

Research on the Creation of Journalism Education in Yenching University

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Keywords: Yenching University, Journalism education, Department of journalism, John Leighton Stuart

Abstract: Yenching University was planning to set up the Department of Journalism to carry out journalism education at the beginning of its establishment in 1919. Although it experienced setbacks, it finally became a reality in 1924, and eventually became a leader in carrying out journalism education during the Republic of China. Exploring the reasons for Yenching University to establish journalism education, we can find that there are four the key factors for the ideal to become reality. They are respectively the urgent needs for the rapid development of Chinese journalism around the May 4th Movement, the urgent need to improve the morality and professional quality of the existing journalists, the guidance of the unique religious thoughts and school running ideas of the running scholars, and various measures to overcome difficulties. Looking back on this period of history, we can also find that the need of the times and the urgent need of industry development are the conditions for the rise of journalism education; scholars paid close attention to social development and closely linked to the pulse of the times are the foundation; the sponsor's unique school-running idea and persistent school-running spirit are the key to the development and growth of journalism education. This has enlightening significance for the establishment and development of a new kind of education in colleges and universities.

1. Introduction

The Department of Journalism of Yenching University was a leader in journalism education in period of the Republic of China, and its outstanding achievements have attracted the attention of the academic community. The existing research has explored the school-running characteristics of Journalism department of Yenching University [1], the reform and practice of talent training objectives [2], the characteristics of talent training [3], the school- running mode [4], the development of disciplines [5], the school-running thoughts [6], academic research [7], international exchanges and support [8], and so on. However, the academic community is not clear about why Yenching University should establish the Department of Journalism. This paper attempts to investigate and discuss this, in order to enrich the relevant research and help the running of universities.

2. Needs for the Development of Chinese Journalism

Chinese journalism developed rapidly around the May Fourth Movement. First, the number of

newspapers increased rapidly. After the rise of the New Culture Movement in 1915, in order to oppose the old culture and promote new ideas, various newspapers and periodicals were constantly created. Among them, there were about 400 newspapers and periodicals newly created in 1919 alone [9]. The number of newspapers in Beijing also increased from 20 in 1913 to 58 in 1917, and then exceeded 80 in 1919 [10]. Secondly, new changes had taken place in the reading object, content, style and management of newspapers. In terms of reading objects, in the past, most of the readers of newspapers were in business circles, while fewer in academic circles, but with the development of the New Culture Movement, young students began to pay more and more attention to newspapers and gradually became new readers. In terms of content, NEWS has been paid more and more attention, and the traditional newspaper which only focuses on Speech or Political Comment has begun to decline, and NEWS has moved towards the center of the newspaper. At the same time, many newspapers began to establish unique supplements, and gradually assumed the multiple missions of disseminating ideas, academia, literature and entertainment. In terms of style, the stylized vernacular Chinese was easy to understand, which could expand the market more than the classical Chinese, and has increasingly become the mainstream of newspaper writing. In terms of management, newspapers were gradually developing towards the direction of commercialization. In order to survive and compete, some newspapers began to take the lead in setting up full-time correspondents, special correspondents and full-time field reporters in major cities in order to get important news timely and quickly.

The above changes made the press at that time urgently need journalism talents with rich knowledge, skilled skills and operating capability, so as to further promote the development of their cause. However, many people in the press could not do it at that time.

First of all, many journalists have bad morals. By virtue of their status as journalists and the power to create public opinion, there were those who demanded subsidies, those who ripped off, and those who specially harass businessmen for food and drink [11].

Secondly, journalists' professional literacy is low. As Xie Liuyi, a famous journalism educator, criticized: "Many journalists still didn't know what the value of news is, for example, on a 90-degree summer day, hundreds of thousands of residents in Zhabei, Shanghai, for some unknown reason, suddenly were gone without a drop of running water for two days, but there was not a word about it in the newspapers. However, the news that after someone's wife was dead, he who was not the important person in the eyes of the reporter married his wife's sister was reported with great force. They didn't even know the meaning of the most common news value, let alone the editorial policy, scientific management and other things" [11].

