

On the "Poetry Education" Value of the Gentleman's Cultivation Concept in The *Book of Poetry* for Contemporary College Students

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Abstract: The *Book of Poetry*, from its inception to the beginning of its collection, had always been the basic strategy for governing the country in the Zhou Dynasty, with respect and kinship becoming the most basic requirements for literati in terms of etiquette norms. In the process of studying the *Book of Poetry*, it was found that many of its contents have provided explanations and descriptions of the "gentleman". Taking the image of the gentleman in works such as *Duke Wu of Wei* as an example, the commonalities between them are extracted. Based on the thoughts of the CPC in excellent traditional Chinese culture and expectations for young people, the excellent cultural connotations in the *Book of Poetry* are deeply explored, and the reference value of this for the construction of contemporary spiritual civilization, moral education, and the cultivation of excellent personality is analyzed in order to play the "poetry education" function of the *Book of Poetry*.

Keywords: *Book of Poetry*, poetry education, college student, cultivation concept

Introduction

The term "Xiu Yang" has many meanings. "Xiu", also known as decoration, means to cultivate and improve; "Yang" means cultivating and providing, therefore it should be an internal expression of personal morality and behavior. As a model of excellent traditional Chinese culture, the *Book of Poetry* has taken on a heavy responsibility in cultivating virtue and nurturing people. The *Book of Poetry* has always regarded "poetry education" as its advocated object, which has influenced future generations for thousands of years. Based on this, this article explores the connotation of the gentleman cultivation concept contained in the *Book of Poetry* and explains its inspiration among contemporary college students..

1. The function and value of poetry education in the *Book of Poetry*

As one of the "Six Classics", the *Book of Poetry* is not only the earliest collection of poetry in literary significance, but also a ritual music and song book from the perspective of the Zhou Dynasty. It was not until later that Confucianism made a theoretical summary and formed a complete system of poetry education.

Confucius emphasized the educational and social functions of the *Book of Poetry*. In the Analects of Confucius, Yanghuo: "Poetry may serve to inspire, to reflect, to communicate, and to complain."^[1] "Xing" is the foundation of poetry education, expressing self-awareness through visual thinking.^[2] "Observation" refers to the "gains and losses of observing customs", which means that individuals have their own thinking and observation of external things. "Group" refers to the connection established between individuals and groups. In ancient times, "poetry education" was based on the *Book of Poetry*, so the "poetry education" that people came into contact with had relative consistency in both cultural education and

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the field of consciousness, which was conducive to promoting individual socialization and realizing the function of "group" poetry education. Finally, there is "resentment", which expresses dissatisfaction and exposes the ugly side of reality through objective criticism.^[3] Thus, as the dust and gravel of the times, "Xing Guan Qun Yuan" falls on everyone's shoulders and turns into a big mountain. For example, Zhu Xi, Liu Zongyuan, Han Yu, Ouyang Xiu, and even to this day, we are still studying the *Book of Poetry*, learning about its objects, the art of metaphor, and the connotation of royal education. Confucius' poetry education has described a specific picture of ancient poetry education for us, which plays an extremely important role in cultivating the "Xiu Yang" concept of contemporary college students. However, this article does not comprehensively discuss the academic exploration of the "Xiu Yang" concept of the *Book of Poetry*, only involves the content of the cultivation concept of gentlemen and self-cultivation. From Confucius' explanation of the poetry education function of the *Book of Poetry*, it has reference value for the cultivation of the concept of contemporary college students.

2. The specific connotation and current value of the gentleman cultivation concept in the *Book of Poetry*

Many types of gentlemen were portrayed, providing models and standards for future generations to cultivate virtue and character. The term "gentleman" generally refers to nobles, who value the cultivation of etiquette and music. So what is the gentleman in the *Book of Poetry*?

