

A Brief Analysis of the Relationship Between Ancient Literature and Contemporary Humanistic Quality Education

—Take Senior High School Education as an Example

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ABSTRACT

This paper starts with the connotation of ancient literature, and by taking contemporary high school education as an example and analyzing the status quo of contemporary humanistic quality education and the influence of ancient literature on the quality education of high school students, the question of how to improve the importance of ancient literature in high school education is discussed in depth, so as to improve students' humanistic quality.

Keywords: *ancient literature, education, high school students, humanistic quality*

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the 1970s, in China, the concept of humanistic quality education for high school students has gradually entered the middle school classroom, and a series of remarkable results have been achieved. In recent years, with the continuous change and transformation of the external environment, coupled with the imperfections and uncertainties that appeared at the beginning of the education reform, there are some egoists among the senior high school students, and there is also a phenomenon of impetuous academic atmosphere in the education of high school students. A survey report on the humanistic literacy of high school students showed that, there are different degrees of defects in the cultivation of high school students' humanistic literacy.

2. RELATED WORK

2.1. Main manifestation of the lack of humanistic quality

2.1.1. Lack of humanistic knowledge

With "speed" and "efficiency" becoming a necessary condition for obtaining high scores in the college entrance examination, more and more high school teachers and senior high school students tend to adopt a "fast-food" teaching and learning mode. In the face of great study

pressure, driven by the concept of "high scores is the most important", students no longer pay much attention to or read classical books after class. On the contrary, unrealistic online novels with rich imaginations can better cater to high school students' taste and satisfy their curiosity. Although the China's four great classic novels are must-read books, to save time, when teaching these novels, the teachers simply explain these masterpieces by providing them with syllabus or guide, and the students only spend a week on reading the "essential" excerpt of a masterpiece when they take extracurricular classes. Under this utilitarian educational philosophy and teaching method, the students gradually become indifferent to the "nutrients" they should really learn from textbooks. For this reason, students cannot develop the long-term habit of reading books and cultivate their ability of understanding the connotation of works by settling to the content of the book. If things go on like this, senior high school students don't have the opportunities to accumulate the humanistic knowledge, which will affect the cultivation of their humanistic qualities.

2.1.2. Incorrect values

In today's society, new things emerge in endlessly, and because senior high school students lack discernment and they can't make a clear distinction between right and wrong, they easily become interested in and imitate new

things that are not very healthy. For example, due to excessive pursuit of uniqueness and unconventionality, the senior high school students break away from the core values of society; due to excessive pursuit of money and creature comfort as well as utilitarian benefits, the senior high school students lack motivation to achieve their desired and follow their beliefs; by emphasizing self-interest and continuously deepening self-centeredness, the senior high school students have weakened their sense of social responsibility and collective consciousness. The lack of healthy values will lead to a decline in the humanistic quality of high school students, and even a decline in overall national strength.

2.2. The main factors affecting the lack of humanistic quality

2.2.1. The rapid development of the Internet and electronic devices

With the increasing influence of the Internet and electronic devices, the user population is gradually becoming younger. It is common that every high school student has a mobile phone. [1] However, the good and bad are intermingled when the online contents are concerned and there lacks strict control over network information, the senior high school students is extremely vulnerable to its negative impact; second, the development of short videos, comics and online novels has had an impact on traditional paper-based reading, which prevents high school students from deeply understanding ancient culture.

2.2.2. Incomplete education system

The college entrance examination is based on the test-oriented education system, focusing more on the examination of instrumental and technical knowledge, and there isn't enough emphasis on flexibility in the use of knowledge and student literacy; for example, in the senior high school textbooks, the proportion of ancient literature is less than that of modern and contemporary literature and foreign literature; when designing the examination papers for the college entrance examination, more focus is put on the rote memorization of knowledge points. The process of answering questions has become templated based on similar patterns, and the humanities and knowledge skills of candidates can hardly be reflected in the standard examination.