The above-mentioned news practitioners flooded the press, so that the news published in the newspaper came from shadow-catching and closed-door. In order to correct the above-mentioned shortcomings of the press and promote the sound development of China's journalism, the Chinese press urgently needed news professionals with well-trained personality, knowledge and ability to be imported as fresh blood to replace the above-mentioned reporters. Such well-trained and batch journalistic talents could only be obtained through journalistic education in universities.

3. John Leighton Stuart's Religious Thoughts and School-running Ideas

The urgent need of the Chinese press was concerned by John Leighton Stuart, then president of Yenching University. He believed that with the progress of China's new culture movement, "newspapers were coming to be increasingly influential in Chinese life, and the inculcation of high standards of editing and ethics seemed especially worth-while at what was almost the inception of a new profession" [12]. Therefore, he proposed establishing a journalism department at Yenching University to develop journalism education to cultivate journalism talents.

Stuart's proposition had a direct relationship with his religious thoughts and school-running idea. In his actual work, Stuart had developed religious thoughts that distinguish him from traditional missionaries, which were mainly manifested in social evangelism, religious evolution, Sinicization of Christianity and education as the main way to realize his thoughts.

On social evangelism, he believed that Christian belief was primarily a spiritual need rather than a formal worship of God, the mission of the missionaries was to make the whole society of the power of Christianity and to embody it by the progress of society, not to make individuals believers [13]. On religious evolution, he believed that Christianity was always progressive, and every era should have an era of explanation. Every believer should always gain new abilities from the masters that he believes in and never loses [14]. On the Sinicization of Christianity, he believed that western missionaries should understand China's national conditions, strive to cultivate China's own Christian leaders, and realize the independence of the Chinese church as soon as possible [15]. As for education as the main way to realize his religious thoughts, he believed that "it was not the country so much as what I conceived to be the nature of the life and work-haranguing crowds of idle, curious people in street chapels or temple fairs, selling tracts for almost nothing, being regarded with amused or angry contempt by the native population, physical discomforts or hardships, etc., no chance for intellectual or studious interests" [12]. Therefore, he was more inclined to spread the Gospel of Christ by giving people knowledge to cultivate intellectuals and social leaders with religious temperament to gradually make China Christianized, at least to make the Chinese people not hate or oppose Christianity.

His thoughts influenced his actions so deeply that in 1918, when almost all his friends suggested that he didn't accept the church's invitation to become president of Yenching University, he eventually chose to become president of the newly formed and difficult university [12]. After he took office in May 1919, he put forward four ideas for the development of the university: "its Christian purpose; its academic standards and vocational courses; its relation to the Chinese environment and contribution to international understanding and good will; its financial resources and physical equipment" [12]. Among these four concepts, Stuart believed that to develop vocational education was an important way to spread the Christian spirit and could make students meet social needs in the future [12]. Therefore, since he took office, he attached great importance to the development of vocational education, not only advocating the establishment of ceramic production courses, but also offering strong practical majors such as tanning and animal husbandry. He believed that the educational purpose of Yenching University was not only to read for students in the special classroom and library, but also to improve students' ability. It was not to cultivate talents to engage in some political and economic activities, but to develop a spirit of cooperation, construction, and serving the country; not to become the most famous university nor the most famous university, but to become the "now" "China" the most useful university [16]. Therefore, under such concepts, coupled with the historical background and industry demand in the May 4th period, it was natural to create the department of journalism.

4. Efforts in the Voice of Doubt

Although Stuart advocated the establishment of a journalism department at Yenching University, it was strongly opposed by some faculty members. In conclusion, there were two main reasons: on the one hand, there were many and miscellaneous original departments in Yenching University, which needed spend a lot of money, but the church could provide limited funds. After the establishment of Yenching University in 1919, although its departments were integrated on the basis of the original colleges, its scale was still quite complex. The whole university contained five groups and 21 departments, and each department needed money to run. Despite its efforts to reduce the budget of the whole university, its expenses were twice the income [12]. And the environment of Yenching

University also needed to be improved. It was low-lying and easy to get wet. The dust in front of its gate could submerge the lower leg. Stinky ditches and accumulated garbage were very close to the university. Hundreds of thousands of funds had been spent on transforming this environment, looking forward to the future and unable to develop [17]. In order to seek the future development of the University, it was imperative to choose a new university site for relocation, but the churches that supported to establish Yenching University had no plans-“or even thought of-for securing additional funds or for other progressive efforts” [12].