Of course, the term "gentleman" is not just a personal title, but also a laudatory name: "In the cultural concept of the pre-Qin people," gentleman "not only had a certain social status, but also noble character."^[4] In this sense, not all nobles of the Zhou Dynasty can be called "gentlemen". Only those who are outstanding in morality and have special moral character among the nobles can be considered true gentlemen."^[5]

Confucius said, "It is only when the natural qualities and the results of education are properly blended, that we have the truly wise and good man." Only by combining literature and quality can one be called a gentleman. *Duke Wu of Wei* records: "Our duke is dignified like polished ivory and stone or jade refined. "Polishing and refining originally meant the craft of jade treatment, but later extended to the meaning of discussing and researching knowledge. Using jade as a metaphor is not only used to describe the beauty of a gentleman's appearance, but also to use jade treatment as a metaphor for the difficulty of the gentleman's process of refining virtue."^[6] Among them, special emphasis is placed on "warming it up like jade", which is to take the warmth and luster of jade, with a rich radiance, to metaphorically describe a person's gentle temperament and literary quality." Spare the rod and spoil the child", nor is a person. The literary and artistic qualities of a gentleman are also gradually refined and carved into beautiful virtues.

In addition to being particular about clothing and accessories, there is also an emphasis on matching one's family in love. In ancient times, love pursued a perfect match in cultivation. "A modest and self-disciplined gentleman is as warm and moistening as a jade." The gentleman gradually broke away from describing the value of status and used to describe the moral humility of a gentleman. The term "shu" in "shu nv" refers to the meaning of water and the sound of "shu", where water represents delicacy and tenderness, using softness to overcome hardness. Uncle ranks lower in the order of seniority among brothers, it represents the status of "A fair maiden". It is no longer a description of a woman's graceful figure, but refers to her unfathomable inner cultivation and kindness, just like a gentleman. In the era of "beauty is justice", the concept of love among gentlemen in the *Book of Poetry* appears invaluable.

In principle, gentlemen advocate respect and humility in their dealings. In the *Book of Poetry*, "gong" is mentioned multiple times, such as in *The Great Drought*: "O my reverend sire, why vent on me your ire?" In *The Banished Prince*: "The mulberry and other, trees planted by our mother, and father are protected, as our parents are respected."^[7] Respecting the deity is one aspect and a manifestation of the ancient concept of the way of heaven. But for Confucius, he said one should sacrifice to a spirit as though that spirit was present. His words of "spirit" did not include this, but rather showed respect for elders and rulers. Confucius and Mencius believed that "human nature is inherently good", and filial piety is the most natural manifestation of this viewpoint." The proper way between father and son is a natural propensity that by

extension becomes the appropriate relationship between ruler and minister. "Filial piety to parents is innate and an innate instinct in life. Filial piety is the first level of respect, and the second is to emphasize the attitude of serving the ruler. Humility is the second principle in handling things. "Humility" is humility, and "harmony" is obedience.^[8] How to be humble? Modesty and persevere in it, Meritorious but modest and practise modesty. The first meaning is that the reputation of humility is known to people, rather than self proclaimed humility. The second meaning is a wise humility, a decision made after distinguishing right from wrong. The last one is about diligence, diligence, prudence, and humility. Humility is to move forward courageously and selflessly.^[9]

During the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States period, wars were rampant, and war poetry, as one of the most common themes in the *Book of Poetry*, all reflected the noble and patriotic sentiments. In *Lamentation*: "In frosty moon, my heart is grieved. Rumors spread soon, can't be believed." This scholar-bureaucrat was worried and worried, because all the world is muddy and I alone am clear, and because all men are drunk and I alone am sober. leaving only one person to lament the tragedy of the country's collapse. Sorrow lingers, sorrow becomes a disease, sorrow sighs. "Governing the country and pacifying the world" is the advanced stage of life's pattern. As a qualified king, it is necessary for him to be able to coordinate and carry out comprehensive social work, first worrying about the world, and then enjoying the world. From a social perspective, the purpose of "humility" is to maintain social harmony and order. On the one hand, gentlemen are aware of the uniqueness of their life environment and regard respect for the personality, will, and emotions of others as a prerequisite for communication. On the other hand, "humility" also has principles and limitations. It is led by "benevolence" and is "humility" while maintaining self-esteem and personality.^[10] Humility should be a way to achieve one's own and others' personalities, and should not hinder moral character.

