



Research on Folk Art Teaching in Normal Universities in the Context of Promoting Traditional Culture

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Abstract

Traditional culture which manifests the values, view of life, and world outlook established by the Chinese nation in long-term production and life has also become the cultural gene of Chinese nation. Folk art as one of the main carriers of traditional culture created by the masses in daily production and labor carries the people’s expectations for a better future life and records folk custom activities. This paper first analyzes the abundance and diversity of folk art resources. Second, it analyzes the importance of carrying out folk art teaching in normal universities, conducts in-depth discussion on folk art teaching model in normal universities in the context of promoting traditional culture: a) Folk art teaching should be integrated with other courses; b) It is necessary to carry out social practice of intangible cultural heritage of folk art; c) It is necessary to construct folk art education system.

Key words: Traditional culture; Folk art; Teaching

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INTRODUCTION

The extensive and profound traditional culture with a history of 5000 years has condensed the spiritual pursuits of hundreds of millions of Chinese people. The sparkling

insights have always been the spiritual source for the Chinese nation to forge ahead, which has constituted the spirit and moral integrity of the Chinese people. The ideology and concepts that have been transmitted have deeply penetrated into the hearts of every Chinese people. The report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China points out to “deeply excavate the ideological concepts, humanistic spirit, and moral norms contained in Chinese excellent traditional culture, and inherit and innovate in respond to demands of the time so that Chinese culture can present its permanent charm and style of the era.” Traditional culture which manifests the values, view of life, and world outlook established by the Chinese nation in long-term production and life has also become the cultural gene of Chinese nation, which are unique national identity formed during the process of making achievements, knowing frequency changes, and cultivating equality. Folk art as one of the main carriers of traditional culture created by the masses in daily production and labor carries the people’s expectations for a better future life and records folk custom activities.

Folk art has always been closely correlated and integrated with folk culture regardless of its cultural connotation, expression form, or creative concept, and it is no exaggeration to say that folk art has essentially become the primary visual symbol of folk culture, which is undoubted course inseparable from the support of traditional culture. It is because of this that more and more folk art are included in the national-level, provincial-level, municipal-level, county (district) level intangible cultural heritage lists. However, it is a pity that as people’s current spiritual and cultural life is becoming more and more abundant, modern civilization and imported culture have greatly impacted the survival space of folk art. A lot of folk-art categories have been extinct or are endangered to disappear. In this case, it is the duty of normal colleges and universities to consciously undertake the responsibility of inheriting and protecting folk art, and

to open up a new world for the sustainable development of folk art. Folk art with high artistic value can provide plentiful teaching resources for art education in normal universities. This paper studies the folk art teaching in normal universities in the context of promoting traditional culture.

1. THE ABUNDANCE AND DIVERSITY OF FOLK ART RESOURCES

Folk art deeply entrenched among the people also serves the people. After the development for thousands of years, it has grown and developed stronger, and has established a relatively mature system. Based on the function of folk art, it can be divided into practical folk art and decorative folk art. But there is no clear boundary between both as they were created by the masses to record little things in their daily life and reflect people's inner emotions. According to the visual effects of folk art, it can be divided into three-dimensional modeling folk art and plane modeling folk art. Three-dimensional modeling folk art includes cloth products, clay figurines, festive lantern, dough modelling. Plane modeling folk art includes printing and dyeing, paper-cutting, and printmaking, which is mostly characterized by relevantly obvious original ecology and originated from the daily life of the broad masses. The broad masses of the people often take folk art as one of the main ways of self-entertainment in their daily labor and study, incisively and vividly display their innermost thoughts in artistic ways. People's personal thoughts on family, society, and life are condensed in folk art works by using free creative methods. As thus, folk art works are usually endowed with strong "individualistic" characteristics.

China is a multi-nationality country composed of 56 ethnic people, with a vast territory and a long history. Because of the abundant human resources, natural resources, and geographical resources in China, the art form of folk art is colorful and impressive. The ancient Northern Shaanxi Plateau has cultivated Ansai paper-cutting and Fengxiang New Year pictures, the fertile Sichuan Basin has cultivated Sichuan figured satin, and the abundant Jianghuai Plain has fostered Qinhuai festival lanterns and Huishan clay figurines. The Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau has fostered cross-stitch embroidery and batik figured cloth. It can be seen that folk art has always been displayed in colorful and vivid forms around us. Although it is not necessarily exquisite and magnificent, it can immediately capture our hearts. Folk art has always carried various cultural factors, including emotional needs, folk customs, and propitious implications. Taking Northern Shaanxi cloth tiger as an example, its image was originated from an ancient totem. After 5,000 years' lagging development, the image of Northern Shaanxi cloth tiger has already evolved from the original totem

pattern to a cultural symbol of Chinese nation with both a series of spiritual values endowed by the public, such as town houses, eating ghosts, exorcising evil spirits, and expelling monsters. Even in nowadays society with extremely advanced technology, a fair amount of people still insist on making tiger-head shoes and tiger-head hats for their juniors or children with the hope of getting protection from the gods, forging ahead with the vigor and vitality of the tiger, gaining big fortune and great profit.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF CARRYING OUT FOLK ART TEACHING IN NORMAL UNIVERSITIES

