

From Literature to Image: Study on the Literariness of Painting Creation of Books and Periodicals

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Abstract. As two different art categories, literature and painting use temporal words and spatial images respectively to convey information and narrative. In addition to the pursuit of visual decoration, the paintings in books and periodicals in the period of the Republic of China were widely and profoundly influenced by the literature of the same period from the aspects of the style of expression, the theme of content and the creative techniques, thus breaking through the limitations of their own media and achieving narrative effects like literary. The reflection of literary thoughts and trends in theme, the translation of classical novels in content and the use of literary techniques such as metaphor, synaesthesia and “Bixing” in the expression techniques that further highlighted the functional value, aesthetic value, and historical value of the images. In the visual information age, only by maintaining the characteristics of their own media and absorbing the narrative advantages of other artistic media, can images break through the limitation of plane static space and achieve a narrative effect with more artistic appeal and ideological and cultural depth.

I. INTRODUCTION

Based on different standards, painting has different classifications.

According to the view of Roger Fry, a British art critic and art historian in the 20th century, in addition to the pure painting that pays attention to modeling and color, there is another kind of painting that evokes the

viewer's associative ideas and emotions by reproducing specific objects in a way similar to literature (Fry, 2013). Similarly, Feng Zikai, a master of literature and art in China, also noticed another artistic tendency of painting besides decoration, that is, focusing on the meaning and emotion of the objects (Zikai, 2017).

The latter kind can be called "literary painting". As the "mixture" of image and literature, literary painting has the dual narrative attributes of image and word. It is a space-time unity expressed in the form of space. The involvement of literature into painting enhances its plot causality and lyrical effect, making image an important medium of narration outside words.

The coming of image-reading era has aroused the attention to image narration and promoted the comparative study of image and words. As an important form of interaction between image and literature, literary painting is to breaking through the limitation of its own spatial media and pursue the narrative effect of temporal words. The study of the influence of literature on painting creation is obviously the meaning of the comparative research. Thus, on the basis of tracing the development and evolution of domestic literary painting, this article takes the creation of covers and illustrations of books and periodicals in the Republic of China as an example, by analyzing its style of the theme, content of expression and creative techniques, so as to promote the comparative study of image and literature to depth.

II. THE EVOLUTION AND MODERN DEVELOPMENT OF LITERARY PAINTING

Looking back, it can be seen that China has had a tradition of interaction between literature and image since ancient times, which not only accumulated strength for the emergence of a large number of literary images in modern times, but also accumulated thick historical materials for the latter research on literary images.

It can be said that the period of Wei, Jin, Southern-Northern Dynasties was the germination of literary painting (Xiaoping, 2014). The painting of literary themes such as plum, orchid, bamboo and chrysanthemum enhanced the moral and emotional connotation of the image. The rise of mountains-and-waters painting represented the awakening of the scholar painter's self-consciousness. Figure paintings based on historical stories or literary works expanded more possibilities for image narration. For example, the painting of Ode on Goddess Luo by Gu Kaizhi in the Eastern Jin Dynasty was based on Cao Zhi's Ode on Goddess Luo, which showed

the complex and tortuous plots and the characters' contradictory and depressed thoughts and emotions in the form of a long scroll, which had achieved the classics painting based on literature in the history.

During the Song and Yuan dynasties, the prosperity and wide spread of Buddhist painting played an important role in promoting literary images. During this period, scholar painting gradually determined and flourished, and the creation developed from objective reproduction to subjective expression. The poetry lyrics and inscriptions on many paintings not only showed the author's interests, but also enhanced the literariness of images. With the development of folk arts such as novels and dramas and the gradual improvement of block printing, a great number of illustrations in dramas and novels were created, so as to the interaction between images and literature was closer. The development of commodity economy in the Ming and Qing Dynasties promoted the development of folk painting such as engravings, and the creation and commercialization of popular novels promoted the creation of illustrations to a new high, and even to the condition of "no book with no image" in the late time. The development of maturity of novel illustrations and scholar paintings with the exquisite technology and the huge number had become the symbols of the prosperity and development of ancient literary images (Xiaoping, 2014).

