The Contemporary Value of Liberal Education Though in Design Education

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Abstract. The long-term lack of education already thinking of design education in China is an indisputable fact, proposed by the Ministry of education to promote the connotative development of higher education is the reform of design education opportunity, if we can introduce the concept of liberal education, the non-utilitarian mind Wei and focus on training for design education will bring new look specific embodied in: resolve the contradiction between the idea of the University and the social reality; moral quality crisis and save design education; enhance cultural self-confidence, promote the cultural heritage of the three aspects of design.

Introduction

For more than 20 years since the development of Chinese modern design education, the examples of western modern design education, such as Bauhaus and design school, have been taken as a reference. But “in Chinese, Bauhaus spiritual core scientific and rational thought and German cultural design philosophy is converted into dogma and vague teaching mode technology, become synonymous with modern design of a technology. The spiritual concept and value orientation highlighted by this transformation confirm the immaturity of contemporary Chinese design and the design education form the practical level”. [1] This passage tells the reality of modern design in China.

The ancient Greek civilization form the original impetus of ideological education, Chinese design education sound source is long-term because of lack of ideological education and lead to the design education is not perfect is on the one hand, on the other hand is the education of “education” gradually far. There is no doubt that the design education system in China needs to be improved, but before that, the educational thought should be established first. The Ministry of education has made clear that we should comprehensively promote the connotative development of higher education”. This is to say, the development of colleges and universities should pay attention to the school idea, the school culture, the quality of teachers and the quality and level of personnel training, which is also the requirement of the new era. The first thought of education reform, education at the time if the design can be thought of liberal education is introduced, utilitarian and pay attention to the cultivation of the mind will bring new look for design education.

Implication of Liberal Education Thought

Liberal education originated in ancient Greece, and it was the earliest educational thought in Western culture. The scholars in Taiwan translated liberal education into liberal education, and humanistic education was also a branch of it. Free education has evolved can be classified into three stages; the first stage is the classical liberal education, proposed by Aristotle, the main meaning is “for three, to emancipate the mind and spirit, and do not avoid specialized employment preparation education”. Although the purpose is to achieve the harmonious development of wisdom, moral and
physical, but the main service of free education in this period is the nobility, with great limitations; the core content of free education Renaissance is the classical language and literature, still exclude the practical and utilitarian education content, training object the general public from outside, is to cultivate the social elite; modern liberal education, facing the great challenge of science education and vocational education, carried out a strong argument with the times, represented by John Henry Newman (1801-1890), a famous British educator. His book “ideal university” systematic and comprehensive elaboration of liberal education thoughts: first, freedom is the goal of education to improve the mental ability; secondly, universities should provide knowledge education universality and integrity, rather than narrow specialized education. Third, knowledge itself is the purpose. “Without knowledge, there will be no real culture”. He said. “Knowledge is also a tool for expanding the mind”. [2] The ideal has been geared to all educated people.

Throughout the evolution of liberal education, we can see that the cultivation of the mind, the emphasis on humanistic knowledge and the development of human connotation, and the opposition to utilitarian education are the ideals that liberal education has been adhering to.

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Strengthen the Training of the Mind and Resolve the Contradiction of Reality

The author understands that the root of the contradiction between the university idea and the social reality comes from the contradiction between the humanities education and the science education as well as the professional education. Admittedly, with the industry in 4, Internet plus age, lack of professional education so that students will face many problems in the society, and even cause the students employment difficulties, especially emphasis on design education practical ability and practical experience. To emphasize the professional knowledge and problems: how to cultivate cultural literacy and comprehensive quality of students? What is the place of education or university occupation training institutions? With a strong spear the same strong shield will result in both ends, because the humanities education and the science education is as important as the lack of which one education incomplete. Should we change our thinking? Schiller’s point of view is very enlightening: the more realistic the problem, the more it is to use non-utilitarian way to solve, only in this way can’t be eager for quick success and instant benefit, counterproductive. This is Schiller in the “script of aesthetic education” that treat the ideal and realistic attitude: from the angle of human nature, to solve the conflicts between ideal and reality through art aesthetic way. To resolve the contradiction between the ideal of University and the social reality, has the same effect and value outside the box.

We often mistake that many practical problems should be solved in a realistic way, because we are accustomed to putting all the problems to material poverty. Ideal and reality can be summed up in general with spirit and material, then the contradiction between university idea and social reality is the contradiction between spirit and material.

The role of free education in the cultivation of the mind is unquestionable, and the cultivation of the mind is actually of great benefit to professional education: once a person learns, appreciates, reason, compares, and analyzes; once a person has independent judgement, with the spirit of criticism, so that he may not immediately become a product designer, architect or engineer, but his mental state has allowed him to ease in the field of design knowledge.

