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An intercultural comparison of human movement behavior - Speechless, but not motionless -

A. The observation status

How often does one experience situations, in which the wrong word provokes to the controversy, - followed from a wearing down dispute, which knows at the end only "victories". However, in reality one has lost thereby, because ultimately the ignition rope for new explosive loads was put already or in worst case any dialogue was made impossibly. The spectrum of such events is as broadly and multi-layered as our social existence. It germinates in the awkward childlike competitive drive, as it culminates perhaps in the political prestige fight. In the modern, chiefly western dispute-societies is it a part of the life routine, which one experienced unconsciously since birth or was consciously brought up that way. What common remains are position wars or inhumane supremacy. The words fail, - the situations harden.

Moreover the inability joins, readiness on other way as "verbally" to signal or to recognize. One has forgotten "it", unlearned or never experienced. What was lost thereby or has not arrived consciousness really? Completely alone the fact, that our body speaks also a language! It is however an other language, which is meant. It is a nonverbal, difficulty to be squeezed out in measurable performances.

It is the language of motor being, whether in the movement or in the persisting. It is only "readable" in context of the situation. Connected daily problems are evident.

- On individualism trimmed competition society fokuces the strength of single and at the same time weakness of the others. How strong or isolated the individual feels on duration really, using exclusively a negative filter opposite his environment?

- So many technically minded youngsters feels related to media, computers and free time equipments more surely than to carefully realization their own social surrounding field.

Incomprehension and impatience spreads, if the mechanics of technological world does not "grasp" in reality of life.

- Foreign citizens perhaps feel, whether their linguistically deficiencies, faster in a faint opposite the flood of informations of their social environment. How does it have to be issued them in this flooding state, while they look for in vain after nonverbal communication attempts to their fellow citizens?

Social integration is by far not only a process of verbal cooperation. For it sources lie perhaps more deeply than generally expects: in an encouraging smile, in a helping hand, in a bodily attention, in a polite gesture. In this sense NITZSCHKE 1991 is to be understood, if he attributes movement a dialogue function.

Is it possible, that corresponding movement behavior can be a supporting means or a more effective way to achieve agreement in conflict management?

In the Japanese society, particularly in business, in searching for harmony the partners use much more intense nonverbal signal sources at negotiations. Usually westerners in negotiation conversations with Japanese businessmen have for that reason larger problems (MATSUMOTO 1988). One essential cause may exist therein, that they are not to be able to give situation more meaning, than solely the strict handling of a contractual discussion.

B. The cultural background of movement behavior

This few examples should demonstrate, that also in the modern industrial society behavioral patterns exist, which can be described only cultural-historical. Movement behavior in this respect is a distinctive field of observation. Besides its criterions are not limited intercultural: Space - Time, Dynamics - Statics, System unity - System openness (POLSTER 1987).

A particular meaning exists in intercultural comparisons of movement behavior.

NITZSCHKE 1991 defines 3 movement languages, which he derives from different cultures:

1. The movement form of *locomotion* (Europe): The dealing persons agitate reciprocally. Goal of movement, to displace each other, lies outside the body. In this type of movement persons are dependent on their own energy requirements.

2. The movement form of *connexion* (China, Japan): The dealing persons form an unit. During the movement term an energy exchange occurs. In typical Far Eastern combative sports (judo, aikido, kendo, karate) power of attacker is being used cleverly to the reinforcement of own action. Thereby the energy requirements of the attacker sinks and that of the attacked person climbs.

3. The movement form of *assimilation* (India, Africa): The dealing persons orientate themselves according to movements of the environment. They assimilate the rhythms and conditions of the outside world. Thereby no energy exchange occurs. Nevertheless the assimilating person requires fewer energy, if it assimilates the ideal. Such types of movement are to be find among others in ritual dances, whereby persons are playing special roles (gods, animals).

If we leave these movement concentrated view, certainly analogies to other social spheres could be found. NITZSCHKE 1991 defines in generalizing sense 3 worlds:

- the world of the fight places
- the world of the balances
- the world of the rhythms.

In this paper intercultural ideas should be developed exclusively between the movement worlds of the fight-/dispute culture and those of balance-/harmony culture. Furthermore exemplary experiences of two countries, namely Japan and Germany, are standing in the center of observation.

