

Analysis of Influence on Art Education in Chinese Colleges by “Picture-Reading Times”

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Abstract—The society of 21st century has entered into an age of mass communication, and has entered a “picture-reading times” from the “world-reading times”. The picture-reading times is an inevitable result of social development. In the process of college art education, we shall make rational utilization of picture-reading times and provide active guiding for it. The combination of picture-reading and book-reading renders the college students who grow up under the background of visual culture of “picture-reading times” the education about aesthetics, enabling them to improve their aesthetics ability and artistic accomplishment.

Keywords—*picture-reading times; college art education*

I. INTRODUCTION

Along with the development of technology and the arrival of digital times, the human society of 21st century has entered into an era with picture-reading playing the dominant role, namely the era of world-reading has been turned to the era of picture-reading. Thus the culture breaks away from language-centered rationalism ideology and shifts to image-centered sensationalism ideology gradually. As a result, pictures and images have been fashionable in various fields such as books and networks.

II. EMERGENCE OF “PICTURE-READING TIMES” IN CHINA

In China, the real “Picture-Reading Times” appears in the late 1990s. In 1996, the Shandong Pictorial Publishing House launched a new founded magazine of “Old Photos”. Once published, it has been widely welcomed by readers with its spectacular book style and its novel perspective of looking back history. And it has hit a record sales performance of more than 300,000 copies per album, triggering the “culture fever of old photos” countrywide. The successful publication of “Old Photos” has opened the “Picture-Reading Times” of Chinese publishing industry, and it has been selected as one of “Fifty Great Events of New China Publishing Industry”, one of “the Memorable Book for Two Decades 1978 -1998”, “Original Bestseller over the Past Three Decades of Reform and Opening up”, one of “300 Most Influential Books over the Past Three Decades of Reform and Opening up” and one of the “Sixty Books in the Sixty Years of New China” by the industry’s authoritative media in succession. In September 2009, in the Brand

Evaluation of South Reading Festival, “Old Photos” has gained more than 20,000 votes, ranking the first with the voter turnout as high as 45% in terms of “Visual Books with most of Readers’ Attention”. In 1998, in order to promote “Classic Cartoon Series of Red Windmill”, editor Zhong Jieling invited writers Yang Xiaoyan and Zhong Jianfu to write a preface, then they three put forward the concept of “Picture-Reading Times”. Since then, along with the best selling of “Old Photos”, “Old Houses”, “Black Lens” and other series, “Picture-Reading Times” became a popular term. These series of events have showed the approaching to, transformation to, and utilization of the more powerful media culture by the print culture with 20 years’ history. Such trends have supported the great power of pictures in contemporary Chinese society which have entered into the consumption society, media society and information society rapidly with the pace of globalization and the emergence of visual culture.

The situation not only fits the books but also applies to network. The “Sixth Baidu Union Summit” was held in Lijiang, Yunnan with the theme of “Great heroes rise to win the future together” from April 11 to 14, 2011. Baidu Chairman and CEO Robin Li explained the three major opportunities of Chinese Internet existence, namely: intermediate industry, Picture Reading Times, dominated by application. Among which, the “Picture Reading Times” means that the mainstream of Internet content is turning to images from words. Various major sites are no longer restrain users to upload pictures, thus the new era of picture reading has come, and the sites with main business of pictures will experience a better development and growth along with this trend. As a result, the term of “Picture Reading Times” has attracted everyone’s attention once again.

The dynamic and non-dynamic images of Picture Reading Times, film, advertising, MTV, network, and Cartoon are affecting modern people overwhelmingly. A recent survey showed that nowadays, we obtain 60% to 70% society information by way of image. Thus, human society has entered a true “world image era” predicted by Heidegger, namely image has become a dominant way to grasp the world.

