

The Exploration of Guzheng Teaching Methods in Universities from the Perspective of Aesthetic Education

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Abstract: As one of the most representative traditional folk musical instruments in China, Guzheng not only has strong artistic expressive force, but also can fully show the wisdom of our ancient working people. Its shape, timbre and performance style are in line with our traditional aesthetic concept. In the process of guzheng teaching, it is necessary to let students experience its charm and appreciate its unique beauty, and improve the students' aesthetic ability. At present, China's education is influenced by exam-oriented education, which is highly utilitarian. For example, in the process of guzheng teaching, the focus is only to let students master performance techniques of guzheng instead of improving their aesthetic concept. As a result, students are more and more limited to showing off their skills rather than appreciating and exploring the unique beauty of guzheng on the cultural and aesthetic level, which is also a problem that cannot be ignored by professional education of guzheng in colleges and universities. Based on this problem, the article puts forward a new effective teaching path of guzheng in the new environment of aesthetic education, with a better attitude to inherit the art of guzheng.

The core value that a musical instrument conveys is to create a sense of rhythmic beauty, and pass this sense of beauty to the audience to ensure that performers can resonate with audience on the emotional level, thus maximizing the performance of the musical instrument. As one of the oldest plucked string instruments in China, the melodious sound of guzheng is in line with Chinese traditional aesthetic taste. Its unique shape and rich expressive force can bring people a multi-angle and multi-level aesthetic experience. In recent years, with the increasingly close exchanges of music and culture between countries, the art of guzheng has gradually reached out to the world, and has also been recognized and favoured in more and more countries. Guzheng has a wide range of sound, beautiful tone and rich expression, thus enabling people to produce multiple emotional experiences of passion, joy or sorrow, which is incomparable and irreplaceable by other folk musical instruments. Over the years, the current guzheng performance art has become quite mature and has shown its unique artistic charm. Aesthetic education is one of the main guiding ideology of contemporary college education. At present, many universities in China are vigorously promoting the teaching of guzheng, and more and more colleges are making guzheng as a public elective course and general course, and making guzheng closely integrated with ideological and political construction in colleges and universities. However, there are also some problems in the teaching process of guzheng, which not only affects the actual teaching results, but also weakens the positive effect of ideological and political construction. Therefore, this paper attempts to appeal to teachers

involved to find these deficiencies in time, think about and deal with these problems, and strive to introduce Chinese culture, folk music and traditional aesthetics education into guzheng course in colleges and universities, so as to enable students to learn the performance skills of guzheng, also integrate aesthetic education into ideological and political construction, thus playing a positive leading role in speciality construction.

1. The Aesthetic Characteristics of Guzheng

(1) Profound and graceful implication

Like Chinese traditional culture, the art of guzheng also pays attention to the beauty of implication. For example, the song “High Mountain and Flowing Water” portrays the majestic, lofty, static mountains and the gurgling, exquisite, dynamic flowing water, complementing each other. When describing the high mountains, the superoctave technique shows the magnificent scenery of the majestic mountains going straight into the sky and strange rocks rolling up and down in a grand way; As for the flowing water part, it shows different gestures of cascading waterfall, gurgling stream and other running water with gliss, damping, tremolo and other techniques. The beginning of the melody is elegant and slow, as if the sound is coming from deep in the mountains, bringing people to the top of the mountain; then the harmonics are used to foil atmosphere, and the mood rises and falls between the lofty mountains and the flowing water. After the song is finished, it shows people a Chinese landscape painting with the perfect fusion of various scenarios, and demonstrates the profound and graceful implication of guzheng with its unique sound.

(2) Rich and diversified themes

The themes of guzheng are rich and diversified, some of them present cultural customs and express humanities, such as *NaoYuanXiao, Celebrating a Bountiful Year*, etc.; some of them are taken from nature and express emotions through scenery, such as *Three Stanzas of Plum-blossoms* and *High Mountains and Flowing Water*; some of them glorify the heroes and express patriotism, such as *Lin Chong Flees in the Night, Regret and Hate of Linan*, etc.; some of them express thoughts, delicate and euphemistic, such as *Thoughts of the Autumn Night, Long Longing*, etc.; these colourful and diversified themes have provided a constant impetus to the development of guzheng, and they fully shows the connotation contained with guzheng as carrier.