C. The case examples

Everyday motor behavior

Which is handshake in Germany, may be is the bow in Japan. Both are integrate in ceremonial situations, such as greetings, saying goodbye, agreements. Nevertheless feels one as "handshake-lived" European not only the larger reserve but also the deeper reverence, proceeding from bowing. While bowing in polite form still the possibility includes, to leave something or other openly, a handshake seals directly an event. Straight thinking- and behavior- patterns are foreign for Japanese. They are dealing circular (MATSUMOTO 1988). We recognize from it, that fundamental philosophies of life can be discovered also in motor actions.

If one observes the Japanese everyday life - especially the business life more exactly, so it is to be found, that actions are joined very abundantly with motor gestures. Whether be, in the case of inviting or thanksgiving bows of sellers at the entering or leaving a shop. Equal conduct one finds at any services, - also at the friendship service. It does not need first the

customer conversation, which is in Germany a decisive criterion, that one feels immediately as "king of customers". Or whether be, the unimaginable spatial pressure in Japan, which frequently nonverbal agreements makes necessary, in order not to collide continuously with persons in the crowd of everyday life. In this point organizes social life itself according to objective realities, without lavish linguistic regulations. In this narrow everyday life a westerner, without sufficient observation abilities, find itself continually on collision courses. From the view point of movement control already one fact is getting clear: The movement is not the only decisive feature of cultural-historical comparisons. To record movements in social context requires, to interpret it in their internal structure. In the above mentioned case of "spatial narrowness" is motor movement or motor persisting not from itself, but still better from the sensory conditionality explicable.

This corresponds to the description of closely connected movements by NITZSCHKE 1991: "*Persons, who grow up in this movement language, are familiar, to observe all changes in their environment carefully as well as exactly and to ascribe them, not perhaps the own person,- meaning.*" (S.93)

Motor behavior of sport

If we understand sport generalized as a "social phenomenon, that institutionalizes athletic activity" (SCHNABEL / THIESS 1993, S 763 ff.) , proceeding with the features of movement, performance, competition, game and unproductivity, - then differ the German and Japanese sport among other things in following points.

- The institutionalization of sport in Germany is much higher. With right Japanese sport politicians and sport scientists estimate the German club management as more advantageous. Sport is on communal level in Germany unequally more involved with the interests of persons and consumers. In Japan on the contrary exists a kind of company- or family principle, which binds also the sport at a certain business branch. This hinders broader entrance of citizens to organized sport activities.

- The aspect of self organization in the area of sport appears however in Japan more meaningful. Not only in the sense of individual drive to exercise sport. Rather also concerned transferring and learning of athletic activities in groups. Motor learning is frequent, occasionally of missing fitness leaders, sooner a process between elderly and disciples, knowledge and thirst for knowledge , experience and awkward.

- Motor behavior in sport is individualized in Germany more greatly, - in Japanese sport groups sooner ritualized. Of course, the German sport participants are still in typically German orders. Meanwhile such a high ritualized group dynamic, belongs to the organized Japanese sport, is probably not to be found. For it some examples are called only:

In competition- and training places strict references facing founders or teachers have to be shown, speech rhythm support movements, auxiliary services care for continuously movement flow, hierarchical rank structures accordingly knowledge-/age status determine the task division.

- Athletic actions are embedded in Japan sooner in movement concentrated, - less on the contrary, excepted competition sport, in performance orientated behavior. This appears, if athletically active students asked about their aims, among others in: rarely precise motivational states, hardly longer-term goals, frequently exchange between type of sports.

So for instance by 79 questioned students only 31 % have been reported about a longer than three year continuously sport participation. Approximately half of these students expressed own practical experiences already in more than two types of sports.

It is to be assumed, that young German persons in comparable ages thoroughly concentrated, aimed and performance orientated participate in sports.

One last example belongs to sport should illustrate likewise, determining certain patterns of behavior by different cultural roots. In March/April 1994 visited a German judo group from Leipzig for 9 days the mother country of judo. Common training in Tokyo with Japanese judokas stood on the plan. The young German in the ages of 12-14 years learned quite soon the differences between Japanese and German way playing judo. The Germans were battle- and goalfixed,- the Japanese on the other hand were orientated to partner and action. Typical for Japanese judo traditions, but also for other budo sports (aikido, kendo) may be the guiding principle: Before you can be a winner, you must fall three times!

