

Role of Modern Chinese Literature in College Education

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Abstract: Modern Chinese literature plays an important role in college education. It enhances patriotism, cultivates imaginary thinking and human sentiment, and encourages students to think deeply about life and improve their language ability.

Keywords: Modern Chinese literature; Patriotic feelings; Imaginary thinking; Nurture sentiment; Thinking life; Language ability

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1. Introduction

Universities should train qualified socialist builders and reliable successors who are all-round developed in moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor aspects. Universities cultivate the pillars of the country with both ability and political integrity. Talents should possess solid professional skills as well as higher comprehensive quality and all-round development. College students spend most of their time in school to learn professional knowledge. However, they must also expose themselves to other fields of knowledge. Based on the school libraries' loan statistics, the loan volume of literary works is robust, ranking first on the list^[1]. Modern Chinese literature has a stronger connection to today's society, and it plays an important role in university education.

2. Enhance patriotism

Literature inevitably has political attributes. Literary works have political missions; they are closely related to politics and play a certain role in ideology. Literature can educate the people. Lu Xun saw the great educational role of literature and abandoned his medical studies. Literature plays an important role in college education. It improves the political and cultural quality of college students. The flesh-and-blood characters that are created in literary works, the contrast between the fates of the different characters, the twists and turns of the captivating story, and the fascinating literary skills would resonate in the minds of the readers to a certain extent, subtly influencing them and changing their minds. Through the literary creation of the events of the Chinese revolution and socialist construction since the May Fourth Movement, modern Chinese literature will undoubtedly be more inclined to accept the inevitableness and superiority of the socialist road as well as to support the leadership of the communist party, growing in understanding and love for their own country than to simply reason and set the facts.

Lao She's "Longxugou" is the most influential drama masterpiece in the early liberation. The work is based on the real event of Longxugou's renovation. Longxugou was originally a smelly ditch in Beijing, surrounded by a large number of lower-class residents. For many years, the reactionary government turned

a blind eye to the plight of the people, The government remained indifferent in the face of the smelly and dirty ditch water and harsh surrounding environment. Even the funds donated by the people for ditch repairs ended up in people's pockets. After the liberation, although the economy was still in a downturn, the Beijing People's Government put people's livelihood first and rectified Longxugou. The changes before and after the liberation of Longxugou reflect the differences between the new and old society as well as the changes in the relationship among people. A number of vivid characters such as Lifa Wang, Zhongyi Qin, and Siye Chang were created in the script. Through these characters and a series of shocking events, people were able to see the truth; that is, China cannot be saved by bourgeois reformism, and there is no way out other than through personal struggle; China can only take the socialist road, and only the Communist Party of China can save China.

The historical novels of the 17 years after the founding of the People's Republic of China, which mainly reflected the democratic revolution, describe the praiseworthy historical facts concerning the historical stages of the final victory of the Chinese people under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, reproduced the historical process of the bloody battle between the military and the people, and repainted the military war, the peasant movement, the student movement, the prison struggle, and other historical pictures. The revolutionary predecessors were not afraid of danger and hardships; their courage enabled them to sacrifice, offer their lives, and even shed blood. The lofty quality of their dedication to communism was highly praised. Many novels with the Anti-Japanese War and the revolutionary struggle in the twenties and thirties as the theme, such as "The Railway Guerrilla," "The Spring and Autumn Period," "Song of Youth," "Red Flag Spectrum," and so on, left a deep impression. These works help people to understand that this happy life after liberation is hard-won and needs to be cherished ^[2]. Today, these works still have important educational significance.

3. Cultivate imaginary thinking

Logical thinking and imaginary thinking are two important forms of thinking. They correspond to analysis and synthesis, respectively. Academic works reflect more logical thinking. Logical thinking is a rigorous reasoning process. The basis of reasoning is the data or objective facts of a detailed analysis. Logical thinking is linear, with a strict and clear causal relationship as well as an immutable order relationship. Its language expression is also more scientific and rigorous; there is no fuzzy boundary, and its concept is clear and accurate. Imaginary thinking, on the other hand, is the opposite; it is a multidimensional way of thinking. Imaginary thinking is figurative, illogical, rough, and imaginative. Imaginary thinking uses images that are vivid, intuitive, and holistic to think; it combines visual materials together and provides a leap in thinking, from one image directly to another image. In imaginary thinking, information processing is multi-dimensional parallel rather than sequential; it is qualitative rather than quantitative. It looks at things as a whole, omitting details. Both the source and the outcome of imaginary thinking are images, which are processed from existing images to produce new images ^[3].

