

On the Cultivation of Art Design Values From the Perspective of Cultural Self-Confidence

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Abstract

The cultivation of art design values requires the involvement of culture, and the horizon of cultural self-confidence. The development of Chinese design needs to have a strong cultural self-confidence in the designs of the nation, and the basis of design confidence lies in the self-confidence of art design values. Active cultivation of the values of art design helps to promote national self-confidence and cultural self-confidence, and accelerates the development of national designs.

Key words: Cultural self-confidence; Art design; Values

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INTRODUCTION

Modern higher design education has no unified teaching model and system in the world. The teaching systems and models are not the same in the same country, even in the same area. The great differences of the conditions, folklore, geography, culture, market, resources and other aspects make it impossible to form a unified design education system. Germany's modern design education benefited from the idea of the Bauhaus Design Institute and the Ulm Design Institute, whose teaching system

focused on design practice and students' rational thinking, with the purpose to cultivate designers with sense of social responsibility. The modern design education of America is different from the rigorous and rational German design. It is born to serve commercial art designs. However, in the end of the 1960s, Victor Papanek (1927-1999), a famous American design theorist, put forward the idea that the fundamental purpose of the design is to serve the broad masses of people in his book *Design for the Real World*, which makes American design education world universally thinks that the basic task is to cultivate designers with sense of social responsibility. The design education of China has undergone three stages—arts and crafts education with the main purpose to inherit, the learning and passing on education in late Qing Dynasty and early Republic of China, and design education of modern times. The practice of 100 years' design education makes design education model of China become mature gradually and forms a design education system with Chinese character. Nowadays, the design education of domestic colleges and universities in China not only focuses on cultivating students' design ability, but also pay more and more attention to the cultivation of students' art design values.

1. THE CORE OF DESIGN EDUCATION IS TO CULTIVATE ART DESIGN VALUES

1.1 Art Design Values Are an Ethics, a “People-Oriented” Sense of Social Responsibility

The discussion of the cultivation of art design values has been a hot topic in design education. Wang Min, a professor from China Central Academy of Fine Arts, said that the goal of design education is to cultivate professionals with ideas, creativity, excellent aesthetic qualities and good professional skills, independent personality and creative spirit and strong sense of social

responsibility (Wang & Peng, 2015, p.14). Design School of Jiangnan University also puts the cultivation of micro-technical ability and macro-literacy of humanistic care as its fundamental task for its sophomores and juniors. It also puts forward the *121 integrated innovative talent training mode* according to its own characteristics (Wei, 2016, p.132). Lu Xiaobo, the president of Academy of Arts & Design in Tsinghua University, thinks that a university is not an institution to cultivate “talents” whose purpose is to pursue material gains, but to let students have right values and sense of responsibility (Cui & Luo, 2016, p.2). The views of the three educators not only reflect that the design education of contemporary colleges and universities pays attention to design functions, but also reflects that colleges and universities stress humanities and emotions of designs. Art design is a kind of creative art in the process of human development. Its main contents are to satisfy human’s material production and daily life. It is for the people from the date of its birth. So the goal of contemporary design education is to cultivate designers who design for human benefit.

1.2 Art Design Values Are a Kind of Cultural Spirit, and a High Degree of Self-Confidence in Culture

Design art is not only functionally reasonable, but also has aesthetic value. Functional rationality is based on science and technology, art and human need. That is to say, one end of human need is connected with science and technology to solve practical problems, and the other end is connected with art to create and solve aesthetic problems. Science and technology are the basis of the design. Design is the medium to transfer science and technology into social wealth. Aesthetic perception of art is a kind of advanced spiritual activity of human beings to transform nature, and the production of enjoyment in human design practice. Science and technology, art and human form art and promote its development, thus every nation has its own traditional culture. In modern society, traditional culture has great influence of human life. We live in traditional life, on the one hand, we pass on tradition consciously or unconsciously, on the other hand, we leave today’s tradition for tomorrow by creation. So our tradition is with us all the time.

