education in the new era, actively face various constraints, and strive to weaken or solve problems, European Chinese education will have a brighter future.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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