

Transportation of German art educational ideas to China: Reconstructing the route

Cheng Yuk Lin

In early 20th century, the pace of Westernization became faster in China, more and more Chinese intellectuals took an active role in importing Western knowledge. Among the many Western knowledge, German philosophy, aesthetic theories and art educational ideas were also imported and began to play a role in constructing the rationale for Chinese art education. Ideas from Kant, Schopenhauer, Schiller, Volkelt, Weber, Herbert, Pestalozzi, Muensterberg, Lichtwark, Langer, Schalz and Dresdner, etc. could easily be found in many Chinese writings on art education and related areas. In fact, importation of Western aesthetics had a history going back to late Ming dynasty (late 16th to first half of 17th century), while Western missionaries coming to spread Christianity in China. While missionaries played a vital role in introducing Western aesthetics before 20th century, Chinese intellectuals began to take an active role in importing Western aesthetics, especially German aesthetics and the idea of aesthetic education, from the very beginning of 20th century. In this part of the ongoing study, focus is given to the early phase of the importation of German ideas on aesthetic and aesthetic education.

Importation of Western aesthetics by Western missionaries sin 17th and 19th centuries

In late Ming dynasty, more exactly, in the 1580s, Jesuit missionaries such as Michel Ruggieri and Matteo Ricci had come to China. First landed in Macau, which had become the Portuguese trading enclave, then moved forward to inland China, from Zhaoqing to the capital Beijing. They brought with them the Christian art work and printed matter with illustrations. In this sense, Western visual arts were introduced to China while the missionaries presenting them to their Chinese counterparts during their stay. In 1620s, Western missionaries such as Jules Aleni, Francois Sambiasi and Alphonse Vagnoni introduced Western knowledge including aesthetic to China in their writings. Characteristic of the aesthetic theories imported at that time were mainly ideas from St. Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius and St. Thomas Aquinas. From late 16th to 17th century, the Jesuits' missionary had worked very hard to be acquiescent to Chinese culture

and compromising “gospel truth” to build up the goodwill. They found that Chinese ancestor veneration was purely a cultural custom that did not conflict with the Christian faith. However, this perspective was disagreed by other denominations and the Pope. The conflict thus created and Christianity was banned within China by the emperor Kangxi and Yongzheng. Yongzheng was strongly against Christian converts among his own Manchu people and warned that Manchu people must adopted only the Manchu way of worshipping Heaven. He pointed out that different peoples had different ways to worship Heaven:

The Lord of Heaven is Heaven itself. . . . In the empire we have a temple for honoring Heaven and sacrificing to Him. We Manchus have Tiao Tchin. The first day of every year we burn incense and paper to honor Heaven. We Manchus have our own particular rites for honoring Heaven; the Mongols, Chinese, Russians, and Europeans also have their own particular rites for honoring Heaven. I have never said that he [Urcen, a son of Sun] could not honor heaven but that everyone has his way of doing it. As a Manchu, Urcen should do it like us.¹




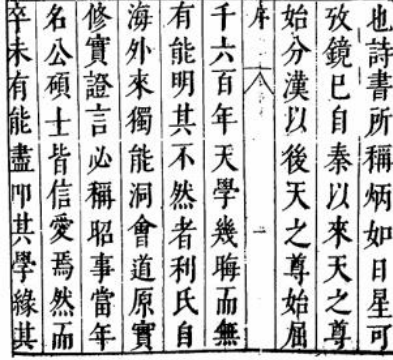
After the First Opium War in 1842, door of China was forced to open to the West, in this sense it was also opened to Western missionaries again. Under the protection of the Western powers, the pace of missionary activity increased. They established clinics, hospitals and different levels of educational institutions in China. Thence the Western missionaries had played a vital role in introducing Western knowledge, including Western aesthetics, visual arts and art education to China and promoting Westernization of China from the second half of 19th century to the first half of 20th century.




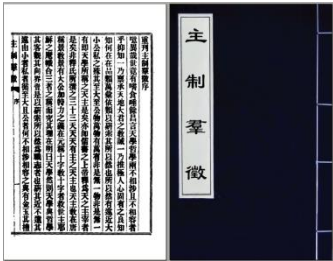
In 1870s, Ernst Faber, one of the most prolific German Protestant missionaries in 19th-century China, introduced aesthetic in his Chinese writing *Dadeguo xuexiao lunlüe* 《大德國學校論略》 (Schools in Great Germany) (1873) and *Jiaohua lun* 《教化議》 (On Education) (1875). In *Dadeguo xuexiao lunlüe* , Faber introduced content of Western aesthetic in Western, more accurately German schools.



¹ Mark C. Elliott (2001). *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (illustrated, reprint ed.). Stanford University Press. p. 241.