Since modern times, with the breaking of the feudal closed-door state and the entering of foreign missionaries, diplomatic missions, businessmen and photographers, the collision between Chinese and Western cultures aroused Chinese people's curiosity and desire for foreign new things. In this context, "Dianshizhai Pictorial", an attached pictorial of "The Shun Pao", was launched and published in May 1884, which opened the new beginning of pictorial appealing to different groups in modern China (Licheng, 2011). It focused on current social news, folk cultures and customs, exotic affairs and moral education. Created by painters represented by Wu Youru, "the first person of Chinese news picture", and published in the form of lithography, the pictorial had an important impact on the creation of literary images such as comic paintings, story paintings, etc. More and more journalists realized the commercial value of decoration and publicity, as well as the cultural value of popularization of science and moral education. Later, many

newspapers published pictorials one after another, which sparked a wave of pictorials, promoted the creation of popular literature on the pictorials, and conceived the embryonic form of modern literary images.

In addition to the increasing number and rapid development of pictorials, pure literary journals began to flourish in the early 20th century. After the publication of "New Novel" in 1902, a large number of them came into being. The illustrations of them were obviously essential for the attraction of the public, commercial promotion and educational publicity that many exquisite photos or decorative illustrations of characters, scenery and so on were on the covers and volume, and comics also began to appear, so as to pursue the effect of visual beautification and combination of image and texts. The large numbers of publications of literary periodicals with new novels and new dramas promoted the development and prosperity of literary works such as novels, biographies, poems, dramas and others, thereby promoting a lot of creations of literary paintings. The images became an effective means of expressing the literary interests, theme content and aesthetic characteristics of the publication beyond the text.

By the May Fourth Movement, the young generation showed rejection of traditional literature and response to the new cultural trends. A large number of intellectuals such as Lu Xun, Hu Shi and Mao Dun devoted themselves to the editing and publishing of literary journals. The covers and illustrations of the magazine got rid of the stereotypes of modern girls, flowers and bird scenery gradually, and became more flexible. The interaction between literature and images became closer. At this time can be called the "golden age" of literary journals publishing (Yongjun, 2010). With the publications of novels in independent volume and modern poetry, the translation of novel into images became a trend. Compared with illustrations in journals, these paintings paid more attention to the function of explaining the text, which became a new form of literary image (Min, 2014).

In a word, with the interaction between literature and images increasingly closer, image, as spatial art, have had changed from the vassal status of the text to the media of narration and expression. Differed from the decorative images which simply emphasize the lines, shapes and colors, what literary images pay more attention to are the expression of the emotions and poetic

power of the theme, thereby laying the foundation for the continuation of movements, the expression of emotions and the development of plots in paintings.

III. PAINTING STYLE INFLUENCED BY LITERARY TRENDS

In the 1930s, a variety of literary narrative modes were developed in Chinese literary and artistic circles, such as "the left-wing" literature, personal desire narrative and popular emotional narrative and others. Different literary trends show different ideological consciousness, aesthetic purport and narrative strategies (Daimei, 2010). The concerns about the revolutionary situation and reflection on the society, the desire for freedom of thought and expression of inner feelings have imperceptibly penetrated into artist's creation. It is typically expressed in two forms and theme styles: the new woodcut prints of the revolutionary realism and the pure artistic illustrations of romantic aestheticism.

Realism: a reflection of the literary revolution

As responses to the political and literary trends, literary groups such as "Literary Research Association" and "the left League" had gathered a large number of intellectuals. They advocated the two concepts of democracy and science, advocated "art for life" and created a large number of realistic and revolutionary literary works. Under this background, a group of artists represented by Lu Xun, Zheng Zhenduo and Zhao Jiabi, realized the visual power and narrative ability of images, strongly recommended foreign excellent art works, compiled and printed representative artists' albums, held art exhibitions, invited foreign artists to give lectures, published comment articles, all of these had promoted the rapid development of modern literary image creations, and made the almost extinct woodcut prints glow with new vitality. Although Lu Xun himself had less practice in printmaking creation, he had higher appreciation and insight than ordinary people in literary criticism. He pointed out that only person with full energy could produce the artwork with strength, the woodcut prints can hardly survive in a decadent and small society in an article entitled "the introductory note of selected works of modern woodcut (2)" published in the twelfth issue of "Zhaohua Weekly" (Xun, 1929). Thus the creation of woodcut prints was related to class struggle and the literary background.