Colleges and universities are responsible for the task of cultivating high-level professionals in the country. The level and the result of the colleges and universities to pay attention to the connotation of humanistic spirit and national sentiment have great influence on the moral fashion and value orientation of a society, which has huge significance to the improvement of the whole citizen quality, and even to the development of a country or a nation (Zhu, 2015, p.6). Colleges and universities cultivate students’ practice ability by a course or many courses, making them know the nature of design, and enter the world of creation. But design education should

not only cultivate craftsman, but the craftsman with thoughts, full of emotions and with critical spirits (Qian, 2016, p.42). Reasonable treatment of traditional culture and establishment of culture self-confidence are the core content of cultivating qualified designers’ artistic design values in colleges and universities.

2. CULTURAL SELF-CONFIDENCE IS THE PREMISE OF CULTIVATING ARTISTIC DESIGN VALUES

In 2014, General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: “We should clarify the history, the development and the basic trend of Chinese traditional culture, and also clarify the unique creativity, value concept and distinctive characteristic of Chinese traditional culture, enhancing the confidence of our culture and values.” Later, he further illustrated:

Literary and art workers should be good at extracting the essence and drawing energy from the treasure of Chinese culture, maintaining a high degree of confidence in their cultural ideals and cultural values, maintaining a high degree of confidence in their cultural vitality and creativity, and making their works the spiritual strength of motivating the Chinese people and the Chinese nation to advance continuously. (Xi, 2016)

For the design education in colleges and universities, it is the focus of the current design education to clarify the dialectical relationship between cultural self-confidence and artistic design values and cultivate college students’ cultural self-confidence and artistic design values.

2.1 China’s Outstanding Culture Is the Fertile Soil of Art Design Values

As a national gene rooted in the Chinese people, Chinese excellent traditional culture has influenced our way of thinking and behavior, and provided us with a deep ideological foundation and a rich treasure trove of thought. It is the root and nutrition source of contemporary art design values. Rooting deeply in the fertile soil of Chinese culture, art design values are inherent, and exhibiting the essence of Chinese traditional culture. The ancient design values have always been the most stable factor in contemporary art design values, such as Confucius’ “combination of fine nature and appearance”, “to be harmonious with time, environment, material, and art” in “Kao Gong Ji”, “Being and Not-being grow out of one another” of Taoism, and so on.

2.2 Western Culture Is Useful to Optimize the Artistic Design Values

Mr. Lu Xun once wrote: “It is a good way to apply excellent rules from the foreign countries and make full use of them, which can make our work more perfect. It is also a good way to choose legacy of Chinese culture and integrate it with contemporary culture.” The development of Lu Xun’s literature works also apply to the

development of art design. If we pay more attention to the heritage of our own culture while we develop our design ability, introduce and apply the latest western science and technology and design techniques, our art design values will keep dynamic forever.

2.3 Cultural Self-Confidence Is the Most Basic in Art Design Values

Cultural self-confidence in art design means that a nation, a country or a designer sincerely respects, trusts and cherishes the excellent traditional culture; truly esteems, holds fast and sticks to the contemporary core value system. The country, nation, or designer highly affirms its own culture connotation and value, and has firm belief to the characteristics and vitality of the culture. In essence, design confidence is the understanding and identification of a nation or designer to its or his own culture. The nation or a design has great confidence of the vitality and prospect of its or his own culture, and also has tolerance attitude to foreign cultures.

3. ESTABLISH CULTURAL SELF-CONFIDENCE, AND EXPLORE THE PATH OF ART DESIGN VALUES

3.1 Focus on the Knowledge Dissemination of Traditional Design History, Making College Students Have Confidence in Their Own Designs

Cultural self-confidence under the design education is the security manifestation on the premise of cultural conflict, invasion and erosion between countries, and also the necessary guarantee of realizing design behavior, design value concept under the background of culture identification. Cultural self-confidence in design education, on the one hand, is to cultivate students' cultural horizon, aesthetic ability, thinking methods, and the design thinking and nation spirits which are rooted deeply in Chinese excellent traditional culture. On the other hand, it emphasizes the heritage and innovation of design culture, making design fully integrate with culture and approaching more closely to Chinese excellent traditional culture. From the first aspect, the realization of the design education targets needs to rely on the traditional Chinese design history.