"National School Art Education Development Plan (2001-2010)" promulgated by Ministry of National Education in May 2002, clearly indicates that schools should organically incorporate outstanding domestic and overseas cultural and artistic heritage in the process of school education so that it can become the main driving force for students to grow up and become elites. At the same time, students are required to master the relationship between art and aesthetic taste, national customs. Under the guidance of the spirit of the document of the Ministry of Education, folk art content has been appropriately introduced to elementary and middle school art textbooks prepared throughout the country. For example, in the class "Folk Toys" in elementary grade three textbook "Fine Art" published by People's Education Press lists a series of folk toys with local characteristics, including black tiger-shaped pillow (Qingyang City, Gansu Province), clay sculpture Afu (Wuxi City, Jiangsu Province), cloth rooster (Qianyang County, Shaanxi Province). Hunan Fine Arts Publishing House has also incorporated folk art such as wheat straw, nuo opera masks, and New Year wood-block prints into junior high school textbook "Fine Art"; Jiangsu Fine Arts Publishing House has also specially published "Local Art Textbook" so that primary and secondary school students can familiarize folk fine arts. Due to the introduction of folk art, most elementary and middle school students can better understand the craftsmanship, artistic characteristics and spiritual connotation of folk art.

Advanced normal colleges and universities as the main carrier of cultivating primary and secondary school teachers must train a large number of primary and secondary school teachers with high professional quality for basic education by closely integrating the current development trend of basic education both in teaching mode and teaching content. However, it is a pity that the fine arts teaching in normal universities fall far behind the demand of basic education. With no attention to folk art teaching, normal universities adopt studio teaching as the main teaching model, mainly focus on traditional Chinese painting, sketch and oil painting as teaching content. Folk art in the awkward condition of "marginalization"

has restricted students' career development planning to a certain extent. On this account, it is necessary to construct folk art teaching model in advanced normal colleges and universities, which can not only diversify the art education and expand students' professional competence, but also introduce folk art to the classroom and campus, and bring new dawn to the sustainable development of folk art.

3. FOLK ART TEACHING MODEL IN NORMAL UNIVERSITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF PROMOTING TRADITIONAL CULTURE

3.1 Folk Art Teaching Should Be Organically Integrated With Other Courses

Folk art teaching in normal colleges and universities must be organically integrated with plane composition, art appreciation, color composition and other courses. In the teaching process of the plane composition course, teachers can take in-depth exploration of traditional cultural connotation of folk paper-cutting by starting from the black and white composition of folk paper-cutting with modern design concept, analyze the production techniques, composition, design features of folk paper-cutting together with students from the perspective of plane composition. In the teaching process of the art appreciation course, teachers can deeply interpret the cultural connotation, essential characteristics, and social background of folk-art works based on traditional culture. In the teaching process of the color composition course, teachers can instruct the characteristics of the five colors (cyan, red, gold, black, and white) to students with colored drawing, facial makeup, New Year pictures and other folk art works as carriers, match and combine them skillfully, stress that only by using the five colors can students achieve best effect of color composition mainly because of the recognition of "gold, wood, water, fire, and earth" in traditional culture, which is also the specific manifestation of yin-yang and five elements. In the teaching process of the visual communication course, the production techniques of folk art can be recorded in forms of text, pictures, videos by using advanced teaching equipment and the charm of folk art can be permanently preserved at the same time, which is extremely important for the inheritance of folk art. In a word, the organic integration of folk art teaching with other courses can allow students to master the creation features of folk art without restraint.

3.2 It Is Necessary to Carry Out Social Practice of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Folk Art

Fine art is strongly practical and folk art is no exception. Carrying out social practice of folk art intangible cultural

heritage is particularly important. First of all, advanced normal colleges and universities can establish a series of folk art themed art communities based on the intangible cultural heritage of folk art according to the actual situation. For example, a normal university in Sichuan has established a folk art association, which specially leads students to get close to Sichuan figured satin, Qin Huai festival lanterns, Huishan clay figurines, and other the intangible cultural heritage of folk art. It has not only carried forward regional folk customs, but also enriched campus life, and propagated national feelings. It can serve multiple purpose Secondly, advanced normal colleges and universities can carry out art performances related to the intangible cultural heritage of folk art, allowing young students to strengthen their understanding of the intangible cultural heritage of folk art through the performance. They can also create better display platforms for folk art creation, allowing students to better understand the traditional culture behind the intangible cultural heritage of folk art. Thirdly, advanced normal colleges and universities can organize practical activities such as folk art culture festivals, social surveys of folk art inheritors, establish off-campus training bases according to students' interests, and teach students through lively activities so as to develop students' interest in inheriting folk art.

3.3 It Is Necessary to Construct Folk Art Education System

To build up cultural self-confidence in youth students and integrate folk art content into fine art education, advanced normal colleges and universities need to draw on the wisdom of the masses and establish a sound folk art education system so that it can give full play to its educational heritage role. Firstly, it is necessary to set folk art courses according to local conditions. As the majority of students in normal universities are from the provinces where the universities are located, it is easier for students to accept folk art in their location. In view of this, advanced normal colleges and universities can set up "optional + compulsory" folk art courses in combination with regional characteristics. Compulsory courses must contain the content of regional folk art appreciation for students to know local folk art works by means of appreciation, including the craftsmanship of folk art, color laws, and survival mode of folk art. Optional courses should contain the content of folk art heritage and serve as an approach for students' in-depth mastery of the spiritual connotation and folk-custom connotation of local folk art. Second, it is necessary to regularly invite the intangible cultural heritage inheritors of folk art to give lectures in advanced normal colleges according to changing circumstances so that young students can truly feel the charm of folk art through oral instruction and the inheritors can be provided with a stage to show their talent.

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