

# The qualifications and treatment of editors in modern China

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**Abstract**—Through the investigation and analysis of the qualifications and living standards of the editors in modern China, it can be found that the editors in modern China are mainly composed of Western missionaries, university teachers, domestic students and overseas students, as well as old-fashioned scholars and intellectuals. In order to adapt to the rapid development of China's modern editing and publishing industry, there is an urgent need for a large number of editors, who serve the development of China's culture and science and technology. According to the analysis, compared with other professional employees in the same period and the local living standards, the income of the editorial staff is acceptable, which is also the guarantee that the editorial staff can devote themselves to the editing work and the premise for the rapid development of the editing and publishing industry.

**Index Terms**—Modern times, editor, qualification, treatment.

In the process of human evolution, the emergence of characters and the communication and dissemination of culture are epoch-making changes. Publishing plays an irreplaceable intermediary role in the communication and dissemination of culture. Editing is the core force of publishing and the soul of publishing [1]. Therefore, editors play an important role in cultural publishing. The qualifications and treatment of editors are the social conditions for their survival in publishing. This paper investigates the qualifications and treatment of the modern editors, so as to expand the development of modern Chinese culture, especially the development of the publishing industry.

## I. SOCIAL BACKGROUND

The first Opium War reduced China to a semi colonial and semi feudal society. It used aggressive means to achieve the goal of opening China to the world. In terms of ideology and culture at that time, some intellectuals began to abandon outdated concepts, go abroad, seek new knowledge, and explore the way to strengthen the country, thus generating a new trend of thought of learning advanced science and culture from the West. At the same time, after the late Qing Dynasty, various academies transformed into modern schools and became the focus of cultural production. In particular, the two major reforms of the school system in 1904 and 1912 laid a certain foundation for the basic system of modern Chinese schools. At the same time, Chinese intellectuals finally have their own independent professional space [2]. At the same time, modern intellectuals realized that if they want to get rid of poverty and backwardness in China, they must rely on

Western learning. Yan Fu emphasized that "if we want to open up the wisdom of the people, we must not stress Western learning" [3]. In such a special historical period, China's publishing industry has developed rapidly.

## II. THE IDENTITY CLASSIFICATION OF EDITORS IN MODERN TIMES

At the beginning of modern editing and publishing industry, professional editors were very scarce. Editing has its own particularity. The work of editors includes reviewing manuscripts of a certain discipline and objectively evaluating the quality of manuscripts, which also determines that editors should have knowledge of a certain discipline. They often have a certain level of scientific research and scientific research experience. This is also the objective reason why editors have multiple identities.

### A. Firstly, it is classified according to the identity of the founder

(1) Western missionaries. Western advanced printing equipment came to China with missionaries, who used books and publications to publicize Western religious culture [4-5]. In the nearly half century after the Opium War, Western missionaries successively founded nearly 170 kinds of Chinese and foreign newspapers and periodicals, accounting for about 95% of Chinese newspapers and periodicals in the same period [6]. By the beginning of the 20th century, foreign missionaries had established more than 70 printing institutions in China [7]. For example, the monthly statistical biography of chasesecularity is the first Chinese monthly magazine in modern China, which was founded by the missionaries of the new London Missionary church, Morrison and Milian. Although the original purpose of Western missionaries coming to China was to publicize their teachings, they also made great contributions to the spread of western advanced science and technology in China.

(2) Bourgeois reformers [8]. After the failure of the reform, Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao founded more than 100 newspapers and periodicals at home and abroad. When Kang Youwei wrote to Emperor Guangxu, he strongly advocated the translation of Western books. Studying abroad has gained new knowledge [9]. Therefore, they began to actively translate and disseminate western



science books. For example, Xinmin series, founded in 1902, is a comprehensive literary and scientific journal founded by the bourgeois reformers. Feng Zishan is the editor and distributor, and Liang Qichao is actually responsible for it.

(3) Bourgeois revolutionaries [8]. From 1894 to 1912, the bourgeois revolutionaries successively founded more than 120 newspapers and periodicals at home and abroad, and the more representative ones were "national", "Zhejiang tide" and "travel study translation". The bourgeois revolutionaries also publicized their political thoughts to the people at that time by creating various periodicals.