On the other hand, the necessity of developing journalism education was questioned. This problem has existed since the beginning of journalism education in the United States. At that time, many people in the United States thought that the profession of journalism could never be taught in universities, and even a major journalist in the United States at that time declared: “the best journalism school in the world is the newspaper itself, and there is no way to learn journalism outside the newspaper” [18]. The Sun in the United States also published an article criticizing journalism education, saying that: “Journalism was a special profession. The theory was not important, but the experience was important. The school of journalism had only ruined the students, because it taught them some specious things. After graduation, it would take him a lot of time to get rid of these specious ideas in the practical newspaper industry” [18]. Walter William, the leading advocate of journalism education in the United States, was also teased by journalists [18]. Similarly, in 1892, Joseph Pulitzer, who was determined to establish a journalism university, discussed cooperation with the president of Columbia University at that time, but the other side not only refused immediately, but also said that Columbia University would never do such a funny thing. The plan was stillborn. As late as 1904, the chief writer of the Chicago Tribune was still writing in the North American Review to attack the absurdity of journalism education [18]. Although the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri was finally established in 1908 and the School of Journalism at Columbia University was also established in 1913 through the continuous propaganda and efforts of William and Pulitzer, there were still many voices questioning the value of journalism education in the press and society, and by 1919, the former had been founded for only eleven years, while the latter was only six years. Their future and destiny had not yet been predicted. Therefore, when Yenching University proposed to establish a journalism department, there was a strong voice of opposition. However, the running scholars of Yenching University did not give up the idea of establishing the Department of Journalism. On the one hand, they kept submitting to the Board of Trustees in the United States for the necessity of establishing the Department of Journalism in Yenching University. On the other hand, they tried to raise funds for the establishment and look for teachers. After five years of continuous running, the Department of Journalism at Yenching University was finally officially established in the autumn of 1924. At this time, it was 16 years away from the Missouri School of Journalism, the earliest established school of journalism in American universities, and three years away from the Department of Journalism of St. John's University, the earliest journalism department in China. It was only a year away from the Department of Journalism of Pingmin University, the first journalism department run by Chinese people. Although Yenching University was not a pioneer of journalism education in China, it grew stronger and stronger, and eventually became an important place to carry out journalism education in the Republic of China, and was in a very superior position. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, when the departments of colleges and universities were adjusted in 1952, the journalism of Yenching University was merged into the editing specialty of Peking University, and then moved again, and finally merged into the Journalism Department of Renmin University of China, whose material materials, school-running methods and school-running ideas were inherited. The teachers and graduates of the Department of Journalism of Yenching University had successively become the backbone and leaders of the journalism discipline in Renmin University of China, and some even became the leaders in a certain

aspect of the field of journalism in China, among which Jiang Yinen, Zhang Longdong, Qin Gui, Hong Yilong and He Zihua were the representatives. It can be said that the influence of journalism education in Yenching University still exists today.

5. Conclusions

In the first two or three decades of the 20th century, under the background of the abolition of imperial examinations and the gradual establishment and improvement of the new education system, much new knowledge originated from the West had been transplanted to China, journalism was no exception, but due to lack of funds or shortage of teachers and other reasons, journalism education in many universities had experienced ups and downs, and its life was weak. The Journalism Department of Yenching University had not been smooth sailing in the process of running a school, and had faced the critical juncture of life and death many times. However, due to the hard work of the scholars, the journalism education in Yenching University was eventually stopped and resumed, and revived in danger, thus cultivated a large number of talents for Chinese journalism cause. From the perspective of the development of the Department of Journalism of Yenching University, as long as the times need to move forward and the industry needs to develop urgently, new knowledge has the necessity of research and the value of teaching. Only by paying attention to social development, keeping close to the pulse of the times, linking up with the needs of industry development, clarifying the target orientation, persevering and raising funds in many ways, can the newly established disciplines and newly developed education obtain the source of development, increase the social reputation of the university, and gradually make the university embark on the road of high-quality development.

Acknowledgements

This work is supported by Jiangsu Provincial Department of Education University Philosophy and Social Science Research Fund Project "Research on the Development Model of Journalism Education in Modern Chinese Universities and Its Modern Significance" (2018SJA1137)".

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