(3) An implicit way of expressing emotions

As a traditional Chinese musical instrument, guzheng rarely uses straightforward expression, preferring to send love to mountains and landscapes, as well as making use of objects to express one's thoughts or to show real feelings from the side. For example, the traditional piece *The Autumn Moon over the Han Palace* describes the ancient woman in the palace thinking of her family over the moon, and her sadness of wandering around alone. The strings are kneaded, slid and dampened, like a woman frowning and sighing softly, which makes the audience have the feeling of dismalness and melancholy as well. There is also another piece of music transplanted from the guqin, called *Three Stanzas of Plum-blossoms*, in which the whole piece shows the noble quality of the plum blossoms through the contrasting images of static and dynamic plum blossoms, which is actually a metaphor for people with morals and integrity through the quality of the plum blossoms. Combining the art of guzheng with literature, this is one of the genres of “Fu, Bi, Xing” commonly used by the literati in ancient China.

(4) Aesthetic development keeps pace with the times

With the highly developed information technology, the development of guzheng also follows the footsteps of the times and constantly absorbs fresh elements. The trend of constantly innovating new styles and elements in the traditional guzheng music to meet the needs of modern society, and even making cross-border fusion and exploration of musical instruments to meet the aesthetic needs of modern people, has already come in guzheng major of the professional colleges and universities

across country. The emergence of new techniques leads to the flourishing of new works, and the establishment of new styles broadens the development of new fields. With the involvement of professional composers and the collation of professional theorists, the development of guzheng's college education has gradually changed from "art serves technology" to the subjective consciousness of "technology serves art" [1].

2. The Important Significance of Permeating Aesthetic Education in Guzheng Teaching in Colleges and Universities

(1) Help students better master the works

Aesthetic education is to cultivate students' ability to feel and create beauty. Guzheng performance also hopes to bring this ability into full play. In the process of teaching, we should make students get closer to the connotation of guzheng performance, enjoy the beauty of guzheng performance, discover the potential rules of guzheng performance through the analysis of the background, technique, composition and emotion of the works. By capturing and creating such rules, we can achieve the purpose of performance. In order to reach this level, the student should first have a keen grasp of guzheng, which is generally formed and established through a constant appreciation of the melody of associated piece and the performance of the performer. The art of guzheng is a close combination of various music theory and guzheng performance skills, and each work contains its own unique aesthetic characteristics and emotions. During performance, students are expected to use a keen sense of perception to empathize with the emotion of the piece and to interpret the heartfelt nature of the piece. Through the training of the above aspects of the students, they can better understand the atmosphere created by the piece, improve the tacit understanding with the instrument, and fit the emotional resonance with the performance [2].

(2) Integrating aesthetic education in guzheng teaching to cultivate students' ability to appreciate various kinds of beauty

The art of guzheng performance not only requires students to master the skills of performance, but also requires students to take into account different stylistic characteristics and emotional control while perfecting their skills. This kind of control should be permeated in the daily aesthetic education. Appreciation of literature and art, the study of various musical styles and so on, which can have a better implementation atmosphere and more comprehensive training conditions in the comprehensive colleges and universities. Colleges and universities need to accumulate students' internal aesthetic experience in guzheng teaching, let them appreciate different types of guzheng works to feel the change and development of emotions, to practically master the skills needed for various emotional expressions, and to improve students' understanding of all kinds of works. As the driving force of independent study, students can pursue excellence in guzheng learning, which can not only express the emotions and connotations required by the works, but also make personalized music processing according to the characteristics of the works, and further integrate their own thoughts and emotions. Cultivating students' appreciation ability in all aspects, cultivating students' taste, and improving students' all-round and multi-angle learning of guzheng performance is another important significance of guzheng aesthetics education in colleges and universities.

(3) Aesthetic education makes quality education more perfect

Quality education is one of the important contents of China's educational reform, and aesthetic education is an inseparable part of quality education. Quality education establishes not only a professional system of musical instruments, but also a kind of appreciation and identification of beautiful things for professional students. Under such a premise, we should develop more ambitious learning goals, deepen our own learning of guzheng aesthetics, and moreover, we should deeply implant the ideological construction as a kind of subtle influence and learning in the professional education of guzheng in contemporary colleges and universities.