Under the guidance of literary and art masters, a number of woodcut creation groups had been established one after another, such as “One Eight

Art Society”, “Mei Lian”, “Spring Land Painting Society”, “Wild Wind Painting Society” and “Wild Spike Woodcut Society”. Influenced by the literary trend, many young woodcarvers were committed to the art practice of “art for life” with knife rather than pen. Their works took the social reality and the public life as the theme, with a strong sense of the era and national revolution.



Image 1. “go to the front” by Hu Yichuan

As one of the origins of China's modern woodcut, “Yi Ba” art society had characteristics of the era and national revolution obviously. The members such as Chen Guang, Chen Tiegeng, Yao Fu, Hu Yichuan, Wang Zhanfei and Li Keran were deeply influenced by the social reality and created a large number of classic woodcut works reflecting social reality and the poor. “Go to the front” (image 1) created by Hu Yichuan in 1932 after Mr. Lu Xun's speech was the most representative modern woodcut work. With brush and knife as weapons, it fully depicted the strong appeal of the workers and the heroic spirit of “living with knife” in the movement of saving the nation from subjugation and ensuring its survival. And it expressed the resentment towards the aggressors and praises the fearless spirit of revolutionary fighters. It was a model of realistic literary image creation.

Romanticism: the expression of emotional desire

After the New Culture Movement, a group of intellectuals gathered in Shanghai, such as Yu Dafu, Ye Lingfeng, Zhang Ziping, Liu Naou, Mu Shiyong, Shi Zhecun and so on. They were self-conscious and advocated the supremacy of art. Most of their works focused on the colorful modern urban life, the emotional entanglement of gifted scholars and modern ladies and the desires of human nature, and also emphasized the expression of subjective emotion and the wanton publicity of people's perceptual desire, which showed the tendency of aestheticism, decadence and vulgarity. The creation of aestheticism was in contrast to the revolutionary grand narrative sharply. Ye Lingfeng and Guo Jianying were representative painters who led the two directions of abstraction and figuration respectively.

Ye Lingfeng called "the painter hooligan" by Lu Xun, extended the pursuit of "pure art" in literature to the painting (Xun, 1991). As he said that his purpose was to use these literature and paintings to provide some relaxation and happiness for people interested, so as to free them from other serious problems temporarily (Lingfeng, 1934). He drew a large number of illustrations in style of "biazley" on the journals of "Creation Monthly", "Flood" and "Huan Zhou", becoming a famous art star in Shanghai. His works mostly focus on the theme of worried girls with slender trunks, decadent faces, wavy curls and the combination of beauty and devil. This illustration (image 2) was published in the second issue of Volume I of the "Creation Monthly". In the painting, a dancing beauty with slender trunk and limbs, elegant long hair and dressed in long skirt decorated with peacock feathers was looking at the shaking candle light with music, and the ornament of willows, petals, wine jars with different curvatures and light lines strengthened the nature of dynamic and decoration, showing the fanatical pursuit and imitation of the wind of "Salome".



Image 2. "Wine and woman" by Ye Lingfeng

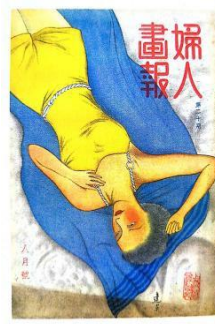


Image 3. the cover painting of "The Women's Pictorial" by Guo Jianying

Differ from Ye Lingfeng, the modern girls in Guo Jianying's creations showed coincidence with urban fashion and secular culture. As the representative of the scholars of "the New Sense Group", after being the editor of the "Women Pictorial", he showed a tendency of urban romance and decadence in his creation in order to echo the novels that emphasized urban emotion and personal desire in the publication.