The so-called “picture” of Picture Reading Times does not simply refer to the static pictures, paintings, drawings, etc., but a new way of transmission with concrete vision and

images and a way to change people's way of thinking. The concept of "picture" has been expanded to the graphical symbols that may convey information through modern electronic, acoustic, optical, photographic means and video as well as network multimedia from the traditional graphical symbols of drawing, writing, engraving and painting. And graphic expression has entered into the multimedia integrated mode of immaterial, interactive, three-dimensional, dynamic, sound and light and others from the original material, simple, flat and static mode. And the graphics application scope has expanded from the original poster, newspapers, books and periodicals to such graphics including information graphics, television graphics, film graphics, environmental graphics, maps etc ... "[1] P65

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF "PICTURE READING TIMES"

The arrival of "Picture Reading Times" signifies that the world has entered into an era of visual imagery symbols affecting on human sensory awareness. The way of visual is being more and more prominent, and people tend to percept and understand the world through "watching" (also accompanied by listening). The dependence on "watching" and the burden borne by "watching" is one of the characteristics of this era. As a result, in the present society, from print publications to electronic media, and from outdoor advertising to daily record, the way of image has become a common way of understanding and perceiving things, and has entered into family and personal life with relevance to personal spiritual life.

IV. DEVELOPMENT TREND OF "PICTURE READING TIMES"

Picture Reading Times is an inevitable trend of social development which is a medium generated in modern context to adapt to modern life. Just as the boom of poetry in the Tang Dynasty, the popular of Ci in the Northern Song of Five Dynasties, and the prosperity of novels and operas in Yuan and Ming Dynasties, they are the inevitable products of the times. Moreover, Picture Reading Times possesses its own advantages that words cannot compare with. Pictures and images can break through the language and geographical limitations and be accepted by broader population. As Hermas Gemsheim said: "Photography is the unique 'language' that can be understood all over the world, which links the human among all the nations and cultures with influence beyond politics, and reflects the real-life events in the place where people enjoy freedom, enabling us to share others' hopes and expectations to clarify the political and social environment, becoming the human and inhuman witness of human." [2] P141-142 As a result, the extensive popular of photography - pictures followed by video - film and television, especially the extensive use of digital multimedia, renders an unprecedented rapid growth of the image products output. The increasingly abundant picture products make the modern life always grow together with images.

V. PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE ART EDUCATION WITH THE UTILIZATION OF "PICTURE READING TIMES"

Picture Reading Times comes over unannounced, which we should take advantage of. "Picture-reading" has been an excellent method to improve the current college students' art quality education with its unmatched advantage. China has proposed the slogan of popularizing art education in regular colleges in 1988, and later formulated the "Overall Plan for National School Art Education". In October 2005, a seminar about college aesthetic education curriculum setting and textbook writing was held by National College Aesthetic Education Research Association. All the above have indicated that the reform of higher education in China has entered into the stage of overall cultivation of talent quality, and the stage consistent with the development trends of higher education in the world. As an integral part of quality education, art education is playing a huge role in developing students' potential, molding their character, improving their aesthetic ability, cultivating their creative spirit and promote the development of their overall quality. Meanwhile, art education is also an important way to implement aesthetic education. Therefore, under the background of today's full implementation of quality education, various colleges have attached importance to art education, which has an extremely important role to improve the overall quality of students.

Picture-reading has become one of the effective ways to conduct art education. In the Picture Reading Times, people tend to be impatient to read the large segment of texts, especially youthful college students. They tend to be attracted by the intuitive pictures, and resist the texts that provide a wider range of imagination space. Facing the dense mass of texts, they would be bored. The literature reading standards of college students are declining, and a considerable part of the college students are selecting the reading contents that are flat, intuitive, sensory stimulation with no need to think deeply. Therefore, under such circumstances, in the course of art education in colleges, we can use such relatively vivid and straightforward medium as pictures and images to spread information about art education. For example, we can learn about Da Vinci and the stories behind his paintings through movie of "The Da Vinci Code", and interpret masterpieces indirectly through Appreciation of Romance of the Three Kingdoms by Yi Zhongtian from CCTV "Lecture Room" ... Such similar examples are too numerous to mention, and students are willing and like to accept them as they are vivid and straightforward. Necessary guidance shall be given to the students in the process of their accepting to guide students into the aesthetic realm created by art, and make them feel the alive artistic images, and comprehend and understand the "implication", "purpose behind the lines" and "achievement beyond the rhyme" of the works more profoundly, and feel the artistic conception among them, comprehend the unique aesthetic implication of artistic form and artistic symbols, thus to accept the beauty of infection and cultivation. At the same time, students' humanistic spirit shall also be cultivated with effort to help them understand the humanistic connotation contained in artwork and to expand their cultural

