

Discussion on music education in China

Lianghui Jin¹

(Art faculty of Jiangsu university Jiangsu province China 226019)

Summary: Music is an indispensable part of the human spirit. The differences between Chinese and Western cultural background cause the unique characteristics of Chinese and western music on origin and development. Whether in China or in the West, education is an important way to pass on music culture. The influence of Music Education on people is imperceptible and lasting. People who study music can improve not only their skills but also their other qualities. For the whole society, music can not only promote the improvement of the quality of the people, but also enhance the spiritual realm of society. Music Education can not only improve the effect of intellectual education, but also promote the effect of teaching. As a teacher, if you want to use music to achieve better teaching results, you should have some music literacy, in order to use music in teaching to enliven the classroom atmosphere and improve teaching efficiency.

Keywords: Music; Music Education; teaching efficiency

Music is an art that reflects human's life and emotions. In modern times, with the improvement of people's living standard in China, every family pays more attention on education. As a result, after-school tutoring facilities appeared as mushroomed all over China. Among them, music education is in the ascendant, which is a new blood for the test-oriented education which can not be changed at present. Moderate learning of music can not only be harmless to the growth of students, on the contrary, it can promote the improvement of teaching and student development, so that make students develop into a complete person.

Date of Submission: 07-10-2020

Date of Acceptance: 22-10-2020

I. THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF MUSIC

We should know that music and music education are completely different concepts, but they are interrelated. If we want to understand music education, we must know the origin of music and how it developed.

1.1. To the origin of music

It is difficult to make sure when is the actual time of the specific origin of music. Long before humans were able to communicate with each other with words, they were able to express themselves with the strength of their voices. On the origin of art, people have many different views: Games, imitation, witchcraft, labor and so on. So as a part of art, what is the origin of music. In the light of the Marxist historical materialism and dialectics, we can infer that music originated from Labor which is also the dominant theory of the origin of music in China.

1.2. The development of music

the differences between Chinese and Western cultural backgrounds cause the unique characteristics origin and development of Chinese and western music. understanding of these characteristics will help us make music education more complete and substantial. Up to now, music has been developing and changing in its own way. At the same time, music in Western countries has also had the new achievement with the time going.

1.2.1. The development of Chinese music.

As early as the Xia and Shang dynasties in China, China already had musical instruments such as the drum, the rock as well as the chimes and so on. During the Dynasty of West Zhou, the court established a complete system of rites and music. Although one of its purposes was to consolidate the hierarchical society, it also has its undeniable value to the development of music. In Zhou Dynasty, "the book of the poem songs" played an important role in people's everyday life.

"The book of poem songs" is the first collection of poetry in ancient China. It is composed of two words. One is poem and the other is song. The two words are closely inseparable and are two different art forms.

This proves that at that time "the book of poem songs already had the matching melody for people to sing. At the same time, the theory of the Pentatonic scale and the twelve temperament was established, which also embodied the great achievements of of the Zhou Dynasty in music.

¹Lianghui Jin (1982—), female, Lecturer of art faculty in Jiangsu University, China.

Research and teaching field: national music and music education. Mobile: 13861350595

In the Qin Dynasty, “Yuefu” appeared, Yuefu was an organization set up by the government at that time to manage singing, dancing and its teaching. Later, the Han dynasty collected folk songs or Literati poems and matched music for them which is also the origin of Han Yuefu Poetry. In the Han Dynasty, “Xianghe songs” is also called matching song were also popular, silk and bamboo musical instrument gradually developed. During the three kingdoms period, the art of “Guqin” art tended to be mature.

Subsequently, with the development of the Tang poetry and Song Ci or other literary style, music is also in progress. “Ni Shang Yu Yi Qu” in Tang dynasty is still regarded as the treasures of the Tang Dynasty and china nowadays. Although after thousands of years, the scene of the Tang Dynasty song and dance seems not have been historical oblivion.

Prosperity of economic and cultural in the Tang Dynasty lead to the origin of Erhu and improvement or being perfect of Guqin. The great poem “Lute Line” written by the great poet Bai Ju yi also shows the position and charm of the PiPa or Lute in the Tang Dynasty as well as the existence of such a musical institution as Jiao Fang or teaching house. Till to Song Dynasty, Ci also known as Qu Zi Ci becomes Brilliant. Qu Zi Ci implies it is for the tune of music, Ci or word is filled in according to the tune. that means tunes are first, then there are words. Thus, music and literature are closely linked. Till to the Yuan Dynasty, Yuan Zaju rose. It means the maturity of the art of opera. As the last dynasty of China’s feudal dynasty, the music of the Qing Dynasty developed prosperously. At this time, instrumental music ensembles as a new form of music performance, it has a variety of style. The songs and dances of all ethnic groups are in full bloom.

During New Culture Movement, many Chinese musicians studying abroad brought western musical culture back to China, promoting the development of music in China. Up to now, the music exchanges between China and the Western countries becomes more frequent.

