

On the contemporary value of Sha Menghai's view of calligraphy in the construction of calligraphy courses in colleges and universities

Dexiang Kong*

Zibo Normal College of Higher Education, Department of Fine Arts, Zibo, Shandong, China

Abstract: In 2022, the discipline of calligraphy in colleges and universities is listed as a first-class discipline together with fine arts, which brings opportunities and challenges for the heritage of Chinese calligraphy. In a Chinese society of great cultural prosperity and development, there are not many calligraphers left. Why? Reflect on how shining the famous calligraphers were during the Republic of China. However, today's calligraphy curriculum in universities still suffers from a lack of cultural connotation and a shortage of elites, among other pressing issues that need to be addressed. Therefore, firstly, this paper focuses on Mr. Sha Menghai's view of calligraphy, such as kung fu and innovation. Secondly, combined with the problems of today's calligraphy curriculum in colleges and universities, it proposes measures such as offering national studies classes, enhancing cultural connotations, establishing family sentiments and cultivating elite models. On the one hand, it provides reference suggestions for the curriculum setting of contemporary colleges and universities in calligraphy, and on the other hand, it makes Sha Menghai's view of calligraphy manifest the value of the times.

1 Presentation of the problem

The integration of the discipline of calligraphy with fine arts as a first-class discipline in universities in 2022 brings opportunities and challenges for the heritage of Chinese calligraphy. In a Chinese society that is experiencing great cultural prosperity and development, there are not many calligraphers left. Why? Reflect on how shining the famous calligraphers were during the Republic of China. However, today's university calligraphy curriculum still suffers from a lack of cultural connotation and a shortage of elites, among other issues that need to be addressed. Based on this, this paper focuses on Mr. Sha Menghai's view of traditional and innovative calligraphy.

Secondly, in the light of the problems that exist in today's university calligraphy curriculum, it proposes measures such as offering national studies courses to enhance cultural connotations, establish family sentiments, and cultivate elite models; and setting up multiple calligraphic styles simultaneously to complement each other's strengths. On the one hand, it provides reference suggestions for the setting of contemporary university calligraphy courses, and on the other hand, it makes Sha Menghai's view of calligraphy manifest the value of the times.

2 An Overview of Sha Menghai's Calligraphy

"Mr. Sha Menghai (1900-1992) lived his life across three major periods of history: the late Qing Dynasty, the Republic of China and the new China." [1] He was a contemporary Chinese calligrapher, jinshi scholar and pioneer of higher calligraphy education, who not only made important contributions in two major fields, calligraphy and seal carving, but was also an iconic figure in the art of seal carving in 20th century China. As, seal carving is the art of engraving calligraphic forms on stone, it requires a deep knowledge of calligraphy and literature. Therefore, his achievements in jinshu archaeology, language and writing, literature, history and museums, calligraphy and seal script are remarkable. He left behind a great deal of calligraphy, seal carving and academic papers for future generations. After liberation, he also engaged in field archaeology, concentrating on the writing resources of the cultural relics of the two Zhejiang provinces. In his later years, i.e. the new period, his calligraphic style reached a place of fire and purity after the age of 80. At a glance, Mr. Sha Menghai's achievements in calligraphy were not only due to his inclusiveness of monuments and posters, but also to the fact that he had a more scientific system of calligraphy research.

Now, it is 30 years since Mr. Sha Menghai became ancient, during which time the art world has expressed its

* Dexiang Kong: 15762875651@163.com

reverence and praise for him in different ways, roughly divided into book style causes, aesthetic values and other directions of discussion. However, research into his view of calligraphy and contemporary calligraphy courses has not yet been undertaken, although previous studies have provided useful references for this paper. In this paper, we interpret his view of calligraphy in relation to the causes of his style and discuss its contemporary value in the context of today's university calligraphy curriculum.