In *Jiaohua lun*, he pointed out that painting and music should be grouped under the category of 美學 *Meixue* (aesthetic). In this way he created the Chinese term *Meixue* to translate or explain aesthetic.



The timeline (1579-1928)

Period/ dates	Events	Examples of People /countries involved	Publications/other activities	Key concepts or knowledge being introduced
1579 Ming Dynasty	Coming of Western Christian missionaries	Michel Ruggieri 	Brought Christian art to Zhao Qing, Guangdong Province	Introduced Western techniques of art making
1583		Matteo Ricci 	Presented Christian art work and printed matter with illustrations to Chinese counterparts during a lengthy stay in China	Introduced Western techniques of art making
1594	St. Paul's College found in Macau by Jesuits			School of Art and music was included
1623		Jules Aleni 	Xixue fan 《西學凡》 	Introduced Western philosophy, aesthetic including
1624		Francois Sambiasi	Lingyan lishuo 《靈言蠡勺》 Transmitted orally by Francesco	Discussed beauty and desire

			Sambiasi and written down by Xu Guangqi	
				
1628		Francois Furtado	Huanyouquan 《寰有詮》 	Discussed definition of beauty
1630		Alphonse Vagnoni	Xiushen xixue 《修身西學》	Introduced the types of beauty
		Johan Adam Schall von Bell 	Zhuzhi qunzheng 《主制群徵》 (Über die Gottliche Vorsehung) 	Introduced the types of beauty
1644	Qing Dynasty succeeded Ming Dynasty			
1723/4	Banning Christianity within China	Yongzheng Qianlong Jiaqing Daoguang		
1720s – 1760s		Giuseppe Castiglione	served as an artist at the imperial court	painted in a style that is a fusion of European and Chinese traditions
Late 18 th century		Catholic missionaries	Found an art school in Macau and taught local people Christian art	
1825	Western artists stayed and worked in South China	George Chinnery	Made numerous sketches, drawings and paintings of the South China cities	Involved in teaching
Late 1830s	Beginning of Western aggression	Lin Zexu and Wei Yuan	Si Zhou Zhi 《四洲志》 (1841)	Translations from Murray's Cyclopaedia of Geography

	and the launch of Westernization by Chinese officials and Intellectuals		Haiguo tu zhi 《海國圖志》	Introduce the Western maritime nations. Advocated the idea "learning the superior skills of the barbarians so as to control them"
1839-1842	First Opium War	with Britain	Treaty of Nanking with Britain (1842), Treaty of Wanghsia with U.S. (1844) Treaty of Whampoa with France (1844)	Hong Kong was ceded to Britain
1856-1860	Second Opium War	with Britain and France	Treaties of Tientsin with Britain, France, Russia, U.S.	
1860s	Self-Strengthening Movement		Tongwen guan (interpreters College) at Beijing (1862) Guang fangyan guan (Foreign-language School) at Shanghai (1863) Guangzhou tongwen guan (Foreign-language School) at Guangzhou (1864) Translation bureau of Jiangnan zhizao ju (Kiangnan Arsenal) (1868)	Many books on Western knowledge, esp. science and technology were translated. Signified the beginning of China's adoption of the Western models of education.
1864	Coming of Western missionaries again	missionaries	An art and craft centre was established in Tushanwan, Shanghai	Regarded as the cradle of Chinese Western paintings, and many famous contemporary Chinese artists who became devoted to Western paintings, such as Zhou Xiang and Ding Song, received training at this school
1866		W. Lobscheid	<i>An English and Chinese Dictionary</i>	Different Chinese terms created to translate and explain the meaning of Aesthetics, art was
1873		Ernst Faber 	<i>Dadeguo xuexiao lunlüe</i> 《大德國學校論略》 (1873)  <i>Jiaohua lun</i> 《教化議》 (1875)	Introduction/definition of beauty The Chinese term <i>Meixue</i> was first invented to translate aesthetic

				
1887	Chinese students learnt Western visual arts in Western countries	Li Tiefu	Went to England to study Western visual arts (Probably the first Chinese student who studied Western visual arts in the West)	
1889	Publication of the translation of Western psychology	Yan Yongjing	Published his book Xin ling xue 《心靈學》. It was translated from Joseph Haven's writing on Psychology (the book should be titled <i>Mental Philosophy</i>)	Western aesthetic was introduced
1895	Sino-Japanese War	With Japan	Treaty of Shimonoseki	Taiwan was ceded to Japan
1890s	Scramble for Concessions	By Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Japan and U.S.		
1898	Hundred Day Reform	Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao and Tan Sitong	<p>Kang Youwei made references to the West while composing proposals for institutional reforms from 1888 to 1898.</p> <p><i>Xixue shumu biao</i> 《西學書目表》 (List of Books on Western Knowledge) published by Liang Qichao</p> <p>Tan Sitong had brought many books on Western ideas to be published by the translation department at the <i>Jiangnan zhizao ju</i> (Jiangnan Arsenal) in 1893.</p>	Recommended books or magazines such as <i>Taixi xinshi lanyao</i> (Outline of new history of the West) and <i>Wanguo gongbao</i> (World news)
1900	The Eight-Nation Alliance	Consisted of British, Japanese, Russian, Italian, German, French, American (USA) and Austrian troops		