horizons, thus to encourage them to improve their cultural psychological structure. In this way, we can teach through lively activities, why not adopt it? Therefore, in the era of picture reading, we should and be able to make rational use of photography, film, television, etc. to interpret or explain a series of relatively art theory or art phenomenon. On the one hand, the information itself is consistent with the rules of aesthetic, and on the other, they are conveying relevant information about art, therefore, the students are experiencing subtle artistic nurture while reading pictures with intangible enhance of students' artistic accomplishment.

While "Picture Reading Times" is booming, someone proposed the argument of "pseudo image era". Indeed, under the background of material desire and rapid economic development at present, the increasingly developed electronic media are stimulating people's vision with the overwhelming and constant flow images with varying quality which makes us dazzling, especially for the college students whose personal ideological value system hasn't been mature. So, while we are actively improve the students' artistic accomplishment with rational utilization of picture-reading, we shall also give necessary guidance to contemporary college students' aesthetic ability of picture reading, and strengthen their media literacy education to improve contemporary college students' media accomplishment. "Media literacy" refers to the interpretation and critical ability of people about various media information and the ability to take media information for individual life and social development." [3] P31 As a result, we shall guide students to interpret "picture-reading" correctly and enjoy it constructively through media literacy education, and cultivate students to form a healthy picture-reading and critical ability. "In the era of picture reading, you need a pair of wise eyes, and also a firm mind."

However, the straightforward and simple images make the space for people to think reduced greatly, so excessive picture reading will shrink modern people's brain with simple thinking, and words just make up this shortcoming. As a cold medium, text has low legibility with a high degree of audience participation, so people will read text accompanied by the thought and imagination, and therefore "if there are a thousand readers, there will be a thousand Hamlet. ""There are thousands of texts, but movies are all the same." Therefore, the Picture Reading Times has brought modern people into a type of fast reading succeeded by a "shallow reading" generation. This is an indisputable fact, but also a problem can not be ignored. "The prevalence of shallow reading and spread of utilitarian reading have reflected the fickleness and ostentatious of the general mood of society. What is worrying is the damage to such deep-seated books as history, literature, philosophy and others that will determine the future national development. And reading crisis is not alarmist to some extent. "One expert of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences said that the difference between fasting reading culture of Picture Reading Times and the book reading culture with traditional roots is that one is "wide" and one is "deep". So drawing nutrients blindly through television and networks will develop an impetuous attitude which satisfies with a smattering of knowledge. As a

result, we shall advocate reading books while following this trend. "No knowledge can be acquired without their own reading, thinking and practice, and any attempt to study on classics through fast reading is absurd." Reading books can improve personal critical thinking skills, visual literacy and aesthetic ability on the one hand, and on the other, we can break away from learning about society merely depending on picture reading created by the "second reality", but really to contact with social reality by their own. Thus the contemporary college students may distinguish the good ones in the face of various images that are both imaginary and real, and take the useful ones for their own use, without excessive indulging in images and losing themselves under the impact of visual culture in picture reading times, enabling the students who grow up under the background of visual culture in picture reading times to obtain cultivation about aesthetic and improve their own artistic aesthetic ability and artistic accomplishment.

VI. CONCLUSION

There are unlimited opportunities in Picture Reading Times coexisting with challenges. In fact, the images and text are inseparable, and from the point view of visual anthropology, the two are integrated and complement each other. A simple text message mode does seem boring, and it is not easy to understand and remember. The introduction of the image has solved this problem to some extent. Therefore, in Picture Reading Times, we shall use this medium development in a reasonable manner, making it one of the excellent methods to improve contemporary college students' artistic quality, meanwhile, we shall not ignore the words. Promote contemporary college students to get down and read more in their spare time, combine picture reading and book reading with integration of "watching" and "thinking", thus the real role of pictures and images can be played to truly achieve the goal of improving contemporary college students' personal artistic accomplishment and realizing their overall development.

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