2.1 View of Kung Fu

Every successful calligrapher is inseparable from the stage of Lin Chi with kung fu. Su Shi Yun: "Pen into a mound, ink into a pool, not as good as Xizhi that is, Xian; pen bald a thousand tubes, ink grinding ten thousand ingots, not as Zhang Zhi for Sojing." [2] The importance of the calligrapher's theory of kung fu can be seen in Wang Xizhi's ink pond and Huai Su's pen mound. Therefore, Sha Menghai's view of kung fu not only focuses on diligent study, but also on the dialectical study of "thinking" and "learning". For example, in his speech at his ninetieth birthday [3]: "The study of calligraphy is dependent on words, and without words there would be no calligraphy. To learn calligraphy, there is no model other than the calligraphy of the ancients. The main thing to do is to build on the good works of the ancients and naturally develop a new style of your own. Individuals take different paths and look different, forming a hundred flowers." This is what he considers to be the importance of kung fu in calligraphy. At the same time, he advocates the use of dialectical thinking to draw out the essence of traditional monuments and posters for copying. Since he was about thirty years old, he loved Yan Zhenqing "Cai Mingyuan", "Liu Taichong" two post, time to time study. Yan also has "General Pei's poem", or said not Yan pen, but love its divine dragon change, think breath from "Cao Zhi Temple Tablet" out, bold learning, also had occasionally participate in its method. He is not a thick ancient and thin modern calligrapher, but believes that copying monuments and posters is valuable in like, especially in unlike. For the study of monuments and posters he has a profound understanding: "to my" turn to benefit many teachers, but also to set out a way, that is, to learn a certain kind of monuments and posters, but also "poor source to flow", and learn about the monuments and posters and ink. What do you mean by poor source? To see where the body of the inscription comes from. How does the author learn from the ancients and draw out the essence? What does it mean to compete? To find how this inscription gives later influence, which one inherits the best." [4] "We learn calligraphy, we should take in the strengths of the monuments and posters, and be comfortable with the changes, there is no end to it. We treat the generations of monuments and posters, must be analytical, critical, absorb its essence, discard its groove cypress, must not blindly worship, nor can a sum of erasure." [5] as Huang valley said: "learn to copy when the book, can be similar. Great to take more ancient books to see carefully, so that into the spirit, is to the wonderful. But the heart is not mixed, is the way to enter the gods." [6]

He cited all the works of the great masters since the Song and Yuan dynasties as having surpassed those of their predecessors, and drew on them as teachers and friends. In the process of learning from his predecessors, the student also paid particular attention to the uniqueness of his ideas. For example, in his study of the seal script, he took his cue from Wang Shu and Qian Gao when everyone else was learning from Deng Shi Ru of the Qing Dynasty. In the clerical script, he loved Yi Bingshou, and occasionally used Mr. Changshuo's clerical style to write on such monuments as "Sacrifice to the Three Kings" and "Heng Fang". In cursive, he is fond of Huang Tingjian, Mi Fu, Fu Shan and Wang Duo, and believes that each of them has its own speciality in learning from the ancients, taking the strengths of each.

In addition, in the calligraphy "kung fu", he put more effort into the tenth volume of Wang Xianzhi's book, despite the forged post, I love its exhibition, see more and more, sometimes there will be a new realm out. He said, "think of heirloom wang duo ink is mostly pro-writing ancient post, take and stone book against, and not all like, even purely self-transport, not keep the original post norms, this is where this old success." He does not roll from the pool, pay attention to the "amount" of kung fu accumulation, at the same time, in exploring the premise of "quantitative change", focus on the discursive nature of calligraphy, that is, the combination of theory and practice, and through theory to guide practice.

2.2 View of Innovation

"Innovation is the highest realm of the art of calligraphy, the ultimate destination of calligraphy learning and research, only innovation, there is development." [7] For example, Huang Gu Yun: "Follow the people to make plans for the end after the people, since the formation of a family began to be realistic." It is about the innovative view of calligraphy. He also often referred to the "creative view of calligraphy" for the innovation of calligraphy, has encouraged himself: "innovation innovation, not write two or three post how innovation"? Therefore, he chose to "transfer the benefits of many teachers" view of creation: "that is, to learn a certain kind of monument and post, but also "poor source and competition", and learn the relevant monument and post and ink. What is called poor source? To see where this inscription comes from, how does the author learn from the ancients and absorb the essence? For example, "Zhong carefree calligraphy, the first line is Wang Xizhi, later Wang style is popular, people can not see the real post of Zhong, generally only the heirloom Zhong post of the line and Wang Xizhi's different characters counted as Zhong character characteristics. Song Dan, Song Ke and other people are good at learning Zhong Xiao, had made reference to, is 'even flow' example. What is the "even stream"? To find out how this stele gave later influence? Which family inherited the best? For example, Zheng constructs 'calligraphy flow of the chart' to Yu Shinan, Ouyang Xun, Chu Suiliang, Yan Zhenqing and all the other families are unified under Wang Xizhi, a lineage, which is not appropriate. Ouyang Xun style of calligraphy, far from the Northern Wei, near the

Sui dynasty, "Dong Mei" square brush tight knot a school. Song and Yuan people did not attach importance to the Sui dynasty stele plates of the Northern and Southern Dynasties, or did not see some stele plates of the previous generations, and presumed to point out that Ouyang Xun's true and lineal styles were all out of the Two Kings, too impractical." He used the above method to approach calligraphy through the ages, to study calligraphy through the ages, and to dive into calligraphy with a point-by-point, touch-and-go view of calligraphy, which also laid the foundation for the formation of the calligraphic style in his later years.