3. THE CONNOTATION AND IMPORTANCE OF ANCIENT LITERATURE

3.1. The connotation of ancient literature

3.1.1. The content of ancient literature

Literature is a social phenomenon that belongs to the superstructure, and with the language as the main tool, through image and typical generalization, it reflects the truth of life and the nature of society, so as to achieve the purpose of educating the people. [2] In other words, literature has a certain educational effect. In China, ancient literature refers to all literary works circulating in the society from ancient times to the May Fourth Movement, including ancient myths and legends, primitive ballads, poems, lyrics and music, novels, biographies, etc. According to the historical period of ancient Chinese literature, Chinese literature can be divided into the following seven parts: pre-Qin prose, The Songs of Chu and poetry in the Han Dynasty, literature of Wei and Jin dynasties, literature of Tang and Song dynasties, literature of Yuan Dynasty, literature of Ming and Qing dynasties and late Qing literature. Important works include "The Book of Songs", "The Songs of Chu", "Water Margin", "A Dream in Red Mansions" and so on.

3.1.2. The Characteristics of China ancient literature

There are many achievements made in ancient Chinese literature. In the long process of development, ancient literature has formed its main characteristics, including nationality, lyricism, enlightenment, humanity and pluralism. The most distinctive feature is its nationality, and different from the cultures of other countries, ancient Chinese literature shows unique regional style and cultural connotations unique to China. For example, unlike the openness and boldness of Indo-European civilization, and the freedom and wildness of American culture, ancient Chinese literature embodies the peacefulness, tolerance, and stability unique to the Central Plains culture. "Lonely smoke straight in the desert, long river and a round sunset." With a few words, the distinctive regional characteristics of the desolate and far-reaching frontier fortress is highlighted, which is mixed with a trace of loneliness that the author feels through the plain expression; "long time has passed since I left home, and everything has changed. Except the lake in front of the door, which ripples in the spring breeze." From the poem, it can be known that, Chinese people are attached to their native land and unwilling to leave it, just like fallen leaves returning to the roots. Lyricism is also the main feature of ancient literature, which is most obvious in ancient Chinese poetry. Most of Chinese ancient scholars would pour out their heart or by reciting

poems, or they wrote the poem to express their frustrated feeling for unsuccessful official career and being unappreciated, or to express their lonely and solitary feeling when they are in a strange land, or their attachment to their spouses or yearning for their beloved ones. The educational aspects are reflected by the cultivation and appreciation of sense of hierarchy, mission and responsibility. The dualism of superiors and inferiors, being patriotic and loyal to the throne, and being committed to the well-being of people. Humanity is to encourage people to carry forward the humanistic spirit, and as early as the time of Confucius, people proposed to shift the perspective for the understanding of the world to human beings rather than human beings' dependence on nature. Therefore, ideas such as "The benevolent loves others" and "keep ghost and gods at a distance", and a philosophical system of thoughts related to the five elements of "destiny-courtesy-benevolence-knowledge-moderation" is constructed. Diversity is usually reflected in the categories of ancient Chinese literary works, and in addition to poems, lyrics, music, novels, biographies and other different genres, there are sub-genres under each genre, and each genre is designed to express and convey different sentiment and values. For example, novels can be divided into novels of people and novels of monsters.

3.2. The importance of ancient literature

3.2.1. A brilliant pearl in the history of literature

Ancient Chinese literature is a shining pearl in the history of literature and a cultural gene rooted in the Chinese nation. Therefore, it is inevitable to promote the education of ancient literature in the class. Innumerable great achievements have been made in the history of the development of ancient Chinese literature. There is rhythmical prose characterized by parallelism and ornateness, poetry in the Tang Dynasty featuring openness and inclusiveness, Song Poems which is not only bold and unconstrained, but also graceful and restrained, and the important influence of ancient Chinese literature on literature itself is reflected in the diversity of the styles and types of literature, which enhances the breadth and depth of literature. As long as the diversity is concerned, there are a number of genre approaches unique to China's ancient Literature, such as rhythmical prose, poetry in the style of li sao, a poem of eight lines, Song Poems and script for story-telling (in Song and Yuan folk literature) and so on.

