

Research on Mr. Feng Zikai and Impressions of His Works

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Abstract—Mr. Feng Zikai is a famous painter born in the late 19th century and is active in the 20th century in China. He is an artist who masters six arts and is good at writing and painting. During his whole life, he has met several excellent teachers. With the encouragement of the teachers, he firmly believed in the art path until the end of life. For example, Master Hongyi discovered Feng Zikai's great painting ability. Mr. Ma Yifu taught him the thought of Chinese culture. The teaching of Mr. Xia Mianzun in the study of Chinese language gave Feng Zikai a good literary foundation. Thanks to the teacher's correct guidance, Mr. Feng Zikai created his own unique painting style and appearance in art. This article explains the content of the paper by talking about Feng Zikai's life experience and analyzing his works.

Keywords—*literati painting; Master Hongyi; life-protecting painting set; apprentice*

I. INTRODUCTION

November 9, 2019, is the 121st anniversary of the birth of Mr. Feng Zikai. A year ago, the National Art Museum of China launched the exhibition of Mr. Feng Zikai's 120th anniversary. This exhibition contains more than 150 sets of works, manuscripts and objects from Mr. Feng Zikai. The exhibition shows objects of his six identities as painters, essayists, art theorists, binding and layout designers, music educators, and translators.

II. MR. FENG ZIKAI'S PEACEFUL THOUGHTS

Born in the 24th year of Guangxu of the Qing Dynasty, Mr. Feng Zikai was born in this declining feudal society. However, he had a very high ideal and ambition. He once said: "My heart is occupied by four things: the gods and stars in the sky together with the arts and children in the world". He raised the child to the level of art and the height of the gods and stars, which showed his love for children was beyond ordinary people. Mr. Feng Zikai loves children throughout his life, constantly drawing and writing articles about children. He was praised by Yoshikawa Yujiro as "the most artist-like artist in modern China".

To commemorate the 121st anniversary of the birth of this great artist, the author would like to write a little about the impression that Mr. Feng Zikai left to miss this great artist. He is extremely good at writing among many artists, and his work has left a very deep impression on the public. The commemoration of Mr. Feng Zikai's 120th anniversary

exhibition attracted a large audience to see, revealing that in today's very impetuous society, there are still a large number of viewers and readers who like his works, which proves that Mr. Feng Zikai's great charm in terms of art and personality.

Mr. Feng Zikai's thoughts and paintings have a great influence on the later period of China's liberation. He is influenced by Buddhism and has compassion and kindness. He hopes that people have good intentions. Many of his popular comics are very affectionate in combination with national education. The works with moral sense are very close to life, and the texts in the paintings are also easy to understand. When the public see the works, they will be educated, humbly, fully embodying the thought that do not fail to do good even if it's small; do not engage in evil even if it's small.

III. THE FORMATION AND IMPRESSION OF THE STYLE OF MR. FENG ZIKAI'S WORKS

The main impression left by Mr. Feng Zikai is the following five points.

First, Mr. Feng Zikai obtained the guidance of many famous teachers in the process of learning to draw. When he was studying at the First Normal School in Hangzhou, the teacher who taught music was the famous Mr. Li Shutong, which is what people often call Master Hongyi. It was Master Hongyi who discovered his talent in painting. He told Feng Zikai: I have taught so many students in Shanghai and Hangzhou. But I have never seen a student who has made such rapid progress in painting study as you. In the future, you can... After listening to this, Mr. Feng Zikai decided to stick to his persistent pursuit of art and his lifelong dedication. It is the acquaintance and support between famous teachers and students that make Feng Zikai an artist who is still loved by readers for more than 40 years after his death. In 1919, after graduating from the First Normal School, Feng Zikai and his classmates founded the Shanghai Specialized Normal School in Shanghai and taught drawing courses. He went to Japan to study in 1921. In the process of studying in Japan, Mr. Feng Zikai discovered that the Japanese cartoonist Yumeji Takehisa's works are very interesting, so his works are also deeply influenced by Mr. Yumeji Takehisa. "The paintings of Yumeji Takehisa have both Western-style composition and the taste of Oriental painting, which means that its shape is Western. Another characteristic of his paintings is the rich poetic interest."

Feng Zikai said that the former Japanese cartoonists mainly used humors, satires, and games as the theme of painting, while Yumeji Takehisa drew some contemplative works while removing some interesting subjects. This is the difference between Yumeji Takehisa and others. He pays great attention to the taste of serious life and the joys and sorrows of fate. In the painting, there is deep love and compassion for all living beings. This style catches Feng Zikai's attention as if he has found a confidant. In addition to being influenced by Mr. Yumeji Takehisa, there are two Chinese painters who are also very inspiring to Mr. Feng Zikai. One is the famous scholar Chen Yanke's elder brother, Chen Shizeng, who was also the talent scout of Mr. Qi Baishi to let him achieve a gorgeous turn in Beijing. Mr. Qi Baishi also said that Mr. Chen was the only sworn friend for him among lots of friends. Mr. Chen Shizeng is not only good at the creation of literati paintings, but also able to depict the characters of the Republic of China in a very refined way. For example, in the series of works of the Beijing Customs Map, he restored the environment of people's lives in Beijing in the early years of the Republic of China. The characters in the painting are mainly for depicting the people at the bottom of the society: junk dealers, camel-drivers, storytellers, mourners... There is something interesting when having ragged verse on the screen. Everything in the world can be drawn into the painting. This painting of Mr. Chen Shizeng is a new trend of integrating literati painting and sociality, which has great sense of the times. It was a bold exploration of the traditional elites in the early years of the Republic of China to find a point of integration between the populist trends. Feng Zikai learned the world view from Chen Shizeng and promoted the difference between the modernization of Chinese painting and the painting of literati. In his later works, he showed the secularity of painting and the greed of human beings, as well as the humor of the Chinese characters in paintings.