Academic works focus on cultivating people's logical thinking and scientific spirit, but literary works focus on cultivating imaginary thinking and humanistic spirit. Higher education should focus on cultivating talents in an all-round manner, developing their morality, intelligence, physique, and aesthetic sense. No matter which subject, literature can play a role in educating people. By creating various characters, literary works entice readers to read voraciously and be inspired by these characters. An individual's thinking ability may be described as comprehensive only if he or she has strong logical and imaginary thinking. In "Border Town," Congwen Shen introduced several characters, including Cuicui and the old boatman. The shaping of these characters is an important factor, guaranteeing the success of this work. Cuicui is the embodiment of "beauty," while the old boatman is the embodiment of "good." Cuicui's "beauty" manifests through her love story, while the "goodness" of the old boatman manifests through his care and love for

Cuicui. Ah Q in Lu Xun's works is a typical example of a backward farmer, deeply poisoned by feudal thought. His strategy toward spiritual victory transcends beyond national and geographical boundaries. Through this, people of different nationalities from different countries can determine their own strategy. In "Farewell to Cambridge" by Zhimo Xu, the evening scene at Kanghe River was depicted beautifully yet thought-provoking because of the concrete and vivid images of the golden willow, wave light, floating heart, starlight, and so on. The scene reflects the author's dependence on his past vision and the sorrow of separation in front of him.

4. Cultivate human sentiment

Sentiment is a relatively stable psychological state formed by the combination of human feelings and ideological beliefs. It can be divided into four types: knowledge, aesthetics, morality, and belief. Literature can cultivate human sentiment, promote ideological and moral cultivation, as well as help maintain a healthy psychological state. By reading more literary works, one can expand knowledge. The description of unheard sceneries and customs in literary works can expand the knowledge of readers. Literature will provide readers with an explanation of what constitutes beauty and foulness. Excellent literary works provide aesthetic pleasure to people upon reading. Literary works have shaped a variety of characters and social phenomena. Readers will deliberately contrast moral depravity and virtue as they read as well as evaluate using their hearts. Not all of the characters will have a plain-sailing story; heroes often encounter obstacles on the road to success. Reading literary works can build students' confidence in the face of setbacks, encouraging them and cultivating their tenacity and personality.

Mu Qin's prose emphasizes knowledge, interest, quotation, and talks about the past and present. Reading his prose inevitably increases one's knowledge. His prose "Sheji Altar" describes the five-color soil on the Sheji Altar to the establishment and evolution of the ancient concept of five elements and compares ancient India and ancient Greece in terms of the origin of the world's philosophical thinking and rich academic environment.

Zhilin Bian's "Broken Chapter" elevates the momentary feeling into profound wisdom, expressing a relative and balanced concept: a person can visualize a scenery, but the person may also become a scenery and be observed by another person; an individual can use the moon as an ornament to decorate his or her window, but it may also become an ornament of another person's dream. The images of "you" and "I" are exchanged in each other's eyes and dreams. The four-line poem is full of philosophy and contains profound life experience. It expresses the close and interdependent relationship between all things in the universe. The entire poem emanates a deep sense of beauty^[4].

"Fortress Besieged" ridicules unlearned local intellectuals with a playful pen. Meiting Li shamelessly sells drugs at high prices to make a fortune out of national difficulties. As a professor with shallow knowledge, he only pretended to be wise. As a disciplinarian, he relied on speculation and free prostitution on the streets. The hidden face of an academic fraudster and a moral rascal, whose cunning, vulgar, and shameless stunt was repulsive, is exposed. What is true, good, and beautiful, and what is untruthful and ugly, both left a deep impression. This story will have an impact on students' moral standards, thus affecting their usual thinking and behavior.

Modern literary works depict a historical picture of the bloody struggle of the older generation of revolutionaries, the deeds of the model figures of socialist construction, and the great achievements of China's socialist revolution and construction. Through these works, students would be able to recognize the historical inevitability between our society and Marxism; establish correct world outlook, outlook on life, and values; strengthen their socialist ideals; and strive for the cause of socialism.

5. Guide students to think about life

The characters shaped by literary works include positive, negative, and centrist characters. The experience of the characters is embodied in their lives and the various obstacles they face. There are good days, but there are also unpleasant ones. University is a period of maturation; students' world outlook, outlook on life, and values become more mature during their university years. They think about life issues, explore the value of life, and plan their own lives. Modern Chinese literary works and the writers' life experience provide a reference for them.

Zhongshu Qian's "Fortress Besieged" has successfully shaped a group of life-like typical figures of modern new Confucians with fine and profound realistic brushstrokes, among which Hongjian Fang is the representative figure. Their fate reflects the bankruptcy of western cultural thoughts in China, puts forward the way out for Chinese intellectuals, and reveals the author's philosophical thinking on modern society and life. Hongjian Fang often moved from one besieged city to another, never content, and continuously in agony. He tries to escape from trouble, but there are obstacles everywhere. After four years of studying without bearing any fruit, he forged a fake diploma in order to face his elders. After returning home, he was still in agony due to love and career. He lost his one true love, Xiaofu Tang, as a result of Wenwan Su's jealousy. He was hastened into marriage as per Roujia Sun's plan. With the hardship of life, there were also family conflicts, which led to the marriage's eventual dissolution. From Shanghai to Hunan Sanlu University, he was demoted to an associate professor. He was then dismissed from his position because he could not adapt to the new predicaments of the school nor yield to the tide.