His paintings were in the form of sketch in which the characters were not documentary, but stylized with moderate exaggeration and deformation (Daimei, 2010). Most of them focused on graceful modern girls with slender eyebrows, narrow eyes, red lips, and its high saturation colors made it full of strong sensory impression (image 3). The rhythm and spaces enhanced the infection and decoration, that represented the vulgarity and sexuality of the modern girls and the enjoyable atmosphere of city incisively and vividly. In a word, as media of narrative, images reflected the subjective thoughts and emotions of the people, the aesthetic purport of them was consistent with the ideological proposition of literature.

IV. IMAGE TRANSLATION OF LITERARY WORKS

Compared with texts, illustrations in the book were much easier to be seen, its visual priority would affect people's reading and understanding of the texts (Xianzhang, 2018). Literary and artistic creation had more vitality and creativity under the special background of the Republic of China, a number of far-reaching literary works had been produced and then circulated widely by the public which had become the main sources of the painting creation. Whether it was the author's own image translation or other painters', it was inevitably linked with the original text.

The author's own image translation

As for the author's own painting translation of the novels, taking Zhang Ailing as an example. As a typical representative of self-written and self-drawn novels in modern China, Zhang showed great attainments in drawing. She not only published her paintings in middle school, but also drew illustrations for many novels of herself when they were published in the magazine, such as "Red Rose and White rose", "Love in a Fallen City", "the Golden Lock" and "the Love-reading Jasmine". "The Rumors" had become the only prose collection with self-drawn illustrations in the history of modern Chinese literature. Ke Ling once commented that Ms. Zhant Ailing was eye-catching among writers and also good at painting, her texts thus seemed distinctive (Ailing, 2001). It provides a basis for readers to understand the characters and scenes in the story by the illustrations. The translation from literature to images released the author's aesthetic feeling and sense of free creation (Huizhao, 2019). The authenticity and presence made the images interact with the text, which expanded the narrative effects of the literature.

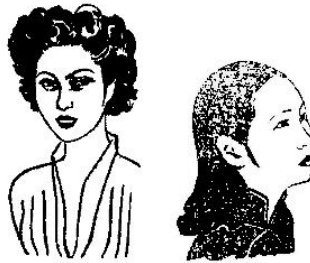


Image 4. Zhang Ailing's own illustration for her novel

In "the Red Rose and Write Rose" (image 4), Zhang Ailing drew the scene of Wang Jiaorui after washing her hair, that the hair curls thick as clouds, snow-white soap bubbles were shining, golden brown face was greasy, eyes were hanging like actor's, lips were bright-colored, and a striped cloth bathrobe with wide robes and large sleeves was closed to her body loosely that showed the openness and vitality of the red rose as a modern social butterfly. In contrast, the description of white rose named Meng Yanli, was slightly thin, pale face was lifeless, lips were closed tightly and head slightly raised, the eyes revealed some helplessness and sadness. The old-fashioned hairstyle and high-collar clothes reflected the traditional conservatism and the depression of the personality. At the visual level, the depiction of face, expression, hairstyle and clothing showed the characteristics more clearly.

The painter's Image translation of novels

Many classic novels have strong attractions to painters. Differed from the supplementary and guiding illustration created by the novel's author, painters inevitably bring subjective attitude into the image-translation of the novel from the perspective of audience. Although the plots of story are the same, the selection of scenes, the perspective of expression and the ways of expression will have impacts on the picture presentation and the theme transmission

During the New Culture Movement, image was regarded as a more direct and powerful weapon of revolutionary struggle than literature, and many classic novels were translated by different painters. Due to the personal understandings of the characters and plots, the diversity of expression methods and angles, the painting effect were different. As one of the earliest vernacular novels in China, Lu Xun's "the True Story of Ah Q" reflected the social contradictions at that time and showed strong characteristics of the era. The artistry rooted in reality had led many painters such as Liu Xian, Ding Cong, Chen Tiegeng, Jiang Zhaohe, Ye Qianyu and Zhao Yannian to create images in different forms. Just Feng Zikai, a comic master, himself painted as many as fifty-three paintings.