1.2.2. The development of Western music.

The ancient Greeks also had a very advanced understanding to music. Plato and Aristotle, two famous ancient Greek philosophers, made similar observations about the social function of music. They all think that music has the function of Education and correction to people’s moral character.^[1] The emergence, enrichment and development of Western music in the Middle Ages is great. vocal music in churches during the period of religious music and instrumental music in the renaissance contributed significantly to the development of Baroque music. The end of the Baroque ushered in the classical music period which saw the emergence of Sonatas, concertos, symphonies and other forms of music, which greatly enriched the expression of music. Later, Europe had several great changes in the cultural field, music as a form of culture also changed its style. There are several broad categories: Romantic music, Impressionist music, expressionism, neoclassical, specific, incidental, electronic music etc. These music styles are very different and very distinctive. Many Chinese also like Western music very much. This affects music style and culture in china.

II. THE VALUE OF MUSIC EDUCATION

Whether in China or in the West, the inheritance of music culture is an important way of education. Music Education in modern society is very common. In china, many parents pay more attention to music education on their children. They do so not only because music can help their children have good future but also because music can improve their children’s quality on many aspects. The positive aspects of music to children can not be denied. Parents are keen for their children to learn such skills for different purposes. Although some parents let children learn music only from the naked eye of the interests, but ignored the hidden function of music education. Music Education can not only promote the effect of intellectual education, but also promote the teaching effect. However, the influence of Music Education on people is subtle and lasting. People who study music can improve not only their skills, but also their other qualities. For the whole society, music can not only promote the improvement of the quality of the whole people, but also enhance the spiritual realm of society.

2.1. Value to the individual.

2.1.1. Enhance the aesthetic ability, reflect the function of aesthetic education

In the context of examination-oriented education in China, the burden of classes and homework on students increased. Middle and primary school only pays attention to the student knowledge transmission, the only judgment standard of a student’s good or bad is the students’ intelligence score high or low. According to Gardiner’s Theory of multiple intelligence, students not only possess verbal intelligence, logical, mathematical intelligence, but also musical intelligence and motor intelligence.^[2] As early as 1912, Cai Yuanpei, a well-known scholar in modern China, put forward the educational idea of combining five education, aesthetic education is one of the five education. Although a century has passed, we have not really achieved the simultaneous development of five kinds of education.

Compared with physical education and intellectual education, aesthetic education is more abstract and its training effect is less obvious. Aesthetic education is not what we call art education, art education is an important way of school aesthetic education. Aesthetic Education, unlike music and art teaching and extra-curricular activities, pays attention to the systematic study of specialized knowledge and the training of skills, and stresses the mastery of skills. Instead, it should go beyond the training of artistic skills and aim at improving students' aesthetic quality in an all-round way. It is certainly not aesthetic education to be able to play an instrument but be able to appreciate beauty. Students learn basic music knowledge and skills not only to pass on this art, but also to pave the way for a higher level of aesthetics and creativity. With the help of a good music teacher, students will not only be able to improve their skills, but also develop a correct sense of beauty. Well, such a child will certainly live in a beautiful world, he will have more happiness than others.

2.1.2. Sound student personality

Music has a variety of forms of expression, vocal and instrumental music and so on. But no matter what form of music, to achieve a certain degree of success, it can not be practiced successfully in a day. In China, a word saying: ten minutes on the stage, ten years off the stage. Almost all the outstanding musicians are all experienced a lot of sweat and hard experience. As far as instrumental music concerned, the initial practice of Bow Movement for Erhu and violin is boring and dull which is difficult for children who have not developed their attention and will completely well. After the pitch practice, the difficulty is higher, It is possible for the student to retreat when they know the difficulty. Practicing music instrumental for a long time is also a test to the students' bodies. But once insist on down, they not only have this skill, but also cultivate a perseverance, facing difficulties and hard-working spirit. At the same time, music-educated students tend to have better focus on a task.^[3]

2.1.3. Promoting students' intellectual development

Intellectual education involves science and humanities as well as music, which may or may not be of interest to students. Interests need to be cultivated, and many parents force their children to learn music when they are young, and most of these children grow up to love music spontaneously. This also proves, student is not impossible to fall in love with study, just because the student does not know how to study interestingly.

Perhaps we should not force students to study music as parents do which leads students to view music learning as a dull, passive task. We should cultivate students interest in learning music in another scientific way, such as inculcating students and explaining to them the significance of learning music. The same is true for intellectual education. If a student starts to learn a subject with interested, motivation and strong will, Thus none of difficulties in the learning process will be an obstacle to his learning. Also, music learning of children can also promote students intellectual development just because the movement of their finger and thinking when they are learning music.

As a part of aesthetic education, music can also edify students' sentiment and delight their body as well as mind. Nowadays, with the rapid development of education and the great pressure of competition, it is inevitable that students will feel anxious and tired when they study. The special value of music lies in that it can adjust the psychological tense of the students when they study knowledge and ensure the students to have a good mood, in order to improve the efficiency of learning. Music is often the true expression of people's feelings.