Borrowing the ancient legend of the phoenix's "self-immolation on incense wood and rebirth from ashes," Moruo Guo's "Phoenix Nirvana" details strong patriotic passion and the spirit of the times. The magnificent and lofty image of the phoenix negates the old reality, sublates the inherited old self, rebukes the ugliness of the shallow and obscene group, such as the rock hawk, peacock, owl, dove, parrot, and white crane, as well as yearns for a fresh, clean, beautiful, and fragrant new world. It embodies the fighting spirit and optimism of anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism as well as fully expresses the author's progressive socialist ideal of completely destroying old things and creating a bright new world. Phoenix is the embodiment of young poets as well as the symbol of the nation and motherland. This work can be said to be a declaration of national awakening.

Ziqing Zhu's "The Sound of Oars and Glow of Lamps on the Qinhuai River" won the hearts of readers not only by painting scenes, but also conveying feelings to these scenes. The first half of the work talks about the beauty of nature; the second half turns to people, their emotions, the reflection on "history" and the examination of "self," the prosperity and desolation of history drawing on sadness and melancholy, as well as the historical heritage-embodied occupation or activity at Qinhuai River – geisha. Although the author is tempted by the historical existence and realistic predicament of geisha, the author is constrained by the society and conventional morals. When writing the "scenery" and revealing the "emotions" behind, he used hidden "disillusionment," which included aspects of illusory and self-contradiction. The depth of his work focuses not on the "beauty" of the landscape, but rather the "truth" and "goodness" of reflecting on history and examining oneself.

6. Improve language ability

The ability to write is crucial for college students with regard to their studies, employment, and work. With regard to learning professional knowledge, students need to write learning summaries and their graduation theses. In life, interpersonal communication requires an individual to express their thoughts and opinions. When applying for a job, one will need to write a resume; additionally, there will be written tests to assess the applicant's written expression ability, and during the interview, the applicant's oral language expression ability will also be assessed. At work, work reports and summaries, briefings, and press releases might be

required as well. A more skilled expression is required in business. A person's level of language expression directly affects their interaction with others and their work progress. The language in classical literary works is used as the standard for writing and oral expression. Reading literary works can improve an individual's language expression ability, whether written or spoken.

The various literary language and art styles in modern Chinese literature, including novels, essays, poems, and dramas, can be used for reference.

In "Fortress Besieged," exquisite yet appropriate metaphors and words can be seen, highlighting the author's humorous wit and satirical ability. As Hongjian Fang acknowledges the importance of a diploma, his feeling is reflected as such: "Like how a fig leaf functions by covering up one's lower body, this diploma, a small piece of paper, is able to conceal a person's emptiness, stupidity, and ugliness. Without the diploma, it was as if he were spiritually stark naked and had nothing to bundle up in." Through a metaphorical sense, the author wittily reveals that the role of a diploma is like a fig leaf; its existence does not measure the profoundness of knowledge. Through the connection between noumenon and phenomenon, the author ridicules the prevailing wind of deceit and fraud among intellectuals, where the ironic effect is strong ^[5].

"Picking Wheat Ears" is a delicate prose, written by Hao Zhang. It has a pure and quiet narrative style. Whether in words or sentences, a soothing and calm atmosphere that is not rushed is created. The work is sincere in emotion. The prose begins with a sigh of a rural girl who is picking wheat ears, followed by a detailed description of an old man who loves "me" and a small fire persimmon hanging on a tree top, which makes people feel at ease. The exquisite prose focuses on the implication of the implicit, such as "Why would a little girl develop attachment to an old man selling stove sugar?". This may be the girl's indifference to the world. This arouses the resonance of readers and touches the readers' heartstrings ^[6].

"Under the Apple Tree" and "Grape Ripe" are notable poems written by Jie Wen. The former brims with life interest. The poet draws a picture, reflecting the enthusiastic pursuit for love between a young man and woman. He used apples to represent love. From flowering to ripening, he depicts the development and maturity of love. The latter portrays a group of young men and women who are happily playing and working in a vineyard. The lads are eager to find love, pursue happiness, and taste the "sweetness of grapes." However, they were only given unripe sour grapes by the ladies. This signifies that love is like a grape, in which one should wait for it to mature naturally. The language used is vivid and imaginary.

College students will learn language expression skills from these modern literary works and constantly improve their language expression ability.

7. Conclusion

In a word, modern Chinese literature plays an important role in college education. It enhances patriotism, cultivates imaginary thinking and human sentiment, guides students to think about life, and improves one's language ability. Concrete measures should be taken to provide convenient conditions for college students to read modern Chinese literary works, so that these students can become the pillars of the country.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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