He also learned the methodology from a Taoist priest in the Qianlong and Jiadao years of the Qing Dynasty, that is, the Qiru lay Buddhist — Zeng Yandong. Zeng Yandong has a geek title in the Qing Dynasty art circle. He portrays the characters and the marketplaces. He is extremely simple and flexible in using his pen, and he also has the style of Wei and Jin Dynasties seen in Dunhuang. Although there are a few strokes in the expression of the character, the work also can show the vivid image of the character. His work is greatly different from the previous figure painting. It was not only Mr. Feng Zikai who was influenced by Zeng Yandong's paintings, but also the famous Shanghai school painter Bailong Shanren, Wang Zhen.

In addition, he has his own creation in the process of obtaining the guidance of famous teachers. He is good at telling modern themes with traditional techniques, so many people read his paintings and feel very cordial, and it is because Mr. Feng Zikai's works use the brushwork of Chinese ink painting to describe the life of the Chinese at that time, many readers really like Mr. Feng Zikai's paintings. His paintings are based on "converting the ancients" and "ego existing", which means that while studying the ancients, he has his own opinions. His paintings are not limited to the

traditional landscape and figure paintings praised highly by the people since the Northern Song Dynasty. It is a picture of the real life that can be seen in front of you. To give a typical example, Mr. Feng Zikai has a very classic painting, "The Bicycle of Zhanzhan", in which the Zhanzhan is the son of Mr. Feng Zikai, Feng Zizhan. Because Zhanzhan saw others riding the bicycle but he didn't have one, he took two fans to imitate. After seeing it, Mr. Feng Zikai drew the bicycle of Zhanzhan. He used simple brushwork lines to easily describe a very interesting thing. The depiction of these mortal things is also the innovation of Mr. Feng Zikai's paintings. He solved the combination of subject matter and painting, and created his own artistic features.

Third, his work makes people feel innocent and vigorous vitality. Mr. Feng Zikai's greatest feature is to maintain a free heart in the fickle political life of the last century. It is precisely because of the spirit of freedom that he has not made a painful choice between his artistic creation and politics. He was not completely defeated by reality and was not betrayed by history. "The Bazhi Toutuo's poem goes: "I love the children for they are as pure as the lotus without any dust. Even if they are beaten and scolded, they don't really get angry. In face of various situations, they still keep quiet hearts; when encountering advice from others, they mend their ways of behaving. It is a great pity that with years passing by, the naiveness of them may be changed by material desires." And this is also a real reflection of Mr. Feng Zikai. In his work "The Origin of War", it humorously describes a scene that two children tussled and there was an empty paper box with the word of BISCUIT on the ground. When you saw this English word, you already knew the reason for the war was because of a box of biscuits. In the picture, the two children fought with hands and feet with angry staring eyes, and although the facial features and movements of the limbs are minimalist lines, they are also vivid. In order to enhance the vividness of the picture, the puppy and chicken are added to the picture. The puppy saw the two children fighting, rushed forward and looked back. The old hen led the chickens and walked forward quickly, while the last chicken opening wings for being afraid of dropping behind. The general turmoil that people said was also shown in the picture.

Fourth, Mr. Feng Zikai used the feelings of retreat to do things for the engagement. He is an artist with religious color. Another teacher in Feng Zikai's life is Ma Yifu, a master of Chinese studies. The relationship of him and Ma Yifu is brother-like, and Ma Yifu is like both a mentor and friend to him. When visiting Ma Yifu, Mr. Feng Zikai wanted to draw a batch of works named "Impermanent Album", which is based on his plaint over the impermanence of ancient poetry. Ma Yifu immediately listed many "impermanent" Buddhist stories and poetry collections for Mr. Feng Zikai to benefit him. In order to give directions to Feng Zikai, Mr. Ma said, "The impermanence is permanence, the impermanence is easy to draw, and it is often difficult to draw the permanence." This sentence is filled with wisdom, as a result, he who was always immersed in pessimism and depression wakes. Later, Mr. Feng Zikai said, "I haven't heard such words for a long time. He has rescued me from the fire house

of impermanence." Later, Mr. Feng Zikai himself lamented so. It is precisely because of Mr. Feng Zikai's use of the retreat to do things for the engagement and the use of this very simple way of dealing with the complex and impetuous world that makes many people in today's society feel fresh when seeing Feng Zikai's paintings. This can also explain why so many people like Mr. Feng Zikai's paintings and watch Mr. Feng Zikai's exhibition. Although people are in the human world, but their heart is yearning for freedom. This can also explain why paintings with contradictory and entangled mentality like Laoshu Paintings can be popular and be liked by so many people. Although people are struggling to cope with the burden of their social roles, everyone's heart hopes to be relieved, and it is also the commonality between Laoshu Paintings and Mr. Feng Zikai.