Image 5. illustration of "the True Story of Ah Q" by Feng Zikai

In this illustration (image 5), Feng choose the most dramatic moment when the crowd listened respectively to what Ah Q had seen and heard in the city. At that time Ah Q was raising his right hand, Wang Hu was stretched his neck and stunned, Zhao sat opposite looked solemn and everyone laughed happily. The scene made readers think of the different situations before and the ugly attitude to Ah Q in Weizhuang. Images stimulated the audience's association of the story and the contrast made the meaning much richer. It can be said that the visual translation of temporal texts is an important generation path of literary images in modern China. Pictures and texts helped each other and strengthened the narrative effect.

Intervention of poetry in painting

The intervention of texts in the image also has the effect of enhancing the literariness of the painting. Image is not good at showing intangible objects such as thoughts or emotions, and its meaning conveyed is extensive and fuzzy. The gap between the signifier and the signified gives the audience room for subjective interpretation which could be restricted by the intervention and supplement of the texts, and also the spatial images could help the text convey the connotation, so that producing infinite narrative effects.



Image 6. Feng Zikai's cartoon with poem

Image and text are like the plus-minus poles of a circuit, the isomorphism and interaction can conduce better narrative effects. Taking Feng Zikai's cartoon with poems as an example (image 6). In this painting, the fruit bowl on the windowsill was full of red cherries, while the cigarette on the matchbox smoking repeatedly and several plantain leaves outside the window swing in the wind. Although the juxtaposition of these images seemed meaningless, the inscription of "it is easy for flowing time to throw people away and color cherry red and plantain green" showed the theme creatively. The verbs of "flow", "throw", "color" had the meanings of development and change distinctively, echoing with the smoking and swing of the images and inspiring the viewers' further association, so that making these images imply the passage of time and producing flowing sense by the static image

V. USE OF LITERARY TECHNIQUES IN PAINTING

As the main forms of narrative, literature and images must learn from and imitate each other in creative techniques. During the period of the Republic of China, literature was the creative source of paintings in books and periodicals, the use of multiple expression techniques of literature in images could promote the development of the plot and convey thoughts and emotions, so that making the spatial images show the narrative effect of literature.

Metaphor

As a kind of cognitive method and creative technique which is common in literary, metaphor means express deep meaning by showing the connection of two things (Aristotle, 1996). It is based on the commonality between the “Ontology” and the “Vehicle” in certain characteristics and requires audiences’ understanding of the context and background, so as to complete the connection and conversion from signifier to signified of image. In Lu Xun’s essay “the memory for oblivion”, the words of “night” and “road” were metaphors for the darkness of feudal society and the struggle of revolutionary (Xun, 2009), thus revealing the writing background and profound meaning of the text. In art creation in Republic of China, metaphor can also make the image achieve the effect of infinite aesthetic enjoyment. Here take the cover images of three versions of Zhang Ailing’s novel collection “the Legend” as examples (image 7).



Image 7. the cover images of three versions of “the Legend”

First of all, colors have the characteristics of coldness and warmth, lightness and depth, brightness and darkness, and often have conventional understandings and perceptions of audiences, such as red for celebration or blood, white for purity or solemnity. The special colors of paintings carry the author's creative thoughts and emotions. The color of the cover of the first edition of "the Legend" selected by Zhang Ailing herself seemed simple but profound. As she mentioned in the postscript that she wanted the cover of blue-green to open a little night-blue window for the newsstand from which people could see the moon and the crowd (Ailing, 2001). The metaphor of colors is more subjective.

