

Lu Xun's Classics: Modern Media Perspective on Creation

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Abstract: Since modern times, the rise of modern media represented by newspapers and magazines in China has had a profound impact on the ideological consciousness of the Chinese people, including literary masters of Lu Xun's generation. As the father of modern literature, Lu Xun's creative process was also deeply influenced by modern media. Therefore, this paper studies the creative process of Lu Xun's literary classics from the perspective of modern media, hoping to bring some new insights and inject new vitality into the study of Lu Xun's literature and modern literature.

Keywords: Modern Media, Lu Xun's Literary Classics, Modern Literature

1. Introduction

Towards the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the rise of modern media in China, represented by newspapers and magazines, provided intellectuals with a new channel for disseminating ideas and participating in politics and policy discussions. It also constructed the context for modern literature. It was during this period that many of Lu Xun's classic essays gradually took shape.

2. Modern Media Provides the Contextual Call for Lu Xun's Creation

No literary phenomenon can be separated from its specific historical and cultural context. Therefore, to profoundly understand the classics of Lu Xun's literature, it is essential to first clarify the context in which they were created. Towards the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the exchange of culture between China and the West increased day by day, modern cities rose rapidly, and the psychology of the public underwent significant changes. All these factors promoted tremendous transformations in modern media technology to a certain extent. The development of modern media has multiple significances in the formation and development of the classics of Lu Xun's literature.

First and foremost, modern media provided the cultural environment and material carrier necessary for the survival of Lu Xun's literary classics. Many of Lu Xun's literary classics sprouted in this context of enlightenment. For instance, Lu Xun's first cry in the "New Youth" magazine was born against this backdrop. At the same time, modern newspapers and periodicals such as "New Youth," "Beijing Daily Supplement," "Morning Post Supplement," "Yusi," "Shen bao Free Talk," "Mang Yuan," and "Meng Ya" provided important platforms for the development and maturity of Lu Xun's essays.

Secondly, modern media provided significant resources for Chinese modern intellectuals like Lu Xun to fight for the space of speech, becoming an effective medium for Lu Xun to "vent his anger" and "express his emotions."

Additionally, the development of modern media also led to changes in the content and form of Mr. Lu Xun's literary creation, with the popular vernacular becoming the best means to express advanced ideas. Therefore, a large number of enlighteners represented by Lu Xun began to use vernacular Chinese to promote their ideological propositions. During this period, the subjects of Lu Xun's novels and essays were closely related to the personal interests of young people, such as marriage, etiquette, clan law, and the emancipation of women.

3. Modern Media Stimulated and Defined Lu Xun's Creation

Modern media has its own characteristics: on the one hand, its timeliness has enhanced the interaction between authors and readers, greatly shortening the feedback cycle from the social readers, stimulating the authors' passion for creating again; on the other hand, it also imposes certain regulations and limitations on the authors' creative space in terms of language and style.

3.1. Modern Media Provided Lu Xun with Strong Motivation for Creation

Modern newspapers and periodicals extensively adopted the manuscripts submitted by Lu Xun, which greatly inspired his motivation and passion for creation. Lu Xun could publish eight or nine articles a month in "Shen bao · Free Talk" alone. Relevant data shows that in just over a year from 1933 to 1934, Lu Xun published more than 130 essays in "Shen bao · Free Talk". This "output" is truly astonishing and also quite remarkable. Compared with closed self-creation, the ability to "produce" articles at a high speed in newspapers undoubtedly has a greater sense of achievement and is more capable of stimulating the author's enthusiasm for continued creation. At the same time, the author can further enrich creative ideas through interactive communication with editors. Because the publication cycle of newspapers is relatively short, the author can conveniently adjust creative ideas and the structure of the work, and even rearrange the fate of characters. Just like Lu Xun's "The True Story of Ah Q", it adopted a typical editor-writer interaction, and after serialization, it caused a great sensation and became a classic of the era.

