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Shaping Teachers' Aesthetic competence with Aesthetic Education Concepts in Confucius Ideology

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Abstract: Confucius established a comprehensive framework of aesthetic education based on the rich heritage of aesthetics passed down through generations. His profound insights emphasized an aesthetic education philosophy rooted in "benevolence" and centered around "humanization." He seamlessly integrated these principles into the establishment of a rational social order and the cultivation of an ideal personality. This perspective holds significant practical significance and social value in contemporary efforts to advance aesthetic education and shape individual personalities. Confucius believed that aesthetic education transcended the mere appreciation of beautiful things; it was a holistic process of personal development and refinement that intersected with moral and humanistic education. His vision recognized the inseparable link between aesthetics, emotions, spirituality, and culture. In today's rapidly changing world, characterized by technological advancements and accelerated lifestyles, the importance of aesthetic education and personality development has grown exponentially. Confucius' aesthetic education philosophy offers invaluable guidance and insights. It not only enhances our ability to understand and appreciate beauty but also aids in finding our place in a dynamic society, enabling us to harmonize with ourselves and our surroundings. Confucius' teachings inspire us to integrate aesthetic education into our lives and educational systems, fostering well-rounded individuals who appreciate beauty, uphold moral values, and contribute positively to society. In doing so, we can embrace the timeless wisdom of Confucius to navigate the challenges of the contemporary world while nurturing our inner selves and our collective humanity.

Keywords: Confucius; Aesthetic; Teacher’s Competence.

1. Introduction

Aesthetic education has a very long tradition in Our country. In ancient China, there has been a tradition of aesthetic education. Confucius, a great educator and thinker, is one of the originators of Chinese aesthetics. He not only laid a foundation for Chinese aesthetics, but also organically combined aesthetics with education, opening up a broad ideological and thinking space for Chinese aesthetic education. At the beginning of this century, Mr. CAI Yuanpei also put forward the idea of "replacing religion with aesthetic education". This proposition integrates Chinese historical and cultural genes with modern aesthetic consciousness and makes a clear indication for the realistic mission of Chinese aesthetics.[1] It shows the contemporary value of Confucian traditional aesthetic education. The basic mission of aesthetic education is to coordinate the relationship between man and the object world through the intermediary of emotional observation, so as to achieve freedom and harmony.

Naisbitt, a famous futurologist, predicted in The Great Trend that the success or failure of the future information society depends on the balance between high technology and high emotion. Therefore, he emphasized the harmonious balance between the miracle of material civilization and the needs of human nature.[2]

The purpose of this paper is to explore how to use the aesthetic education concept of Confucius' thought to cultivate teachers' aesthetic ability and further transfer the external indoctrination to the internal infiltration, to promote students' overall development and complete personality shaping with aesthetic education unconsciously.

2. Aesthetic Education Concepts

2.1. Basis--Benevolence

The basis of Confucian aesthetic education is the analysis of benevolence. Confucius's "benevolence" is both ontological and functional. At a high level, "benevolence" refers to the spiritual realm, and at the functional level, "benevolence" is "filial brother".[3] The essence of Confucius benevolence is humanism. Confucian benevolence focuses on the growth and perfection of human life with moral emotion as the core, considers the significance and value of human existence, and the relationship between human and the world, and its orientation is value metaphysics. "Seeking benevolence and obtaining benevolence" must be achieved through external education and internal cultivation, to reach the realm of life of the unity of nature and man. The highest realm of "benevolence" is precisely the aesthetic realm of freedom. From this point of view, seeking benevolence is aesthetic education.

2.2. "Human Culture"

“By observing human cultural patterns, we can educate the people and build a thriving, prosperous, and refined society.”——The book of changes.[4]

Confucius aesthetic education thought is the development and extension of his benevolence. "Human culture" is the description of Confucian aesthetic education thought. "Culture" is the core concept of Confucian aesthetic education thought. "Culture" means civilization, which promoter human perception and makes people improve from the vulgar and cruel state.[5] And also means the outside expression of Benevolence and conceives the human ideals and value

pursuing. In Confucius point of view, "culture" expresses as the poem, etiquette and music culture. Benevolence of human is the purport of Confucius' aesthetic education thought to awaken, enlightens, cultivate and maintain people's benevolence, form culture-psychological structure and cultivate gentleman's personality with benevolence as the core.

"Transformation" is the purport of Confucius' aesthetic education thought. The characteristics of Confucius' aesthetic education thought are summarized as humanistic orientation, practical rational tendency and ecological consciousness, which are embodied in the integration of sensibility and rationality, the connection between living and transcendent dust, the combination of practical rationality and value rationality, and the harmony between man and nature.