At the same time, he had unique insights into the book learning concept of "raising the stele and suppressing the post" at the time. He would select ancient written materials. The inclusiveness of monuments and posters made it a blend of monuments and posters. Thus, from the Qing Dynasty to the Republic of China, he took a stand on the issue of jinshui, which is the main aesthetic feature of Sha's style, in the pursuit of jinshui and the desolate rate of brushwork brought about by the construction of the monument. During this period, he not only worked very hard on the Northern Monuments, using his brush to write large characters in combination with the physiognomy of Zhang Manglong and Huang Tingjian, but also inscribed lists for people, often referring to their methods and writing in a majestic and unrestrained style. "In contrast to the ancient calligraphers, he has both "past" and "future" calligraphy, based on his predecessors. He was a master of the tradition he inherited and then surpassed his predecessors.

3 The contemporary significance of Sha Menghai's view of calligraphy

Throughout his life, Sha Menghai's calligraphy has not only left a strong mark on the history of calligraphy education, but has also brought important contemporary significance to the calligraphy curriculum of today's universities.

In 2022, the discipline of calligraphy in universities will be listed alongside fine arts as a first-class discipline, which brings both opportunities and challenges for the heritage of Chinese calligraphy. In other words, in the future, the discipline of calligraphy will highlight its own shortcomings in the future competition of the discipline. In terms of curriculum development for university calligraphy education, the entire Chinese university curriculum still needs to be improved. As the saying goes, "calligraphy is contemporary", and the training of calligraphic talents must be integrated with the development and needs of the times. "The traditional Chinese calligraphy education was basically taught by teachers and apprentices, and in the 1960s, a calligraphy course was set up in university art courses, but the number of learners was very small, and then suspended for nearly 20 years." [8]

In the 1980s, along with the country's emphasis on traditional culture and the promotion of it, as many as a hundred schools across the country offered undergraduate courses in calligraphy. In an overview of contemporary

calligraphy university curricula, the author found that art schools focused on technique and aesthetic education in a typical collegiate style, while comprehensive universities emphasized the integration of the plastic arts and the humanities. Teacher training colleges emphasize the training of students' basic skills, but there is still room for improvement in creative literacy. This "blossoming of a hundred schools of calligraphy" has set different goals for the training of calligraphers, and as a result, there is a wide range of calligraphy courses in universities. In light of this, Mr. Sha Menghai's view of calligraphy is of contemporary significance as a reference for today's university calligraphy curriculum.

3.1 Provide national studies classes to enhance cultural connotations

Learn from Sha Menghai's traditional view of expository writing. Calligraphy is originally part of traditional Chinese studies, and the addition of traditional directions such as poetry, song and song, and ancient philology complements the curriculum. Learn from Sha Menghai's view of Chinese literacy and incorporate it into the calligraphy curriculum. This will not only broaden new ideas in calligraphy creation, but also contribute to the promotion and development of Chinese studies. For example, a class on ancient scripts can help students to find the source of calligraphy, as the saying goes, "For there to be a source of living water," and having a source of ancient scripts provides inexhaustible literary motivation for students to create calligraphy, which is conducive to enhancing their inner literary cultivation. In the ancient history of Chinese calligraphy, calligraphy was the medium through which literature was conveyed. This is similar to the Confucian view that 'art carries the way'. "Confucius' 'To aspire to the Way, to base oneself on virtue, to follow benevolence, and to travel in the arts'. (Analects. (The Analects of Confucius...)' is to emphasise the unity of calligraphy's practicality and artistry. In the Treatise on Letters, Zhang Huaqun's 'heart' in calligraphy also refers generally to the cultural cultivation of the calligrapher. The most exquisite of all calligraphers and writers have a deeper meaning in order to see their aspirations. This 'Zhi' is the cultivation of the acquired." [9] The famous calligraphers of the past generations invariably mentioned "cultivation" and "pursuit" because these two points are necessary to produce the spiritual beauty of calligraphic works. For example, Huang Gu in the "valley lifting" cloud: "learning the book in the chest must have moral righteousness, and wide with the study of the holy philosophers, the book is valuable. If its spiritual house without the program, the government makes the brush and ink not less than Yuan Chang, Yi Shao, just vulgar ears." [10] Looking at the current calligraphy curriculum in colleges, in addition to individual institutions offering advisory courses, most calligraphy courses have yet to incorporate disciplines such as poetry appreciation, ancient scriptology, and jinshu archaeology into the calligraphy curriculum. "During the Qian and Jia periods, scholars of jinshi took the skill of calligraphy as a minor path, and the pursuit of

the inherent beauty of words was the major path." [11]