3.2. Modern Media Defined the Style of Lu Xun's Creation

However, modern media did not simply publish the works of authors; it was deeply involved in the creative process of their works. Just as when Lu Xun serialized "The True Story of Ah Q" in the "Morning Post Supplement," the media would often "correct" the content or structure of his work, and this kind of "regulation" undoubtedly influenced Lu Xun's creation.

Lu Xun, from "New Youth" to "Morning Post Supplement" and "Shen bao Free Talk," adapted and utilized these newspapers and magazines, continuously making choices in literary forms and adjusting language styles, thereby creating modern literary classics such as "A Madman's Diary," "The True Story of Ah Q," "Random Notes on the Wind and the Moon," and "Qie Jia ting Essays." This indicates that Lu Xun's choice of the essay form was actually a conscious adaptation to the characteristics of newspapers and magazines. In order to better participate in the struggle and resistance, Lu Xun ultimately consciously chose the short essays that were more readily accepted by people and most suitable for the fight, and spread them widely through newspapers and magazines, reaching a larger number of people.

4. The Impact of Lu Xun on Modern Media

4.1. Editor-in-Chief Lu Xun Imparts the Spirit and Backbone to Publications

It is well known that the overall style of a newspaper or magazine is directly related to the talent and temperament of the editor-in-chief. This is because the editor-in-chief will integrate their own requirements for articles into the editorial policy, and will also favor articles by authors whose style is similar to their own. Throughout his life, Lu Xun founded more than a dozen periodicals, such as "Mang Yuan," "Zhao Hua," "Ben Liu," "Yu Si," and so on. Lu Xun infused these publications with his own thoughts, emotions, and life aspirations, and gathered a large number of articles by radical intellectuals with similar thoughts, which defined the space of the literary front. At the same time, it also made the publications he edited, like his own articles, have a very distinct combativeness. They became an important force for social enlightenment and criticism at the time, and at the same time, they were also restricted and suppressed by reactionary forces because of the sharp words in the text.

However, since Lu Xun turned the publications he founded into an important ideological position for cultural criticism and national education, this also limited Lu Xun's literary creation within the media space. Due to the restrictions of the publication's purpose, the content and themes of the literary works written by Lu Xun and intellectuals with similar thoughts would be confined; their literary works needed to be modified and adjusted multiple times to fit the characteristics of the newspapers and periodicals.

Additionally, media possesses a distinct contemporaneity. Only media that align with the characteristics of the times and meet the reading demands of the audience can achieve significant development. Therefore, Lu Xun's literary works have a strong combative characteristic; various polemical trends become the source of his creation. At the same time, he also attempts to achieve a perfect fusion of criticality and artistry.

4.2. The essay genre pioneered by Lu Xun has been widely adopted by modern newspapers and periodicals.

From the early 20th century to the 1930s, the "literary revolution" triggered by newspaper supplements and the left-wing literary movement both demonstrated that the media's influence on literature within the "surveillance environment" was extremely significant and highly effective. Just as Mr. Lu Xun's literary propositions of "civilization criticism" and "social criticism" were conveyed through the media to monitor the political environment and disseminate progressive culture. Among them, the best genre was the essay. Lu Xun innovatively created a new style for the era, making the essay an important newspaper and periodical genre, and greatly influenced today's newspaper and news commentary writing. The essay combined classical Chinese literature with the popular literary works of the time, greatly promoting the development of discourse writing. Undoubtedly, Lu Xun is an important figure who has elevated the writing of essays to a "proper position".