3.1.1 The Premise of Cultural Self-Confidence Is to Learn and Understand the Traditional Culture

In design education, to learn and understand the traditional culture is to extract wisdom which is in line with modern lifestyles, and solves life problems of modern people, inspire modern innovation designs, and connect the life of modern people, which is not to seek culture for the sake of culture. The knowledge dissemination of design history is not equal to the ordinary history dissemination, because design is not only the embodiment of the life

styles of people, but also the vivid refraction of science and technology, economic thinking and aesthetic concepts in the modern world. How to grasp the artistic characteristics and developing laws of traditional design from the perspective of aesthetics, and understand deeply the philosophical thinking and national psychology of the times is the key issue of design history dissemination.

3.1.2 Chinese Culture Identity in the Context of Globalization

With the development of the Internet and large data, the knowledge of a region, a nation or a field will be instantly spread to every corner of the world. Design education in universities pays more and more attention to the digging and exploiting of the resources from the new media and internet. The design works of students aim to integrate with the world, which set off Chinese style in Britain, France, America and other countries. Therefore, universities should strengthen the teaching of traditional design history, making students draw wisdom of design thinking from the essence of its own culture while they accept foreign culture, and cultivate the design talents with cultural deposits, deep thinking and social responsibility. To make students have strong "cultural identity" is the question for design educators to consider.

3.2 To Carry Out Practical Teaching, Making University Students Realize the Historic, Contemporary, National and Cosmopolitan Characteristic of Art Design

Practical teaching treats national cultural art and traditional creation culture as its design source, and also draws design spirit and philosophy from them, constructing the design works which have Chinese characteristic, correspond with the contemporary audience aesthetic taste, and adapt to contemporary international design concepts.

3.2.1 Basic Modeling Training

Basic modeling training mainly drills students' "shape-space" cognition ability, with cultivating students' design thinking, design consciousness, design expression ability as its core. The teaching contents can be the typical Chinese traditional decoration, design works, such as pottery pattern, bronze pattern, porcelain modeling, book binding, Buddha statues and mural art, paper-cut art, clay sculpture art and so on, which are easy to get and understand for students. The teaching forms can be copied, imitation and transformation. Copying is the most basic and common form of teaching in design teaching. Copying can not only enhance students' understanding of traditional creation art, but also train students' modeling and coloring ability. Imitation is the imitative creation, which can create on the basis of preserving the style and charm of the original works. It can also imitate the decorative styles and color configuration. Transformation is the shifting and conversion of the original graphics from expression means, forms, materials and other

aspects (Xue & Peng, 2016, p.79), aiming to let students experience that the design works with the same purpose can be expressed by different materials and design forms.

3.2.2 Proposition Design and Application

Proposition design means to select design elements relating with Chinese traditional culture and carry out activities with the way of proposition. Such as the designs with the themes of the sun, the moon, gold, wood, water, fire, soil and other Chinese characters; the designs with the themes of Dragon Boat Festival, Chong Yang Festival, Spring Festival and other festivals; the designs with the themes of kites, clay dolls, papercut and others forms of folk art; the common good designs with the themes of reading, care, protection and so on. All of them can be teaching proposition.

The purpose of propositional design is to transform the design work into a product which is suitable for people to use, so proposition design and application are an indivisible whole. Before the completion of the proposition design, students should not stick the graphic to the article forcibly, but consider comprehensive factors such as people, materials, fashion trends, technology, culture and so on, and then create design works with both national and modern characteristics.

CONCLUSION

In this era of diversification, college design students should have the art design value of “cultural self-confidence”, which is the strong guarantee of “foreignism”, “international” and “commercial”, and also the imperative factor to promote the harmonious development of national design industry. In the teaching

process of design majors in universities, the education of cultural confidence should penetrate into all teaching links, making design the important carrier of cultural heritage.

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