3. Shaping Teachers with Aesthetic Education Concepts

3.1. Gaining a Deeper Insight into Aesthetic Education

The core of aesthetic education as life education and emotional education is to cultivate the life consciousness of the teaching object.[6] The so-called life consciousness is the self-consciousness of human beings as a kind of life, and its connotation is to explore and grasp, cultivate and shape the social meaning of life. Only those who have a sense of life can cherish their own life, understand the value of their life, know how to maximize this value, and make full use of it to create new value. And only when a person has a consciousness of life and can cherish and respect all life existence, can he truly have a broad and selfless mind, and can he discover the true beauty of life without being obscured by worldly and immediate utility. Only in this way can this beauty lead to goodness.

3.2. Improving Teachers' Aesthetic Competence

3.2.1. Using "Book of Songs" to Inspire Ambition

In the “Book of Songs” are three hundred pieces, but the design of them all may be embraced in one sentence--"Innocence of thought".[7] In the Analects of Confucius, Zhu Xi explained this as follows: "Those who say good things in poems can feel people's good heart; The evil can punish the free will of a man, and the purpose is to make him get the right of his emotions." That is to say, the use of poetry is due to the cultivation of honesty and integrity. He quoted Cheng Zi as saying, "Think innocently and be sincere." "Innocence of thought" does not refer exclusively to ideology, but also to the language tone of the poem and the beauty of the emotion contained in it. The poem is intended to cultivate people's benevolence, so that people's feelings to be honest.[8]

"Book of Songs" is an important way for teachers to educate students and cultivate temperament. Studying Poetry can cultivate a sense of benevolence, so that people can be in harmony with the natural universe; one can see everything in the world and the world, so that one can gain an understanding of the universe and life; it can cultivate a gentle and honest disposition, it can make people harmonize with the ethnic group; it can reasonably discharge "resentment" and restore ourselves to peace.

3.2.2. Using Etiquette as the Criterion of Establishment

The most basic meaning of etiquette can be said to be the artistic and standardized unity of human behavior. The manoeuvring, yielding, advancing and retreating in the etiquette itself have distinct artistry, giving people a sense of aesthetic enjoyment.

"Etiquette" is the external expression of benevolence and the conscious display of personality.[9] Obeying etiquette becomes an expression of inner emotion, not an external mandatory norm. As a standardized behavior, ritual also has the effect of restraining impulsive emotions and behaviors and making them beautiful. Liang Shuming once pointed out: "Etiquette puts people in the midst of poetry and art", "Confucianism attaches great importance to propriety and music, and the difference is that it can induce and cultivate emotions from outside to inside. Emotions must be taught deeply and mellowly. Expressive, restrained, and balanced with joy, anger, sadness, and joy, and later in life, people think that it is natural and stable for eternity.

Mr. Xu Fuguan believes: "The so-called standing is to make decisions by yourself, to have confidence, and of course from the heart, and to naturally adapt to the reasonable trends of external things, that is, to be able to grasp oneself and embrace the life of the group. Achieving this kind of life can only rely on the cultivation of propriety.

3.2.3. Using Music to Cultivate People's Temperament

Music is a temporal abstract art, it has no material intermediary, so the audience needs to devote themselves to the world of music and understand the spirit of music. The essence of music is "harmony", "eight tones overcome harmony, no phase dominates, gods and people are in harmony", "great music is in harmony with heaven and earth", and the spirit of music is consistent with the highest state of benevolence, "the world returns to benevolence".[10] Confucian music education thought that the most ideal "music" should reflect the orderly and harmonious unity of the universe, nature, society and life.

Teachers learn music not only to obtain aesthetic pleasure, but more importantly, to comprehend the spiritual connotation contained in music, so as to obtain the cultivation of personality, and apply this to teaching subtly. "Historical Records: The Family of Confucius" records: Confucius learned to play a qin piece from Shi Xiang, and did not change new pieces for ten days in a row. After repeated study and comprehension, he finally realized that this piece of music depicts King Wen of Zhou, a stalwart, far-sighted, and broad-minded. Shi Xiangzi was greatly surprised by this and said that the title of this song was "Wen Wang Cao". Mr. Xu Fuguan said, "Confucius' learning of music is based on the spirit of technology and the specific personality of the person who has the spirit. This is exactly how a great artist works." The real people and the ideal saint are separated by time and space. They are connected by hearing from the ear, sensing from the air and communicating from the heart. Listening is a natural faculty, indicating the path through which one can connect with the sage - to the edifying of music, to the heart through hearing. In fact, Confucius introduced personality into aesthetic education and enlightened goodness by beauty.

3.2.4. Adopting the Concept of Integration in Teaching

The aesthetic education methods of Confucius are not independent of each other, but are often integrated into one. Cai Yuanpei once said: "The ancient education in our country used the six arts of etiquette, music, archery, equestrianism, calligraphy and arithmetic. Music is purely aesthetic education; books are used to describe, but also beautiful; archery is skillful in technique, but also elegant in attitude; the

original meaning of etiquette is to obey the rules, and its function is to help people stay away from vulgarity; besides the arithmetic, there are all elements of aesthetic education, and almost all of them can be used in informal education." "In fact, "arithmetic" also has aesthetic education elements It is the penetration and integration of aesthetic education principles into other educational methods. Confucius inherited the essence of the "six arts" of the Western Zhou Dynasty, and combined various factors in the implementation of education, so that students can absorb the essence of heaven and earth in nature, and play the qin and drums. Self-cultivation, "knowing more about the names of birds, animals, plants and trees" in reading poems, internalizing abstract concepts into vivid feelings.[11] Teachers can imitate Confucius and implement the principles of integrated education into practical teaching.