Build a Sound Personality, Improve the Quality of Education

In our country, the education at present, Hong Kong patriotic who had published such Lear’s comment: “true to the long-term risks of education is education target’s utilitarian tendency. First, the quality of university education is still relatively high, but only the students’ cultural knowledge learning, some students have mastered a certain cultural knowledge and professional skills, but lack of dedication and sense of responsibility, there is no necessary conservation. This is the misunderstanding caused by the utilitarian goal of education”. [3] The evaluation of cut into the
present-day evils, set people thinking. But when we criticize some young people’s moral problems, should we reflect on whether our education has gone wrong?

In addition to the moral crises of education, the design education also faces the new crises of declining education quality because of its own particularly. In the face of market need a lot of design talent stimulation, design institutions continued to expand its scale, many university have also set up the design department or college enrollment., the art students most had no special training in art, the foundation is weak or no basis, the traditional admission standards and quality challenges. Although the higher education are expanding enrollment, but the art with other art music, dance performances, drama is required talents and interests, but many scholars into or out of the pressure students, or for employment in considering temporary art training before he. Thus, cultural literacy is thrown into the side, artistic accomplishment has not been fully coupled with culture; whether professional college or university, with the needs of the market, the lack of hardware and software in the case of blindly set up the new profession. In this way, the design education in our country has suffered the double crisis of morality and quality.

If the liberal education advocates non-utilitarian education, the design education can not only see the utilitarian side, it is important to provide the best education that can’t be measured by money. This kind of education not only gives the educated strong professional skills, but also enables the educated to be good at thinking, to think and to explore, and to shape a sound and perfect personality.

To Enhance Cultural Self-confidence, and Promote Design Heritage

The humanistic education in ancient China was mainly represented by Confucian education. Through inquiring master the art of government is to heart, sincerity, self-cultivation to strengthen morality, family, country and the world, is the goal of Confucian education. In can be seen that the humanistic education in ancient China shows a strong color of moral education. However, this great educational thought in the Opium War forced open China used abroad, the western culture entered gradually imbalance, to today, probably only in the literature to find a trace. In our traditional culture, being discarded is not only educational thought, but even our cultural self-confidence is lost. In the design of education, the design of this course several easy to its name, and ultimately didn’t escape the fate of being eliminated. This is only a small part. Why is this, Zhang asked a pattern really out of data? Not pattern out, is our own lost self-confidence in front of western culture. We are pleased to think that the understanding of the design of the history of the people understand the modern design; with a design course will be able to train international master of design. We throw away our design culture for thousands of years, thinking it’s outdated. The famous “China chair” is designed by master Hans Wegner design in Denmark, but in the shape of a chair, it is not difficult to see that it is a China Ming style chair for the prototype design, and is the perfect combination of tradition and Modernity (Figure). Foreign designers are able to China interpretation of traditional culture, Hans Wegner is said to be the “first type” Home Furnishing book China see the Ming style chair copy photos in a new book, which had a strong interest in, and guide him in the next decades design career. Therefore, the ancient Chinese thought to let foreign designers today is still amazing, and we are blindly copying and imitation of foreign design, lead to the design of our country become more and more can’t find the root, so we began to panic, to design culture. We see a lot of cultural labels, but no cultural connotations of the design. Tsinghua University Department of industrial design, Academy of Fine Arts professor Yan Yang said: “the national characteristics not deliberately pursue even hard against the appearance of the product on it should be the designer of a natural emotion understanding after the outpouring of national culture.

A Latin American educator once said: “do not just abandon our own traditions simply because it is not in accordance with the cultural traditions of the most powerful country in the world”. Japan and South Korea’s design have been able to occupy a place in the international area, and have a high degree of identification, that is, the two ethnic groups in the study of western advanced technology, while retaining the traditional culture of the nation. Japan proposed “the foreign culture Japanized” thought in the Meiji period, called on the people in the study of western culture but also
to retain the traditional Japanese culture. Therefore, the prosperity of a nation is not only the strength of technology and economy, but also the inheritance of traditional culture. Otherwise, glorious history does not bring glory now, or even Egypt’s “lost civilization”. The humanistic spirit of liberal education advocated by the higher education can guide the design to find the traditional design culture, make the traditional culture to inspire innovative design, but it is also good for students to accumulate cultural consciousness should be.

Epilogue

In 1996 twenty-first Century, the International Education Committee published a report “rich education contains”, which refers to: “the fundamental role of education, it seems more than ever is to ensure that everyone enjoys them to give full play to their talents and as far as possible to firmly grasp their own destiny and thoughts, judgements, feelings and imagination free”. So if the economy is the lifeline of the country, education is the lifeblood of the national spirit of the design education in China only teach knowledge and technology without paying attention to the cultivation of personality and mind, the result is not only personal happiness, could eventually make the whole society into a crisis of happiness. Looking forward to the design education in China to fill the gaps in thought, led the modern people from the quick way of thinking and way of life, to regain the “rich chrysanthemum, leisurely Nanshan see” mood.

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