3. The Application Strategy of the Aesthetic Education Concept Permeates the Guzheng Teaching in Universities

(1) Enrich guzheng practice activities and enhance students' cultural self-confidence
Aesthetic ability can only be greatly improved by continuous practice. Therefore, in addition to performing practice and checking in the classroom, teachers need to find more opportunities to improve students' self-confidence, train their playing ability in various environments, and improve their aesthetic expression ability. What's more, teachers can utilize contextual education to create different teaching and performing situations for students, attracting them to enter the realm of the work and feel the spiritual inspiration and emotional resonance that the art of guzheng brings to people. Teachers can also use the break time to organize students to watch live guzheng concerts, so as to feel the aesthetic performance and playing skills of excellent performers in close proximity, to examine themselves and find their own shortcomings from appreciation, and to guide them to think seriously and correct their problems actively. Teachers' teaching and students' learning can only be transformed into students' aesthetic taste through practice as a kind of solidified psychological aesthetic habit [3]. Therefore, there are many ways for teachers to guide students' practice. Performing on stage and participating in activities are external manifestations, but the cultivation of such aesthetic taste has certain limitations. So we can also organize reading clubs and performance salons regularly, or let the professional students simulate the class and social practice to popularize the guzheng education and use other positive and optimistic means and ways to make students get the sense of immersion and mission through identity transformation.

(2) The teacher is the teaching leader and the student is the teaching center

Teachers should deeply analyze guzheng culture , and introduce in detail the origin, development progress, stylistic genres, performers, and classical pieces of guzheng, so that students can better grasp the connotation of guzheng, understand the emotion of the work, and improve the overall expressive force. In addition, the art of guzheng is often related to literature, poetry, fine arts and dance. In daily education, teachers can introduce knowledge from other fields according to the teaching content to comprehensively improve students' aesthetic ability. During the process of lesson preparation, teachers should organize and excavate the professional course of guzheng performance systematically and comprehensively, forming a set of complete system including techniques and arts, and taking full control from macro to micro level to make reasonable planning and arrangement for every student. Teachers should take the concept of “human-oriented” as the principle to grasp individual characteristics of each student and carry out personalized education to ensure the collective improvement of students' performance ability. In the teaching process, attention should be paid to increasing the proportion of students' aesthetic training, and the aesthetic level of guzheng performance should be gradually improved in the process of learning in order to form a profound ideological resonance and understanding. As the carrier of the teaching center, students need to optimize the content of the course. They should not be limited to the simple imitation and performance on the technical level, but make full preparations of the related history and literature before performance, and make full use of the associative effect to appreciate the style of the work, then try to figure out the actual aesthetic meaning of the work and the extended mental activities after completing the work. In this way, the new situation of “interaction, vitality and association”, which is suitable for the development of guzheng major in colleges and universities, can be created in the process of teaching and learning [4].

(3) Teachers introduce the culture related to guzheng works

When introducing the culture related to guzheng works to the students, in order to let the students better understand the connotation of guzheng music works, teachers should first guide students to consult and learn the content of the background of the creation, the era of the creation, and the characteristics of the composers, so that the students will have a better understanding of the

whole piece before performing the works. When introducing the culture related to guzheng works to the students, in order to let the students better understand the connotation of guzheng music works and the thoughts and feelings they want to express, the students should first be guided to do the checking and learning of the background of the creation, the era of the creation, and the characteristics of the composers, so that the students will have a deeper knowledge and understanding of the whole repertoire before they play the works. Then, with audio-visual materials, students can better appreciate the content of the work and understand comprehensively about the control of guzheng's timbre and the connotation of the work. The art of guzheng performance has the common characteristics of region, conservatism and continuity [5]. However, with the development of the times, the new school of guzheng, the diversified musical functions, musical content, genre, multi-level of acoustic effects, and techniques are constantly being borrowed and introduced.

4. Conclusion

The art of Guzheng performance is an aesthetic art of expressing emotion. With the development of society, people's aesthetic level continues to improve. Guzheng has also attracted more and more common people to discover its unique beauty. Guzheng major students in colleges and universities shoulder the great mission of inheriting and developing the art of guzheng. And the social and cultural development has new demands, so the teaching of guzheng must also increase the content of "applying what they have learned". Guzheng teaching currently conducted in colleges should not only focus on improving skills, but also on cultivating students' ability to understand and express aesthetics. Guzheng, as a kind of musical art that expresses feelings, aesthetic education is an effective method to cultivate students' emotional expression [6]. The concept of aesthetic teaching permeated in guzheng teaching can make students deeply understand the charm of music, and the two are complementary to each other, so that students can better represent their performance skills and emotions. At present, China is actively carrying out aesthetic education in colleges and universities. Teachers' teaching concepts must keep pace with the times, guiding students to correctly view aesthetic education, cultivating a correct sense of aesthetics, and better applying it to guzheng performance, which will help students to improve their aesthetic ability and effectively express their feelings. We also hope that, in the new era and new situation, the performing and playing, learning and teaching of guzheng are all based on the premise of aesthetics, and that guzheng will be used to tell the Chinese story and depict the Chinese characters.

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