

A Study on the Titles of *Dianshizhai Pictorial**

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With its unique title art, *Dianshizhai Pictorial* has become an important document for the study of the intersection of news communication and traditional Chinese culture in the Late Qing Dynasty. This study explores the formation mechanism, artistic features, and social influence of the title, from historical allusion, report content, stylistic structure to the appearance of sound and rhyme. Through this research, we hope to reveal the unique charm of the *Dianshizhai Pictorial* title and its important position in the history of journalism and communication, and to provide a new perspective for understanding the changes of Chinese traditional culture in the process of modernization.

Keywords: *Dianshizhai Pictorial*, title

Preface

This research takes the title of the *Dianshizhai Pictorial* as the object of study, and discusses its origin, structure, artistic features, and communication effects. The title not only refers to historical allusions, but also closely relates to the content of the report, reflecting the cultural implication and the characteristics of the times. Flexible structure pays attention to rhythm and aesthetic appearance. Its dissemination effect not only comes from the artistic charm, but also comes from the profound connotation of the times. This study reveals the unique charm of the title of the *Dianshizhai Pictorial* and provides a new perspective for understanding the changes of Chinese traditional culture in the process of modernization.

Text and Material: Source of Title

In the creation of the title of the pictorial news of the Late Qing Dynasty, it cleverly combined the traditional Chinese culture with the modern news communication. On the one hand, by drawing on historical allusions such as “Devastation” (疮痍满目) and “beauty trap” (美人计), these titles not only contain profound cultural connotations, but also can quickly arouse readers’ resonance and interest. For example, the title “Devastation”, taken from the *Legend of the Kite Error* (《风筝误传奇》) by Li Yu in the Qing Dynasty, was used to describe the tragic scene of social unrest and people’s livelihood in the Late Qing Dynasty, and intuitively expressed the editor’s disappointed attitude towards the social status quo at that time. The title of “beauty trap” cleverly borrows

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the allusions in *Zuo Zhuan* (《左传》); although it is called by this title, it actually emphasizes the scheming strategy of Xu Peiqing and his wife, which successfully attracts the attention of readers and reveals the nature of news.

On the other hand, the title of the news illustrated in the Late Qing Dynasty is also very accurate and vivid in expression. For example, the title “Crushing the Giant Leopard” (挤死巨豹) directly summarizes the core of the news event, that is, a huge leopard was tragically killed because of the crowd, and this intuitive expression not only highlights the drama of the event, but also stimulates the curiosity of readers. “An oracle is offered before agriculture” (谕祭先农) reflects the solemnity and respect for the sacrificial activities, and reflects the editor’s deep understanding of traditional culture and historical events.

In short, the title of pictorial news in the Late Qing Dynasty not only retains the essence of traditional culture in creation, but also integrates the elements of modern news communication. Through accurate and vivid expression, it successfully attracts readers’ attention and transmits core information, reflecting the professional quality and aesthetic pursuit of the editor.

Style and Transformation: Title Structure

The pictorial news of the Late Qing Dynasty showed its unique charm in the title structure, among which the four-character opposite title form was particularly outstanding. This kind of structure is simple and clear, and through the arrangement of the rhymes between the level and oblique tones, it creates a harmonious and beautiful phonological effect, such as the titles “Camel Collision Monk Pass” (驼撞僧关) and “Silkworm Breeding Need to Know” (育蚕需知), which not only convey the core information of the news, but also satisfy the aesthetic needs of the readers. The popularity of the four-word title form is because it conforms to the social and cultural habits and readers’ reading habits at that time, and also reflects the love and inheritance of traditional culture.

However, with the increasing diversity and complexity of news events, pictorial news in the Late Qing Dynasty also carried out corresponding adjustments and innovations in the title structure. For reports of major events or special themes, the headlines are often more detailed and specific to reveal the deep background and details of the news event. For example, the headline “Hanging Lights of the British Consular Office in Hankou Concession” (汉口租界英领事署悬灯图) directly reveals the core content of the news and attracts readers’ attention; titles such as “The First Picture of British Events” (英事第一图) to “the Seventh Picture of British Events” (英事第七图) present readers with a complete chain of news events in a continuous and systematic way.

The title innovation in these special cases not only enriches the expression form of pictorial news, but also shows the continuous exploration of journalism in information transmission and form innovation. These innovative headline forms abandoned the original four-word tradition, according to the specific content of the report and readers’ reading habits to determine the structure and form, with the main purpose of introducing the content directly. Through these innovative titles, readers can simply and clearly understand the news content presented by the pictorial, making the information transfer more efficient and accurate.

Rhyme and Appearance: Title Propagation

The pictorial news of the Late Qing Dynasty had an originality in the title dissemination, which not only paid attention to the accuracy of information, but also pursued the harmony and unity of sound and appearance. In terms of rhyme, there are various types of rhymes in headlines, such as “The Golden Rooster Is Captured” (金鸡被获) and “God’s Way Is Good” (天道好还), which not only reflect the solidification and integrity of

headlines, but also enhance the communication effect of news content. Abab-style titles, such as “Ni Ni Ni Tawdry” (亦尼亦俗) and “No Clothes, No Brown” (无衣无褐), create a unique rhythm by repeating the same syllables, making the title more sonorous, easier to remember and transmit.

In terms of appearance, the headline design of the Late Qing Dynasty news illustrated was elaborate and unique. Elements such as font size, font shape, kerning, and color are carefully arranged to highlight their importance and draw the reader's attention. For example, the sub-text design of “Huashan Encounter Fairy” (华山遇仙) closely relies on the trend of the mountain, and the text is like the growth of trees on the mountain, which both fills the picture and enhances the sense of hierarchy of the picture. The text in “Trickle Down” (涓滴不遗) is arranged diagonally along the house line, cleverly filling the blank area, complementation with the main image, and forming a harmonious and beautiful layout.

These well-designed titles not only enhance the artistry of pictorial news, but also enhance its communication effect. The coordination and balance between the title and other elements of the page is also an important embodiment of the appearance characteristics of the Late Qing Dynasty news pictorial. This layout design not only improves the overall beauty of the illustrated news, but also improves the reader's reading experience.

Conclusion

After a thorough study of the *Dianshizhai Pictorial's* headlines, we find that they not only refer to historical allusions, but also accurately summarize the contents of the reports, showing their unique cultural charm. Structurally, the neat format of the four-character antithesis coexists with the flexible adjustment based on the report, reflecting the fusion of tradition and modernity. In the dissemination aspect, the title rhythm and the rhythm, the shape and the page complement each other, enhanced the dissemination effect. These research results highlight the title art of the *Dianshizhai Pictorial*, and provide valuable enlightenment for modern news communication.

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