In fact, in ancient China, the literature is closely related to the politics and education. Wang Anshi, a widely known poet, is also a politician written into the annals of history. All the scholars in the pre-Qin period, which are known for the hundred schools of thought, are the men of literature and writing, and Wang Shouren, a prime minister of Ming dynasty, also founded the philosophy of the mind to educate the people while

resisting foreign aggression and pacifying the interior. Therefore, the value of ancient Chinese literature and its impact are not limited to the literary level, and it has become the epitome of Chinese civilization and culture.

3.2.2. The spiritual essence of Chinese civilization

Ancient Chinese literature has reflected the inner spiritual temperament of the Chinese nation. Ancient literature help people shape correct outlook on life and values, and many excellent works in ancient literature contain rich wisdom of the ancients, and it can not only help people find spiritual comfort, but also point out the direction for future development. Xuncius proposes that, the nature follows its own laws, and this law will not be changed by Yao's keen intelligence and excellent judgment or Jie's tyranny. This sentence shows that the change and development of nature follows its own laws; on the other hand, ancient literature can also enhance the humanistic cultivation and aesthetic ability of the Chinese people. The beauty of rhythm, nature, and human feelings contained in ancient literature have shaped the inner quality of Chinese civilization. For example, Tao Yuanming loves the chrysanthemum, and he writes, "while picking asters 'neath the Eastern fence, my gaze upon the Southern mountain rests." The poem describes the leisure and broad-mindedness he pursued all his life. Zhou Dunyi loves the lotus, and he writes, "I love the lotus because it is unsullied from mud", which is actually a metaphor for his noble character. Su Tungpo "cannot occupy without the bamboo", and plum blossoms, orchid, bamboo and chrysanthemum becomes special culture symbols for the moral courage of Chinese nation.

3.2.3. An important component of world culture

With its unique artistic charm and value, ancient Chinese literature has an important influence on world literature and has become an indispensable part of world literature. Leibniz, the pioneer of German Classical Philosophy, once said in *Novissima Sinica*, that, we didn't believe that there was a nation in the world, whose ethics was more perfect than ours, ways of conducting themselves in society more advanced than ours. Now we found the inspiration from China, an oriental country. [3] This statement undoubtedly confirms the contribution that the ancient Chinese literature makes to the world civilization. In addition, the ideas of kindheartedness and Great Harmony (an ideal or perfect society) unique to China's ancient literature is introduced to the western countries, and the cultural connotations of verses, ditties, odes and songs, that is, the teachings of loyalty and filial piety, has added momentum to the development of world civilization. The diversity of its culture and the exchange between the civilizations makes China's ancient literature irreplaceable as a component of Chinese civilization.

3.3. The situation of teaching of ancient literature in senior high school

In view of the connotation and importance of ancient literature, in the education of senior high school, more and more attention is paid to the cultivation of ancient literature literacy, which is reflected in the teaching materials and curriculum settings. In the "recommendations for reading in and out of class" section, in addition to *The Analects of Confucius*, *Mencius* and *Chuang Tzu*, cultural classics such as "Lao Tseu" and "A History of China" have been added. Students are required to read ancient poems extensively, The range of recommended books covers various works at different periods from the pre-Qin to the end of the Qing Dynasty, so the students is not only required to inherit classic culture, but also to pass down the excellent traditional culture. [4] In terms of course setting, in addition to compulsory courses, the credits of elective courses have been appropriately increased, so that the students can more freely choose the content they are interested in, and the original intention of learning Chinese and cultural knowledge is respected so as to improve the core Chinese literacy of students. Correspondingly, in the college entrance examination, a variety of evaluation methods such as paper and pencil tests, on-site observation, dialogue and communication, group sharing, and self-reflection can be used, hereby improving the efficiency of evaluation and enhancing the scientificity and reliability of evaluation. In doing so, China's education pays more attention to the training and examination of Chinese literacy, rather than rote memorization of book knowledge or "Duck-stuffing" type of teaching. he examination is made in terms of students' flexibility in the use of knowledge and their extra-curricular knowledge. In addition, it is suggested that the scores shouldn't be the only standard for the academic performance, and the purpose is to make sure that the students can develop long-term habit of reading and ability of understanding the connotation of book by settling to the content, so as to improve their humanistic literacy.

4. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ANCIENT LITERATURE AND THE EDUCATION OF HUMANISTIC QUALITY IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

4.1. Course of Ancient Literature helps improve the humanistic quality of senior high school student

4.1.1. Ideological and moral aspects

It helps improve the literacy of senior high school students but also the social construction of ideology and morality by teaching Ancient Literature, and to some

extent, the establishment of the core values of socialism such as honesty, friendliness, civility, harmony and equality is promoted, many of which come down in one continuous line with the spiritual connotation contained in ancient literature. The ideological and moral education that has been emphasized by ancient Chinese for thousands of years through the ancient literary works are still filled with wisdom in today's society. For example, as mentioned at *Zhu Family Instructions*, "for a porridge or a meal, one should know that it is hard-won; for the half thread of the clothes, one should also always remember that it is quite difficult to produce these materials." these words can be used to exhort the senior high school students who want for nothing to make a sustained effort to practice strict economy in the new era; as mentioned at *To Encourage Learning*, *Mister Lv's Spring and Autumn Annals*, "if you respect the teacher, hen don't regard his identity or wealth as important." The purpose is to exhort the senior high school students to respect teacher and his teaching, and not to gone off the rails; "Since heaven gave the talent, let it be employed!", the lines of "Bringing in the Wine" by *Li Po* advises the senior high school students not to indulge in the decadentism culture or believe those passive argument such as "the world isn't worth living". The senior high school students should trust themselves and challenge a new height bravely and aggressively. Needless to say, Ancient Literature can have a profound impact on the cultivation of high school students' humanistic qualities.

4.1.2. Literature attainment

The education of ancient literature can improve the overall literary accomplishment and aesthetic taste of high school students. Today, with the rapid development of China's economy, people are seeking to satisfy their material desires while the literature attainment is belittled by the society and such unhealthy ways and customs are quire prevalent. Without doubt the senior high school students who are barren spiritually can be nourished from the education of Ancient Literature. When we read and recite the Ancient Literature, we can see the wonderful sceneries of "when the rosy clouds are drifting away with a lonely wild duck across the sky at sunset, you look down and catch the water blending into the vast expanse of evening sky in the distance."; we can see a bashful beauty as described in the lines of "fully blanketed is the peach buds, twilight bestrews the flowers' coming into bloom." ; we can understand the joy of a man who accomplishes both success and fame from the lines of "riding a galloping horse proudly in the spring breeze, you can appreciate all the gorgeous flowers in the capital in one day". At the same time, we can learn to do the wording and phrasing, antithesis and parallel sentence, and to express our feelings in an implicit way. Compared to the tourist attractions and shopping malls, these are more useful in helping us to gain spiritual connotation.

4.1.3. national consciousness

The education of Ancient Literature helps promote the national consciousness of high school students. We can feel the spiritual temperament from the excellent works of Ancient Literature, which urges us to constantly strive to become stronger, to seek unity and solidarity, and love peace, and fulfill our lofty mission. As said by scholar Zhang Zai, "For heaven and earth, for the people, for the saints of the past to continue learning, for all ages to safeguard world peace.", and by poet Lu You, "Therefore, on the day when the army of the Song Dynasty regained the lost ground in the Central Plains, hold a sacrificial activity, and don't forget to tell your father the good news!" They are patriotic and loyal to the throne, and they consider it their responsibility to watch for the people all over the country. They set good examples for the students who would understand that they are now shouldering equally great historical responsibility and enhance their national consciousness.