Secondly, as one of the basic languages of image, line is important part of the painting. Lines of different length, thickness, curvature, straightness, arrangement and combination can have different visual effects and meanings. Special lines and symbols were used in the cover of the reprinted version of "the Legend", that made the images have deeper aesthetic meaning and ideological connotation. The stories in the collection were mostly about the tortuous situation of traditional women under the feudal background, and continued in the ups and downs of the character's life. Zhang Ailing once introduced the cover of reprinted, "when the book was reprinted, it used the cover drew by Yan Ying, the symbols on it like dark clouds on the ancient silk, a black tide surging up in the dark with many noisy waves falling gently. When looking closely, it likes small jade chains, some of them hooked up in twos or threes and can't be separated; some looks like the moon, returning to its circle; some two are together, only slightly next to each other, but all things have changed—all of these can be used to representing the relationship between human beings" (Ailing, 2001). The traditional patterns and colors had laid a tone for the whole picture. The lines and rings played the role of decoration, the relationship between them carried special semantics. It showed the complex relationship of human by the combinations or separations of the symbols.

From the perspective of onlookers, Zhang Ailing spied, recorded and weaved the emotions and fates of the various characters in her novels. It was illustrated by the cover of the updated edition vividly.

"The cover was based on a picture in the late Qing Dynasty. There were a woman playing mahjong tiles, a nurse sitting next to her and holding a child. It looked like a homely scene after dinner. Obviously, outside the railing, there was a human shape in the wrong proportion which just liked a ghost and a modern woman peeping in curiously. It was my aim to create something disturbing in the image" (Ailing, 2005). The multiple spaces constructed by the image symbolized the two parallel worlds in and outside the novel. The abrupt window was not only the peeping channel for the characters in the story to other people's lives, but also for writer's and readers', making the image full of contradiction and tension. Whether the metaphor of colors, lines or forms in paintings that broke the static picture and expanded the spatial narrative in depth.

Synesthesia

Synesthesia, also known as transferred perception, is a technique of connecting multiple senses of visual, auditory, tactile and other senses in literature (Cheng, 2016). As analyzed above, as special art, image has limitations in showing sounds and expressing emotions. By synesthesia, paintings visualize sounds, mental activities, thoughts and emotions, thus achieving the effect of literary narrative.



Image 8. painting visualized sounds in Lu Xun's "the True Story of Ah Q" by Feng Zikai



Image 9. painting visualized thoughts in Lu Xun's "Tomorrow" by Feng Zikai

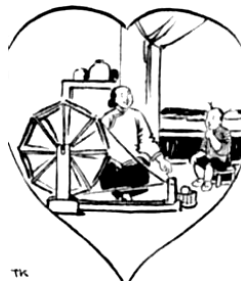


Image 10. painting visualized emotion by Feng Zikai

Taking Feng Zikai's illustrations of Lu Xun's novel as examples. In depicting of the plot when Ah Q was robbed after winning a pile of money, the artist vividly expressed the invisible sound that Ah Q slapped himself in the face with great chagrin by a number of dynamic radial short lines (image 8). With the help of images, audience seemed to witness Ah Q slapping with his own eyes and the transformation from vision to hearing was realized. In "Tomorrow", when depicting the scene of the woman losing her beloved son (image 9), although the character's face and actions were restrained, the inner thoughts and struggles were surged out with the help of untrue image. By using the spatial symbols of cloud and smoke, Feng Zikai depicted the character's psychology in the form of "picture in picture", and the contrast between virtual and reality highlighted the sadness of the scene. When depicting the woman's recollection of the past, Feng used the heart-shaped frame with great visual impact (image 10), which not only emphasized the illusory nature of the scene, but also implied the painter's compassion for the character, so as to arouse the readers' strong emotional resonances.

Puns in image

Pun as a commonly technique used in literature, refer to the word or plot with double meaning. It has two types, one is using homonym to associate two different things that aiming at a pigeon and shooting at a crow, and the other is using the dual meanings of surface and the deep of something to deepen the semantics.



Image 11. "the Neighbors" by Feng Zikai

The use of pun in paintings creation aimed at reflecting the social culture and background, through the depiction of specific and concise plots, the deep meaning behind the signifier was highlighted. In painting "the neighbors" (image 11) created by Feng Zikai, there were two buildings with balconies closed to each other. A man with his hands on the railings was in a suit, on the balcony next door was standing a man in Chinese Robe with his back facing the neighbor. The boundary wall between the two balconies was equipped with a large iron fan with sharp bones as snake spears. Actually, it was the time when the Japanese invaded China wantonly, so the painting had deeper and broader meanings of alluding to society events and enlightening life. The "neighbors" not only referred to the two neighbors in the image, but also the two neighboring countries, and the sharp fan bones also meant the hostile relationship between them. By puns, the audience obtained the superficial meaning of the image from the signifier, and then got the deep signification under the background of a specific era by the technique of puns, so that expand the time and space of the image.