D. The conceptual frame

Relevance

Economic and cultural distinctions are in no case removed self-regulatingly with the creation of the political assumptions for world-wide growing-together of different nations. The risk of a watering-down of the national identity is latent in this process just as the over-emphasizing of national particularities.

From that movement, game, and sport are not to be excluded. At present intercultural-comparative investigations are rarely to find in the field of sports science and need therefore an increased promotion (HAAG 1990a). Both common and different characteristics are to find interculturally in the motor elements or the human movement. In this sense it would be useful to make an exact analysis of different kinds of movements, as also to work the way, in which countries certain kinds of movements are preponderant (NITSCHKE 1986).

A further significance representative of this subject is based on the identification function of movement culture and the sport. Whether movement traditions are suited for an intercultural learning transfer, that is in the context of the above-mentioned political development process not only more a sociologic-cultural formulation of the question, but requires increasingly pedagogic-methodical argumentation points. Research projects on this area should be understood consequently as a contribution to the intercultural conflict mastering and approach with the means of international. sports-scientific understanding, finding and practical influences on the movement culture and sport.

Problem and task formulation

1. Movement culture and sport are integrated in the social overall processes. They do not dispose only in the different use ranges of motor actions, but reflect also in relatively inspecific behaviors. This is to understand in the sense of a reaction of the movement behavior to the society and its political formations.

Task: Lifting of nation-specific interactions between society and movement culture/sport.

2. The appearances of movement culture are interculturally different. Whereas forms of sport find their global unification in the common rule system (DIETRICH 1986, PALM 1987). Olympic sport as well as movement traditions are significant in the process of a world-wide cultural exchange, but also of the necessary finding and stabilization of national identity.

Task: Scientific-theoretical classification of different movement cultures and forms of sport. Analysis of the intercultural efficiency of the professional, Olympic sport and sport for all activities in regard of the national identification degree.

3. European and non-European, particularly Far-Eastern appearances of movement and sport differ with regard to their social relativity and sociologic-cultural functions. European appearances of movement and sport are rather result-performance-guided, non-European ones are to assess however more activity-experience-guided (NITSCHKE 1986).

Task: Exposing of activity-related and function-related, intercultural differences in the case of practicing motor actions at the example of the countries Japan and Germany.

4. The transferable effects on national appearances of movement and sport are world-wide indicated. Usefulness and social advantage are not proved in each case.

Task: Anthropological, action-, and movement-orientated argumentation of the efficiency of traditional appearances of movement and modern sports on the individual overall development of the human being. Statements about the sports degree of movement and game culture. Conclusions to intercultural transfer and learning types, resp.

5. Particularly in the high-developed industrial countries and in the urban over-crowded regions traditional appearances of movement and game fall into oblivion increasingly. With that individual, above all sociologic-cultural development deficits are provoked, which are difficultly to compensate with sportive exercise appearances.

Task: Cultural-historical reconstruction of valuable national movement appearances, linked with revitalizing influences on their repractice. Integration of foreign movement cultures, also as a contribution for the solution of national "foreigner problems". Listing of principles of the development cooperation with the countries of the third world.

E. Research Methods

Deriving from the scientific-theoretical framework, both hermeneutic and analytical advance manners are evident for the elaboration of such research project.

HAAG 1990b refers particularly to the relevance of "comparing research statements" for the further development of the young sports science in general, but also for the self-understanding of the organization "International Society for Comparative Physical Education and Sport" ICCPES founded only a short time ago.

The research-methodical approaching is to show differentiatedly. The following methods are indicated according to the temporal backgrounds:

Historical method

Descriptions and comparisons to the traditional movement culture of different nations.

Descriptive method

Status-quo-analyses to the present social conditions, in regard of among others:

Activity fields

- rehabilitation/handicap (health function)
- everyday life/business/free time (reproduction function)
- experience/adventure (relaxation function)
- preparatory school/school (learning function)
- competition (performance function)

Institutions

- public facilities (sports office, sports facilities, sports science and others)
- self-governing organizations (clubs, special associations, international and Olympic committees and others).

DIETRICH 1993 sums up the methodical claim as follows:

"Culture to understand means to discover the context, which grant the visible behavior's specific meaning. These will be very different connections according to cultural events. Investigations of movement cultures in modern societies have to be based on interdependence between cultural and social system."

Accordingly analyses conform not only the term of movements. They include interactions between persons, between individuals and groups, as well as person's interactions to natural and artificial surroundings.

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