

The Advantages and Disadvantages of Regular Script in the Study of Calligraphy

Take Yan Zhenqing's Regular Script as an Example

Wei Zhang¹

¹Academy of fine arts, Hunan Normal University, Changsha, Hunan, China

*Email: 1663544505@qq.com

ABSTRACT

In order to explore the advantages and disadvantages of regular script in calligraphy learning, this paper analyzes their advantages and disadvantages from the positive and negative sides, starting from the definition of regular script, briefly introduces the scope of regular script, and eventually focuses on the development of Tang regular script. And then on this basis, taking Yan Zhenqing's regular script as an example, starting from the advantages, focuses on the foundation of regular script in calligraphy learning, taking tradition as a reference. Finally, discuss the teaching concept of teaching students in accordance with their aptitude.

Keywords: Regular script, Yan Zhenqing, Inscription, Calligraphy

1. INTRODUCTION

As one of the four major regular script styles, Yan zhenqing's style has been highly praised since the Song Dynasty. Su Shi had a high evaluation of Yan's calligraphy, and he said calligraphy developed to Yan's time has reaches its heyday. Mi Fu recalled his experience of learning calligraphy in his autobiographical notes, "at the beginning of learning calligraphy, I first learned to write on walls, and Yan was my model when I was seven or eight years old." At this time, Yan's calligraphy was the preferred model for many people to learn. In addition to Yan's unyielding and loyal character are admired by many people, all the people from previous dynasties believed that learning Yan's calligraphy can get Yan's character. Until today, when primary school students learning calligraphy, most of the selected characters are from Yan's, which is enough to reflect its advantages. In Song Dynasty, Mi Fu said that Yan's Xing script could be learned, and regular script was "the ancestor of ugly calligraphy". This is different from Su Shi's point of view at the same time. Mi Fu thought that Yan style regular script had lost the "interest" of ink after being engraved with steles, and the decoration was too heavy. Later in the Yuan Dynasty, some people also pointed out the disadvantages of Yan style regular script, or its obstacles. At that time, most of the northern Jin people wrote in Yan style regular script, and Zhao Mengfu said

why they didn't learn other people's regular script. They said that people could learn Yan's loyal and righteous through his calligraphy. In the view of this, Zhao Mengfu did not object. At the same time, he proposed that Wang Xizhi's calligraphy style was unique in ancient and modern times, and his character was also good. Since then, under the influence of Zhao Mengfu, this situation has been greatly changed [1]. So what are its advantages and disadvantages, when others learn Yan regular script as the entry object today?

2. THE ADVANTAGES OF CHOOSING REGULAR SCRIPT AT BEGINNER LEVEL

In ancient times, because of the practicality of regular script, everyone started with regular script and regarded regular script as the basic skill to support calligraphy. From here we know the ancients' attitude towards the introduction of regular script. Because of their practical convenience, the ancients began to learn regular script from small regular script, then middle regular script, and finally big regular script, which is opposite to the steps of today's practice. They all started from big regular script, then middle regular script, and then small regular script. Therefore, small regular script is the foundation of foundation and it was treated as a daily lesson.

From the point of view of regular script itself, regular script is the most complete in terms of strokes compared with cursive seal script. Taking the eight methods of Yongzi as an example, a word contains lots of strokes such as dot, horizontal, vertical, fold, skim, lift, tick, pick, and draw. In order to achieve the accuracy of strokes in the process of writing, we should pay more attention to the turning points of lift and press, so as to achieve a comprehensive understanding of strokes, and to achieve a better effect. If you starting from seal script, the strokes of seal script only have horizontal and vertical intersection and arc combination, so compared with regular script, seal script is monotonous. [2] Compared with seal script, Li script only adds more strokes on the basis of seal script. Of course, compared with regular script, Li script is also insufficient. Although regular script is developed from Li script, it is not necessarily richer in strokes than regular script. Compared with cursive script, regular script is more basic. It starts from cursive script at the beginning. Without the support of regular script, its strokes will look thin and not heavy enough, and it is easy to make the strokes of characters light and smooth. Su Shi said: "calligraphy is learned from regular script, and then turn to cursive script. If you can't write properly, you can't write well. It's like you don't learned how to speak properly, you can't speak well." [3] He was trying to emphasizes that the style of regular script is complete and the form is dignified.

In modern times, regular script has become a common choice of calligraphy learner. On the one hand, it comes from the influence of traditional calligraphy pedagogies, on the other hand, it comes from the praise of modern calligraphers. Shen Yinmo said, "you must learn Chinese characters in regular script first, so that you can practice all kinds of writing skills." In addition, Baijiao also thought: "beginners should learn regular script first, especially, regular script that from the Sui and Tang Dynasties are the best options for beginners, it is a general reasonable consideration." Why do they all think that regular script is suitable for beginners, and this view has gradually become a consensus in the field of calligraphy, and has also become a prototype. This just reflects the advantages of regular script. Regular script from Tang dynasty is an entrance to the art of calligraphy. Starting from the Sui and Tang Dynasty style of regular script, the paper traces back to the Han and Wei dynasties and integrates seal script, Li script and Xing script.