2.1.4. Express emotion, promote students' spiritual development

With the speeding up of China's modernization process, material civilization is highly prosperous, many people's spirit is empty, especially children who are easy to be affected by the network, will spend time on the network game. In the long run, students have no spiritual sustenance, unwilling to communicate with people which leads to the affecting on healthy. While music is an art that is easy to bring people into another healthy situation. Student can spend their leisure time on music, at the same time to avoid indulging in the Internet which is harmful to physical and mental healthy. Students Express their inner feelings through music. In addition, any negative emotions can be improved through rational catharsis.

2.2.1. Value to the community.

Music As a part of social culture, creation is the origin of this culture, while the inheritance and transformation of this culture seems more important. As an ancient civilization with a history of 5,000 years, China's long history has left valuable historical and cultural resources to the sons and daughters of China. Children, as the next generation of successors to the motherland, have the right and duty to pass on such a proud culture and carry Chinese music forward.

Opera, as a kind of music form can be regarded as telling story, mainly through voice expression. the script is often the classic story of ancient China. In the process of learning Chinese opera, students can learn

about historical stories and get inspiration from them. Some classical music has the honor to be able to spread till now, it is our precious wealth. The words composed of these Chinese characters, such as “high mountains and flowing water”, “plum blossom and three lanes”, and “Autumn Moon in the Han Palace” Chinese even foreigners who know Chinese be overwhelmed by the beauty of Chinese characters.

Chinese classical music has grown up in history and matured in the exchanges of national fusion. It is a resplendent Pearl in national culture. A lot of China’s music today comes from minority cultures. Students can understand the ancient cultural exchanges, integration of the history after learned these knowledge .

2.2.2.Promote the improvement of class teaching effect

On one hand, students can develop the necessary spiritual quality of learning science and culture through learning music. On the other hand, if teachers know a little about music and can use music in teaching which can improve the quality of teaching. Some famous teacher who teaches English and Chinese achieved great success and improvement by using music in teaching. Also, some student who like music can also study well and have great interest in doing other things.

III. PROBLEMS EXISTING IN CHINA’S MUSIC EDUCATION

At the present stage China’s music education has developed vigorously in recent years. But we also can see that there are still some problems in China’s music education which changed the original value of music education.

3.1. music education neglects aesthetic education.

Music is an art and an important way of carrying out aesthetic education. In China’s today’s highly developed society, the parents of Chinese students ask their children to study music and what kind of music they learn or study is measured or decided by its economic value or is utilitarian,not to find the beauty of music. While in the West, almost every family has an orchestra, and the members of the orchestra are family members. In some Western countries, the atmosphere of learning music for all people have been realized , they learn music is not for money and status, but to entertain the body and mind, to celebrate life or appreciate God.

While in basic education in China, the school offers music lessons, but they do not taken music lesson seriously. Some music lessons were replaced by other subjects such as English,Math or Chinese in order to raise students’ examination score, and some teachers played music at random in the music lessons without guiding the students to enjoy it or how to play violin or piano. In addition, most music education institutions only focus on the improvement of students’ professional skills, but neglect the aesthetic value of music education. Music education originates from the cultivation and promotion of skills, but it needs to be promoted in improving the student’s ability in appreciating beautiful things. That is what China’s education should do in the future.the aesthetic dimension to be higher than skills.

3.2.Music education is as importance as intellectual education

In nowadays, Knowledge Changes Destiny is the truth believed by many parents, so parents put pressure on their children and school in order make sure that their children and the school that their children are studying in are trying their best to raise examination score. Although the state has recently introduced policies to reduce the burden on students and promote liberal education, the change in people’s attitudes is still a slow and difficult process. Many parents and teachers do not like students spending too much time on music, art, sports and other learning activities that have nothing to do with intellectual education.but music education is indeed can promote students’ intellectual development.These student who like music and play musical instruments well are more clever and have good understanding on learning all kinds of knowledge.

IV. IMPROVE MUSIC EDUCATION AND EXERT ITS FUNCTION IN TEACHING

As an important part of students’ comprehensive education, Music education must be paid enough attention by school and society.music learning not only can promote students’ intellectual development and make them more clever but also can make student happy in class and helps improve other subject teaching.for example,English teacher can edit English word into songs and guide student to sing the song that can help student remember and understand these words and make them happy in class.At the same time ,student also learned music. So music education can be mixed in other education and be carried out at the same time with other education.Chinese poem can be recited like singing songs,so math and English knowledge. At the beginning of the class , if teacher guide students sing a beautiful song, they will be very happy to listen to teacher’s teaching and happy to learn knowledge actively. And even in student’s learning, music can still play an important role, They can improve their learning efficiency by listening to light music when they are doing homework.

So,As school, music education must be payed enough attention,not only hire excellent music teacher to

teach in music class and make sure student can learn music well in music class, but also encourage math, English or Chinese teacher to use music to promote their teaching efficiency. Of course, if doing so, teachers themselves must know music and be good at playing and teaching music.

^[1]Tingsu. On the influence of Ancient Greece to the music of ancient Rome [J]. *The sound of the Yellow River*, 2018 (10) .

^[2]Dao jun Wang, Wen An Guo. *Pedagogy* [M]. People's Education Press, 2009: 311.

^[3]Wenjuan Fu. On the function of music Art [D]. Hebei university, 2004, 4.