4.2. how to enhance the role of Ancient Literature in the education of senior high school, especially in enhancing the humanistic quality of students.

In terms of the content of teaching materials, it is suggested that the proportion of reading and appreciation of ancient literary works, the broadness of ancient literature knowledge and the diversity of literature types can be increased; for example, works of different ideology and genres can be added, such as Book of History, the Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons and Peony Pavilion etc. Therefore, the students are encouraged to read different types of literature books, thereby arousing their interest in the ancient Literature. At the same time, it is also suggested that, certain cultural knowledge necessary for learning the Ancient Literature should be taught through the textbook, such as antithesis and rhyme-scheme adopted by the poetry of the Tang Dynasty, and the rhythm and wording adopted by Song Poems. Selective courses can be provided to explain the relationship between the characters in "A Dream in Red Mansions" and the confronting between different camps. By taking the courses, the students are able to learn more knowledge on classical literature, take serious of the knowledge of ancient literature by learning it, broaden their scope of knowledge and improve their humanistic quality. [5]

From the perspective of school and family, it is suggested that, the "Duck-stuffing" type of teaching and the compulsive learning should be changed, and more guiding and accompanying methods should be introduced to affect student's character by environment. The teachers are not advised to request the students to memorize the

ancient poetry or to guide the students through the quick review of outlines. It is suggested that, the teacher should set a scenario where the students can have dialog with the ancient people as if they were personally on the scene and they can return to the original way of reciting poem by rhyme schemes, and build a link between ancient and modern cultures, and encourage the students to understand the creative inspiration and ideas of ancient people by put themselves in the poet's position. The purpose is to develop their identification with the culture and ideas and enhance their humanistic quality. At the same time, the teacher should guide the students through the cultural ancient books patiently, and nourish the students with the millenarian civilization and ideas, so as to improve their humanistic quality.

At the level of society, spoof on China's ancient scholars, misuse of head portraits of ancient scholars, and bringing shame on their identity should be completely eradicated so as to correct the unhealthy ways and customs prevalent in the social and online environment, so that the senior high school students who are easily affected by the external voices at the stage of Cognitive Development are able to develop correct understanding of historical value of China's ancient Literature and establish correct values and social ideals. By learning the Ancient Literature, the students will be impressed by the noble character and moral courage of ancient scholars, and they can consciously improve their humanistic quality and become a person useful to the society.

From the perspective of national policy, it is necessary to promote and pass down excellent traditional culture and quintessence of Chinese culture; for example, it is suggested that the Ministry of Education should adopt corresponding measures for education reforms by increasing the proportion of Ancient Literature in the textbook of senior high school; the system of National College Entrance Examination should be reformed by returning to the classic of Chinese studies; moreover, the campus knowledge contest can be held to encourage active participation of students; moreover, media such as newspaper, books and periodicals, Television Programme and internet can be introduced, and popular activities such as "Chinese Characters Dictation Competition" and "Everlasting Classics" can be held to provide universal education of Ancient Literature, and promote the excellent traditional culture and the knowledge of Chinese ancient civilization, and pass down the essence and spirit of Ancient Chinese culture among the senior high school students.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, when the social ideas and educational ideas are concerned, the good and bad are intermingled, and the schools and the education system didn't attach much importance to the ancient Literature, so the poor

humanistic quality becomes a prevalent phenomenon among the senior high school students. Moreover, the humanistic colors, the moralizing function and rich history contained in the ancient Literature can help the senior high school students improve their humanistic quality during the formation of thoughts and promote the general level of national cultural accomplishment. It takes ten years to grow a tree and a hundred years to bring up a generation of good men. The issue of education is quite complicated and far-reaching, and it is a question worth ruminating for the educational world as to how to give the best education to the senior high school students.

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