1901	Publication of <i>Jiaoyu Shijie</i> 《教育世界》 (Educational World)			The first Chinese journal dedicated to introduce Western education, philosophy and aesthetics
1902	Education reform and Western mode of education was adopted			Art education was first introduced into the general school education
1903	Chinese intelligentsia began to play an active role in importing Western aesthetic and aesthetic education	<p>Wang Guowei</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translate Japanese scholar's <i>Jiaoyuxue jiaokeshu</i> 《教育學教科書》 (Pedagogy) (1902) • Translate Japanese scholar's <i>Jexue gailun</i> 《教學概論》 (A general discussion on Philosophy) (1902) • “Lun jiaoyu zhi zongzhi” 《論教育之宗旨》 (Discussion on objectives of education) (1903) • “Kongzi zhi meiyu zhuyi” 《孔子之美育主義》 (Confucius's ideas on aesthetic education) (1904) • “Huo en shi zhi meiyu shuo” 《霍恩氏之美育說》 (Horne's discussion on aesthetic education) (1907) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employed the terms “meixue” and “meiyu” • Employed the terms “meixue” and “meiyu” • The first individual introduced “Aesthetic education” • Value of aesthetic education • Value of aesthetic education
1904-1905	Russo-Japanese War	The War between Russia and Japan took place in China		
1905	abolition of the traditional civil service examination system			
	Chinese students began to study Western visual arts in Japan	Li Shutong went to study Western visual arts in Japan in 1906		Li was regarded as one of the first Chinese who introduced Western visual arts to China
1907	Studying humanities in Germany	Cai Yuanpei enrolled at Leipzig University, took courses in philosophy, aesthetics, art history and experimental psychology.	translated several German books into Chinese in Germany.	Promoted aesthetic education in China after returning China

1909	<i>Jiaoyu zazhi</i> (<i>The Chinese Educational Review</i>)			Aims: to study and improve education (1909) to advocate for aesthetic and physical education (1922)
1911/12	1911 Revolution, the new Republican government replaced the Qing regime		announcement by the Education Ministry of the Chinese Republican Government	aesthetic education was declared as one of the four components of general education
	Constructing guiding principles for education	Cai Yuanpei became the First Minister of Education of the Republic China	“Duiyu jiaoyu fangzhen zhi yijian” 《對於教育方針之意見》 (Opinions about the guiding principles for education)(1912)	argued the legitimacy of moral, military, utilitarian and aesthetic education. Made reference to Western ideas. Translated <i>Ästhetische Erziehung</i> to Chinese from German
	More Chinese students went to the West to study Western visual arts	Xu Beihong, Lin Fengmian		Returned Chinese students contributed to the importation of Western visual arts through teaching, writing and organizing art associations, etc.
	A new series of school regulations announced and a new educational system began to be implemented.			Model of the Japanese school system was adopted
1915		Cai Yuanpei	Published <i>Zhexue dagang</i> 《哲學大綱》 (Outline of Philosophy) (1915)	Mainly based Raoul Richter's <i>Einführung in die Philosophie</i> into Chinese. Besides, ideas from Friedrich Paulsen's <i>Einleitung in die Philosophie</i> and Wilhelm Wundt's <i>Einleitung in die Philosophie</i> were also added.
1916		Tian Min	<i>Yishu jiaoyu shang zhi zhu wenti</i> 《藝術教育上之諸問題》 (Several problems concerning art education)	Introduced <i>Kunsterziehungsbewegung</i> (German Art Education Movement)
1919	May Fourth Movement	Chen Duxiu	<i>Qingnian zazhi</i> 《青年雜誌》 (<i>La Jeunesse</i>)(1915),	called for a holistic Westernization and re-

	(New Cultural Movement)	Hu Shi	the Chinese title was renamed as <i>Xinqingnian</i> 《新青年》 (1916)	evaluation of Chinese traditional culture
1922	A further reform of school system announced			American model was adopted
1916-1928	Warlordism			
1925	the first available systematic, theoretic and comprehensive study on art education made by a Chinese scholar.	Lei Jiajun	<i>Yishu jiaoyuxue</i> 《藝術教育學》 (A Study on Art Education)	Aims: to systematically introduce the work of different English and German scholars and art educators so as to provide a reference for Chinese art educators
1928	China was reunified by the Kuomintang (Nationalist Party)			
To be continue				