VI. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LITERARY PAINTING

As a spatial medium, image is good at depicting juxtaposed things or action fragments in space. Compared with temporal words, it is not the most ideal narrative medium obviously. However, literary painting just breaks through the limitations of spatial media to

represent time and tell stories. The involvement of literature in painting provides an effective path for images to depict the extension of time, so as to turn static into dynamic, realize the change from display to description, and achieve the effect of space-time integration. Generally speaking, the value of literary images in the period of the Republic of China is mainly reflected in three aspects: functional value, aesthetic value and historical value.

Functional value

The extensive use of image in the cover and inner pages of books and periodicals lied in the decorative role at the visual level firstly. The demand of commercial promotion was the primary function of art creation. On this basis, the intuition and sense of presence of the image attracted wider audience. The image creation with the theme of revolutionary and social reality advocated by intellectuals had been given a stronger appeal, publicity and combat power at the political, cultural and ideological levels.

Visual information is often accepted and impressed by brain earlier than words. Compared with language and words, images stay longer in people's mind and stimulate emotional experience effect more enduring (Ries, 2013). Under the special background of the era, the vigorous advocacy, promotion and passionate creation of woodcuts by literary and artistic had made them a powerful weapon for the publicity of revolutionary and the dissemination of cultural ideas. As Feng Zikai said when creating illustrations for Lu Xun's novels, the painting was much easier to read for the public (Zikai, 2005). At the level of functional value, the creation of literary images makes it change from decoration to the integration of functions of decoration, publicity, narration and lyric.

Aesthetic value

Aesthetic value refers to the emotional experience and spiritual value felt by the aesthetic subject in the process of creating beauty. Literature in the period of the Republic of China has its ideological guidance and aesthetic consciousness, and the absorption of literary factors in art creation highlights the artistic aesthetic value of visual images further.

Compared with texts, images are easier to be understood and accepted by different groups such as scholar, farmer, artisan and merchant, the old, women and children, and have stronger aesthetic functions of satirizing the public and education through entertainment. The “imitation” of spatial images to literature makes the literary purport, literary proposition and ideological belief represent in its pregnant moment, so that making the audience appreciate the “truth”, advocacy of “goodness” and pursuit of “beauty” in watching. The creation and emergence of a large number of literary images have become an effective means to spread ideas, comfort the soul, enlighten the people’s wisdom and stimulate life.

Historical value

Visual image is a medium that provides endless and rich information about various objects and events in the external world (Arnheim, 1998). As a visual memory of history, image is not only a witness of the changes and development of the age, but also an important part of social culture. In the process of creation, image is marked with the brand of the age, which is a real and objective reflection of the social background and the artist’s ideological state of mind.

Literary images such as newsreels, posters and political cartoons in newspapers and periodicals, with political current events, foreign new knowledge, celebrity anecdotes and causal blessing as the main themes, to some extent, reflected the political situation, social spots, public life and customs at that time, and became valuable material and historical evidence for future generations to explore and understand the past. As an encyclopedia recording historical development and reflecting public social life, with the time changing, the historical value of the literary painting will become more and more prominent.

Literary painting during the Republic of China was a typical form of interaction between literature and image. Images such as woodcut prints, news pictures, illustrations and political cartoons broke

through the limitations of their own media in creation that achieve a narrative effect similar as temporal words. Analyzing the involvement of literary factors in images from the perspective of creation is not only a further expansion of the interaction between images and texts at the theoretical level, but also provides a way for the mutual imitations of different media in the art creations. Nowadays, image has become an effective strategy and means of communication and transmission. Only maintaining the strengths of their own media and absorbing advantages of other narrative media constantly, can it break through its own limitation of spatial media and create a narrative effect of more appealing and ideological and cultural depth.

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