Yan's representative works in regular script include Duobao Tower stele, Yanqinli stele, Yanjiamiao stele, Magu Xiantan Ji, Zhongxing song of Tang Dynasty, etc. Their common point is that they all belong to inscriptions, among deferent stages of Yan's life. The most important and well remained stele is the Duobao Tower stele (figure 1), it belongs to the early stage of Yan's life, which were written at the age of 44. There

are several reasons for beginners learning regular script from Yan Kai's Duobao Tower stele.

No.1. The rubbings are clear. As shown in figure 1, it has very little damage and is easy for beginners to identify.

NO.2. Precise stippling and rigorous structure. Because it was Yan's early work, his personal style was not fully mature and his writing style was rigorous. It can be seen that he was influenced by Ouyu Chu's calligraphy style in the early Tang Dynasty [4].



Figure 1 The Duobao Tower stele.



Figure 2 The Yan Qinli stele.

3. THE DISADVANTAGES OF CHOOSING REGULAR SCRIPT AT BEGINNER LEVEL

Compared with the introduction of seal script and official script, they are more abundant than regular script in stippling. However, the writing skills of seal script and official script themselves are easy to master, which makes the cost of beginners learning calligraphy lower. So, under the premise of calligraphy as art, regular script is easy to become a simple standard character. Under the objective influence of teachers and time energy in learning, people might separate beauty and stander from calligraphy. For example, many parents send their children to learn regular script, the ultimate goal is to help their kids recognizing new Chinese characters, which is completely deviate from the common character of calligraphy art, and some bad teachers could lead the students to the wrong way of learning calligraphy.

In the learning process of Yan's regular script, the teacher plays a key role. If you write Yan Qinli stele (figure 2) as shown in figure 2, we can see that the monument is weathered seriously, the content are incomplete and fuzzy. It is immature to start on this basis. Therefore, the model for beginners must be a clear rubbings or calligraphy. It is difficult to connect

with other calligraphy styles after the inscription which is carved with a knife, the marks of the calligraphy brush will hardly be highlighted. Although Mr. Qigong once said, "see the calligraphy marks through the knife marks", it is difficult for beginners to have the ability to see it. Therefore, a good teacher is important for beginners.

The taboo in regular script practice is inflexible, which is the most common mistake for beginners to commit. Writing and calligraphy are two levels of expression. Obviously, calligraphy is closer to art. From the perspective of writing, it is okay that showing some inflexibility during the practice of regular script writing, but it is necessary to eliminate it from calligraphy art. On the basis of Chinese characters, we must ensure the quality of the stippling, and the use of the calligraphy brush. The quality of the stippling is the guarantee of entering calligraphy art. No matter how you do it, it is easier to accept seal script than regular script. There are no complicated strokes in seal script, but there are lines that are free and easy to indulge. Of course, there are also some in cursive script. However, it is more difficult to choose cursive script for beginners' study.

Calligraphy, as an art of stippling and lining, if beginners could master lines very well, it is very beneficial to learn calligraphy. So flexible pedagogies are needed, which means changing calligraphy style when you are feeling weary. Because beginners can't improve the quality of stipples and lines by learning regular script all the time.

In Ming and Qing Dynasties, regular script became the first choice for examiners because of the emphasis on writing in the examination of imperial examination. Among them, the most popular ones are small regular script Huang Tingjian and Yueyi theory. Only because of the exquisite stippling and the result of beautiful layout. However, for a long time, their writing looks very much the same because they are all keen to learn regular script. Shen Du and Shen Yan brothers were the most representative ones in Ming Dynasty, and their calligraphy called "Taige style". In Qing Dynasty, this kind of rigid regular script was called "Pavilion style". The calligraphy of the presiders and compilers of these bibliographies was mostly of fine and neat style, and there was no interesting change. Although regular script was rigid and unified at that time, it still had its practical value. Today, it still has its artistic. As a beginner, when it is based on artistry, it is not allowed to be deeply stuck in the rigid style. We should take the "Pavilion style" as a warning. Of course, as Liu Heng said, "the combination of calligraphy in Pavilion style and imperial examination has become a special phenomenon in the field of calligraphy." [5]

4. CONCLUSION

On the problem in the study of regular script, we have discussed from the positive and negative aspects. Every coin has two sides. It is feasible if we do not deal with it in one-sided and absolute way. Especially in the study of calligraphy, we must apply to the law of action, that is, the Confucian said "too much is too much". While understanding the common character of community, we should strengthen the performance of monomer. Of course, beginning of any form of art is easy, but in order to maintain the correct direction on the basis of a higher level of improvement, it is inevitable that teachers treating their students according to their aptitude. Learning calligraphy is learning an art, its artistry is reflected in "present arbitrary but not out of order".

REFERENCES

- [1] Huang Dun. Manyi regular script[J]. Chinese painting and calligraphy, 2017 (2): 43
- [2] Zhang Xiangqi. On regular script teaching in higher calligraphy education system [J]. New curriculum learning, 2010 (08): 15
- [3] Huang Jian. Selected calligraphic papers of past dynasties [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai calligraphy and painting publishing house, 1979:314
- [4] Shu Xinshui. On the background factors of the development of regular script in Tang Dynasty [J]. Chinese calligraphy, 2017 (04): 174
- [5] Liu Heng. Qing Dynasty volume of Chinese calligraphy history [M]. Jiangsu: Jiangsu Education Press, 2018:45-49