Not only men, but also many images of women are portrayed in the *Book of Poetry*. In *Patriotic Baroness Mu of Xu*: "I go across the plains; Thick and green grow the grains. I'll plead to mighty land, Who'd hold out helping hand." Mrs. Xu Mu was extremely anxious and wanted to return to her homeland to offer condolences to her brother, but the way home was blocked and long. She disregarded everything, just to tell the world, "If two rabbits walk by the ground, they can distinguish me as a male or female". "Gentlemen" have no gender distinction. Although the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States period were societies ruled by patriarchy, women were not inferior to men, and both men and women were parallel and not contradictory.

3. How to unleash the value of poetry education in the cultivation of the *Book of Poetry*

As a classic work over two thousand years ago, the views on cultivation in the *Book of Poetry* may be questioned in today's world. Why do we seek opinions and inspirations from it?

Although the *Book of Poetry* may not have an absolute impact on us contemporary people, it can serve as a good and reasonable path for us to cultivate our self-cultivation concept. Excellent traditional culture is the crystallization of the wisdom of the entire nation accumulated in the long river of history, and is the soul of the Chinese nation. Under the background of rapid development, the Internet and other emerging media are affecting people's lives. The traditional static and intuitive forms of expression (text, word of mouth) are being replaced by new ways of communication. How should we leverage the contemporary value of traditional culture?

In recent years, traditional culture has presented us with a unique style from an innovative perspective. Focusing on the media method that has the closest connection with the public - film and television media. Like the *Book of Poetry*, as a ritual music song book from the perspective of the Zhou Dynasty's ritual music culture, it itself has the characteristic of musicality. Under the blessing and fusion of music, modern language is grafted and transformed into a song that can be sung by multiple people. In addition to popular music, the emergence of television cultural programs has also brought us a lot of inspiration. Drawing nourishment from traditional culture and combining it with people's spiritual demands at present, a dazzling program has been formed. The core promotional point of *Classic Ode to the West* is to use literature to carry the Tao and singing to express the will, which endows them with new vitality through the rhythm of modern people.

Public elective courses and lectures are also a form that college students often encounter. Schools can implement it

through flexible means such as credits or working hours. Invite experts with certain influence in the academic community to give thematic academic lectures or invite teachers with achievements in ancient culture within the college to offer a series of courses. Meanwhile, a teacher centered classroom format can also be tilted towards students. Peer education for college students has a subtle impact through equal communication among students. In the classroom, students can organize and offer a course on their own, giving them the opportunity to actively participate in management and organization, fully unleashing their subjective initiative and self incubation.

"Peer education" can better stimulate students' interests and adapt to the learning pace in the new educational environment by changing the theme. Integrate excellent culture into the classroom and allow students to engage in theoretical learning and practical activities on their own. Outside of the classroom, it is possible to collaborate with several mentors to enhance the specialization of student research results and take a development path that combines multiple aspects. Of course, it is also possible to create a student preaching team to incorporate the theoretical achievements of the previous stage into actual classrooms - students can give lectures themselves. The format of lectures can be diverse, including single person topics or multiple collaborations; It can be a single output, or it can be in the form of interviews, demonstrations, etc. Furthermore, it can be organically combined with campus promotion. Cooperate with the campus radio station, campus official account and other platforms to launch special columns for promotion, so that more people can join the ranks of the new school.

4. Epilogue

A journey of thousands of miles with strong winds, standing straight at the distant mountains. Learn the virtue of being a gentleman from the *Book of Poetry*. Colleges and universities should also take cultivating the cultivation of young people's values as an important direction for development. They can learn from the *Book of Poetry*, draw inspiration from the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation, and help students establish correct worldviews, outlooks on life, and values on their growth path, gradually advancing towards the true "gentleman".

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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