Lu Xun most frequently used the essay genre in his newspaper publications because he could leverage the "unconstrained" combative nature of essays to confront readers directly on modern newspapers, delve freely into people's real lives, and receive timely feedback from society. In the early 20th century, Lu Xun's essays exhibited formidable combativeness, capable of monitoring the political environment and guiding the direction of public opinion. The essays published by Lu Xun in newspapers were actually his observations, examinations, and reactions to Chinese society and the politics and lives of the Chinese people. Lu Xun's essay writing was inseparable from the enlightenment, propaganda, and mobilization of modern media. His essays popularized serious battles, and his style, which was most pungent, direct, and essential in "scolding people," could well resonate with readers and attract their attention. For example, in "Random Notes at Lamplight," Lu Xun pointed out that the reason foreigners praised Chinese civilization was, "One is to consider the Chinese as an inferior race, only suitable to remain as they originally were, thus deliberately praising China's old things. The other is to wish that people in the world are different to increase their interest in traveling, to come to China to see the queues, to Japan to see the wood exhibitions, to Korea to see the straw hats. If the clothing is the same, it would be tasteless, and thus they oppose the Europeanization of Asia. All of these are detestable." This passage directly points to the foreigners' curiosity and prejudice against Chinese culture, as well as the cultural centrism hidden within it.

Additionally, in many of his essays, Lu Xun directly addressed the deep-rooted negative aspects of the national spirit. For instance, in essays such as "What Happens After Nora", "Occasional Composition", and "A General View of the Extermination of the Communists," he criticized the "spectator" mentality of the Chinese people; in "On 'Face'", "Propaganda and Play-acting", and "Modern History," he criticized the national preoccupation with face and pretense; in "Random Thoughts, Seven", "Correspondence", and "The Silent China," he criticized the forces of mediocrity and compromise; and in "Literature of Help and Idle Literature" and "Diary on Horseback," he criticized the lack of integrity among the populace.

With the continuous development of modern media, newspaper commentaries are required to be concise, fast, and fresh, in order to adapt in a timely manner to the characteristics of modern news. Lu Xun's style of essays and short reviews perfectly meets this requirement, adding a unique charm to the development of modern newspapers and periodicals. Moreover, as the times evolve, the issues that readers care about are also constantly changing, and the style of newspapers must continuously adapt to these changes, thus necessitating the creation of various writing styles. Lu Xun's essays provide a reference for this, as they have very prominent characteristics in terms of stylistic changes and style. In summary, Lu Xun's essays have had a profound impact on the development of modern media.

The creative trajectory of Lu Xun's literature is closely related to modern media, from which we can see the state of mutual influence between modern media and literary figures, and more clearly understand how modern media intervene in our politics, life, and thought. These modern media with strong characteristics of the times present the profound historical background, creative emotions, and practical will contained in the classics of Lu Xun's literature.

From these classics, we can also see the depth of Mr. Lu Xun's writing and the power of the media. In today's society where electronic media is developing rapidly, the connection between people is closer, and the degree of electronic media intervention in people is deeper. The relationship between media and literary figures is worth discussing. However, from the creative background and creative process of the classics of Lu Xun's literature, we can find that only by perceiving and intervening in life through literature can we create classics that will last for ages, which is also a profound enlightenment brought to us from the perspective of media research on the classics of Lu Xun's literature.

5. Conclusion

Modern media not only provided intellectuals with new channels for disseminating ideas and participating in politics, but also offered a platform for literary masters like Lu Xun to showcase and practice their literary talents. Through newspapers and magazines such as "New Youth," Lu Xun's essays were widely disseminated. These works not only reflected the call for social change of the time but also became an important part of modern literature. The timeliness of the media also stimulated Lu Xun's creative motivation and set requirements for his creative style and literary form. Lu Xun's essays, with their content close to reality and language that is easy to understand, became an effective means of spreading advanced ideas. In addition, as the editor-in-chief, through publications he founded, such as "Mang Yuan" and "Yu Si," Lu Xun had a significant impact on the content and style of modern media. These publications became an important force for social enlightenment and criticism.

Lu Xun's essay genre has had a significant impact on the development of modern media. His works not only played a role in monitoring the political environment and guiding public opinion at the time, but also had a profound influence on subsequent newspaper and journal news commentary writing. The interactive relationship between Lu Xun's literary creation and modern media provides us with deep insights into how literature and media participate together in social life and the construction of thought.

6. References

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