Fifth, the teacher and student relationship between Mr. Feng Zikai and Master Hongyi is moving. The author already read "Yearning for Mr. Li Shutong" written by Mr. Feng Zikai a long time ago, and later found the original text of "Professor Hongyi for the Youth" written by him before liberation. There are so many moving paragraphs: Master Hongyi became an overseas student from a charming prince, and then changed to a teacher who preached and taught, and after that, he turned into a Taoist priest, later, he became a monk who stood aloof from worldly success. No matter which part he played, he was so decent. He is like an all-powerful actor: in the opera performance, if he plays the Laosheng-role, he will be exactly like a Laosheng; if he plays a painted role, he will be very like a painted character... This is all due to his "serious-minded" attitude. The above has explained the first feature of Mr. Li's personality. The second feature of Mr. Li's personality is "versatility". It is precisely because of the "seriousness" and "versatility" that Mr. Li Shutong has the "promising light" that Mr. Xia Mianzun said. For the reason why Mr. Li Shutong chose to be a monk, Mr. Feng Zikai explained this way: the true Buddhism, is lofty and great, and is better than everything. Readers can believe this if they go into their personal meaning seriously. For example: Why do people learn? — In order to be educated. Why do you want to be educated? — In order to do business. Why do you want to do business? — To satisfy your life desires. Then if you are asked why you want to satisfy your life desires, after you think about it, you can't find any basis, and it is difficult to answer. If you think about it again, you will feel doubts and voids. When you think about it for the third time, you may feel depressed and sad. At this time you have to consult "philosophy" and his brother "religion". At this time you will believe that the true Buddhism is above all else. Therefore, Master Hongyi gave up his wife and children, education and artistic creation, and practiced Buddhism. It is like the birds fly out of the deep valley and gather together on the tall trees, which is not a pity, but something worth of congratulation. At the time of the 50th birthday and the 60th birthday, Mr. Feng Zikai painted 50 life-protecting portraits and 60 life-protecting portraits, respectively, as a birthday present to Master Hongyi. When Master Hongyi was 50 years old, the first "Life-protecting Painting Set" painted by Mr. Feng Zikai was embellished one by one with poetic prose by Master Hongyi. There are many works with profound meanings, such as the

in the painting named "Equality": a child looked at a puppy across the way. Master Hongyi's caption reads: We are all the same flesh as living creatures, even if our name is different; the original nature is all the same. The original nature is same, and what differs is the outlook. These four sentences fully reflect the equal relationship between humans and animals. In 1939, when Master Hongyi was 60 years old, the second "Life-protecting Painting Set" painted by Mr. Feng Zikai was completed in the Guangxi bombing. Different from the first set, after experiencing the hatred of the homeland and witnessing the ruined lives, Mr. Feng Zikai made this painting set more quiet and calm, depicting the true, good and beautiful world in his heart. The preface to the second set was also written by Mr. Xia Mianzun, the teacher of Feng Zikai: the sentient beings of the world are in the rain of bullets. The appearance of the life-protecting painting sets can be described as "timely". The exuberant lotus turns red after wars. Mr. Xia Mianzun deeply understands how deep compassion is the deep friendship between the master and the apprentice. Later, Master Hongyi said that he hoped that Feng Zikai could draw 70 portraits when Hongyi was 70 years old, 80 life-protecting portraits when Hongyi was 80 years old, 90 life-protecting portraits when Hongyi was 90 years old, and 100 life-protecting portraits when Hongyi was 100 years old. Mr. Feng Zikai's reply at the time was "I shall obey your expectations". As long as I'm alive, I shall complete this entrustment. Later, Master Hongyi died in his 60s, but Mr. Feng Zikai has always adhered to the promise of "I shall obey your expectations." for his entire life. Before the birthday of Master Hongyi, Mr. Feng Zikai kept drawing life-protecting paintings. Finally, in the 1970s, the Cultural Revolution began. The society believed that the Buddhist paintings were feudal superstitions, and even his family didn't agree with his paintings. Even under this situation, he secretly drew every morning at four o'clock and finally completed 100 life-protecting portraits, which was also the sixth set of the life-protecting paintings, fulfilling his commitments with Master Hongyi. This kind of commitment and fulfillment between teachers and students is very moving, showing that both of them are true nature figures. Feng Zikai, like Master Hongyi, is very serious in his work. At the same time, he is also versatile. An accomplished teacher certainly has skilled students. It is very obvious in these two masters.

IV. CONCLUSION

Mr. Feng Zikai's characters and works are like a pure spring. As time goes by, it shall awaken many dusty hearts. This is probably the charm of Mr. Feng Zikai!

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