According to incomplete statistics, eight out of ten of the students in the academy courses at many universities today are unable to create the five styles of calligraphy, and even fewer for those who create content in the form of self-written poetry. It is evident that the academic school has reached a point of "poverty and weakness" in terms of national literacy. Zhang Zai: "To establish the heart for heaven and earth, to establish the life for the people, to establish the absolute learning for the saints." As a result of the lack of national literacy, many calligraphy students lacked ambitious ideals and family sentiments, turning the calligraphic path, which was once "to cultivate one's body and establish one's life", into a medium for fame and fortune. The 'refined and refined' character of the calligraphic gentleman of the past has long since disappeared, and what is left is merely a subservient elegance. Therefore, a contemporary calligraphy course in higher education that draws on Sha Menghai's traditional view would be conducive to the enhancement of students' calligraphic literacy.

3.2 Establishing a sense of family and country, elite model cultivation

"A great scholar is one who studies profound learning." In "The Progress of Education since 1902", Cai Yuanpei's student also made it clear that "Education is also the cause of the formation of character. If it serves only to instil knowledge and practise skills, but is not accompanied by ideals, then it is a mechanical education, not one that can be applied to mankind." The aim of university education is to 'develop a sound personality', rather than the 'governmental education machine' of the old Chinese education, which advocated 'learning and excellence'. The reason for Sha Menghai's arduous and heroic path of calligraphy is that he had noble ideals and pursuits from childhood. As Sha Menghai says in the Introduction to the Calligraphy Collection:[12]

"The personal style of a calligrapher is often formed only after a long period of repeated exploration and practice, which is determined by his own learning, education and ambition, but also by the influence of the times and social customs. At present, the first and foremost thing is to establish the ambition to become an ideal and moral calligrapher and seal carver." Therefore, calligraphy in colleges needs to integrate the national studies curriculum into the calligraphy tutorials, so that calligraphers can learn to be calligraphers first, improve their own cultivation and purify their minds. This is the only way to realise the ideal of "cultivating one's body and family" to "ruling the country and leveling the world". "Today, the art of calligraphy and seal carving is not simply for the sake of nurturing the heart and soul, but more importantly, for the sake of making the art of calligraphy and seal carving and its theories meet the needs of the country, the nation and the times, and better serve the people and socialism. At the same time, it is important to make this ancient and modern art of calligraphy and seal carving, which is loved by modern people, flourish and develop in a higher and newer

direction in line with the trend of the times." [13] Universities not only have the obligation to cultivate calligraphic talents, but also bear the responsibility of employment. Along with the upgrading of the discipline of calligraphy and the increase in the number of calligraphy students enrolled in colleges and universities, the demand for calligraphy talents in society is currently at saturation. This is not only due to the peace and turmoil in the world's international relations, but also due to the impact of the 'new crown' epidemic in the last three years. The decline of the world economy is bound to affect the playful art of 'calligraphy'. Therefore, the training of calligraphic talent should be harmonised with national planning, keeping abreast of the times, and in the case of enrolment, reducing enrolment appropriately, and implementing an elite training model.

In conclusion, Mr. Sha Menghai's view of calligraphy has important contemporary significance for the setting of contemporary calligraphy courses in universities. It is not only beneficial in improving the curriculum of calligraphy in colleges and universities, but also in establishing a correct view of calligraphy for contemporary university calligraphy students and providing a beneficial ecological environment for the transmission of Chinese calligraphy.

4 Conclusion

In the vast world of calligraphy, the classical is the model, and Sha Weng's calligraphy is a correct and innovative one. These are all useful references for the development of calligraphy in today's universities. Throughout his life of calligraphy, Sha Menghai was deeply influenced by traditional Confucianism, and sought calligraphy with a mindset of "peace and happiness"; in terms of inheriting tradition and calligraphic innovation, he made friends with famous masters, studied diligently and diversified, laying the foundation for his later calligraphic style. In the borrowing, he "competes with the source", using a dialectical vision to analyse the relationship between "learning" and "thinking"; at the same time, he absorbs and draws on the strengths of the monument and the post, contributing to the formation of the calligraphic style. The author believes that the setting of calligraphy courses in universities today can draw on Sha Menghai's view of creation, which, on the one hand, is conducive to improving the overall quality of calligraphy students and perfecting their personalities; on the other hand, the systematisation of calligraphy courses is conducive to students' flexibility in transforming the dialectical relationship between inheritance and innovation. In today's multicultural world, it is important to look beyond the contemporary to the future of calligraphy. It is only in this way that the curriculum of calligraphy in colleges and universities can be set up in a way that is 'legal' and can be brought to a stage of perfection.

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