4. Practical Significance in Modern Education

"The inundation of sensibility and the ravaging of instrumental rationality are developing side by side, utilitarianism is prevailing and humanistic spirit is lost", which have become the syndrome of The Times disease in modern society. The Times call for aesthetic education, it is also the time for aesthetic education to show its talents.[12] Transplanting Confucius aesthetic education thought into the body of modern aesthetic education can provide reference for the development of modern society.

4.1. Focusing on the Cultivation of Students' Correct Outlook on Life

Confucius attached great importance to the role of moral education, he said: Aspire to the Tao, according to virtue, relying on benevolence and “you” in six arts. Confucius emphasized the word "you", which has two meanings. One meaning is: choose suitable for their temperament art learning; The second meaning is: do not adhere to a certain skill and skill, lost heart and forget the way. Abide by the code of ethics, broad-minded, benevolent heart is the most basic conduct as a student, on this basis to talk about setting up lofty ideals and aspirations, learning all kinds of skills. In today's modern society where material desire is rampant and all kinds of ideas are stirring each other, utilitarianism and money worship are seriously eroding people's ideological values. Contemporary young students are still in the world outlook, outlook on life, values are not fully mature stage, for some thought erosion has no resistance, so for their own life goals and planning lost direction. But if blindly carry on the indoctrination type education, will make the student produce the rebellious psychology inevitably. Therefore, the cultivation of students' outlook on life also needs teachers to be patient, from external indoctrination to inner infiltration, to infect students with practical experience, to inspire students with the power of example, to set up lofty ideals, resolutely cannot be depressed in hedonism, lose themselves in utilitarianism. So as to guide students to establish a correct outlook on life, on the way forward, do not forget the original aspiration, forge ahead.

4.2. Promoting the All-Round Development of Human Being

The humanistic spirit and holistic consciousness contained in Confucius' aesthetic education thought provide a prescription for overcoming the drawbacks of modern utilitarianism and perfecting personality. As mentioned above, Confucius' aesthetic education thought is people-oriented and aims at "perfection of nature".[13] Through aesthetic education, he intended to make people's sensibility have civilized content, to make people's rationality communicate with people's perceptual life, and to cultivate people who could not only enjoy the fun of life, but also have the spirit of transcendence and value pursuit of "killing oneself to become a man". The connotation of ideal personality in modern society is naturally different from that of gentleman, but the value rationality contained in Confucius' aesthetic education thought is an important reference for modern aesthetic education. Modern aesthetic education not only calls for sensibility, but also calls for the injection of rationality, that is, through the return of rationality to cultivate the new sensibility of modern people.

4.3. Providing Reference for Modern Society to Coordinate Relationships

The harmony spirit contained in Confucius' aesthetic education thought can provide reference for modern society to coordinate interpersonal relationship and the relationship between heaven and man. "Benevolence" starts from "affinity" and follows the way of "loyalty and forgiveness" in "heaven, earth, people, things and I", so that all things merge with love and with the sense of life. The way of "benevolence" is the way of getting along with people, countries, nations, religions and cultures, as well as the universal harmony between human beings and nature. Confucius's aesthetic education thought is the ultimate concern of realizing the realm of "the unity of heaven and earth", which is the unity of aesthetics and morality.[14] In this realm of all things and love, the distinction between man and self and the opposition between things and self are eliminated, and the harmony between man and man, man and heaven is realized. This idea of paying attention to the harmony of human relations and interpersonal harmony can be used for reference to improve modern people's eq and national cohesion.[15] Confucius respected nature and endowed nature with emotion and moral consciousness, so as to realize the harmonious coexistence between man and nature, providing valuable spiritual resources for the serious ecological crisis in contemporary times.

5. Conclusion

Confucius aesthetic education thought is the development and extension of his benevolence. "Human culture" is the description of Confucian aesthetic education thought. Benevolence of human is the purport of Confucius' aesthetic education thought to awaken, enlightens, cultivate and maintain people's benevolence, form culture-psychological structure and cultivate gentleman's personality with benevolence as the core. In Confucius point of view, "culture" expresses as the poem, etiquette and music culture. To shape teachers' aesthetic competence, it’s a great idea to use "Book of Songs" to inspire ambition. use etiquette as the criterion of establishment, use music to cultivate their temperament and adopt the concept of integration in teaching. In today's society, the flood of sensibility develops in parallel with the destruction of instrumental rationality, utilitarianism prevails and humanistic spirit is lost. It is of great significance to transplant Confucius aesthetic education thought into modern aesthetic education, which can provide reference for the

development of modern society and the shaping of personality.

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