(4) International students and domestic students. The overseas students in modern China are one of the main forces in the establishment of modern Chinese scientific journals. With advanced knowledge and patriotic enthusiasm, the overseas students hoped to introduce science to backward China at that time by publishing a magazine. For example, science, founded in 1915, has a relatively formal and complete institutional division of labor, and is the scientific and technological journal with the longest duration among the journals run by international student associations [10]. Another part was founded by the student union of domestic universities. For example, Dongwu journal is one of the earliest comprehensive monthly journals of Arts and Sciences founded by comprehensive universities in China, and is edited and published by the student union of Dongwu University. Another example is that in 1918, Fu Sinian, a young student who was influenced by the new culture movement at Peking University, and others initiated and founded the first Student Association Journal of Peking University, Xinchao. [11] discussed about specific Policy document which ensures of which the teaching, learning in addition to assessment methods are upwards to the amount of typically the course and are ideal to the attainment involving objectives and intended understanding outcomes of the program and the course. The particular policy requires that school members use recent in addition to variety of teaching, mastering methods and assessment methods. Higher Quality Accredited Institutions will continue to further more improve the standard involving teaching and learning via recognition, sharing and moving of good practices to be able to inspire the learners to be able to achieve their potentials throughout a multicultural environment in addition to in turn, improve accomplishment, retention and learners pleasure.

(5) School. On January 29, 1901, the Qing government issued an imperial edict to implement the so-called new policy and encourage the establishment of schools, thus setting off a large-scale upsurge of establishing schools

throughout the country. For example, Xueyu (also known as Dongwu monthly) is one of the earliest comprehensive monthly magazines of literature and science established by comprehensive higher education institutions in China. Another example is the Journal of Tsinghua University, which was the longest continuously published academic journal of universities in the Republic of China, and built a platform for cultural exchanges between China and the West. The Peking University monthly, which was founded in 1919, has a relatively standardized system and working procedures, and has become a model of the establishment of University Journals in China [12].

(6) A specialized editing and publishing organization. At that time, there were already special institutions in China for certain periodicals, such as Guanzhong journal edited and printed by Guanzhong middle school newspaper, Hubei journal edited and published by Hubei journal, and so on. Because they were founded by special publishing institutions, their development was faster and better. For example, the Guanzhong journal compiled and printed by the Guanzhong middle school newspaper became an important reading material for people to understand the world, seek strength and wealth, and scientific enlightenment. It was typical and representative in China at that time. [13] discussed about specific Policy document which guarantees security and honesty of understudies' records documented and kept in the Registration Office. The records ought to be overseen in a precise and sensible way as indicated by plans created by the Registration Office that keep up these records. The strategy report and methodology spread the accommodation of records and grades to the Registration Office, documenting, putting away and protection arrangement of the understudy records, locking of the class records and the discharging of transcript and testaments.

(7) Rely on a certain institution. This kind of organization is neither a society nor a magazine. For example, science world is edited and published by the editorial department of Shanghai Science Instrument Museum. Shanghai Science Instrument Museum was the first Science Instrument Museum founded by Chinese people. At that time, Chinese people knew little about natural science knowledge. After some instruments were sold, some users did not understand their principles and methods of use. They established a science workshop to explain to customers. They were in order to adapt to the social needs at that time, with a simple purpose, but they also made outstanding contributions to the dissemination of science and technology at that time.

(8) Imperial officials, small academic groups and intellectuals with official comprador status. What the



imperial court officially founded was mostly a political need of the feudal government. Some small academic groups and intellectuals with official comprador status are normal academic research and public opinion propaganda, and an ideal of serving the country through industry.

#### *B.Sources of modern editors and publishers*

Editors and publishers are different, but in modern publishing enterprises, publishers often hold editorial posts, and editors also change their jobs to publishers. The following is an analysis of the source of editors.

##### *(1) An apprentice in a missionary institution*

Western missionaries founded many publishing institutions in order to publicize their teachings. These publishing institutions not only provided advanced business models for Chinese publishing, but also trained a number of publishing talents with advanced technology and experience for Chinese publishing institutions. For example, Wang Tao worked in mohai library founded by Western missionaries for 13 years, and it was this experience that brought him into contact with Western learning and Christian knowledge, which made him an outstanding publisher of a generation; Another example is Xia Ruifang and Bao Weien, the two main founders of the Commercial Press, who used to work as typesetters in the Western newspaper Jiebao.

##### *(2) Old style literati and intellectuals*

Because of the particularity of the editing work, it is required to have a certain academic culture. Therefore, some old-fashioned scholars who failed in their official career were recruited to join the editing group. For example, Zhang Yuanji lost his official post because of his involvement in the 1898 coup. Later, he was recommended by Xia Ruifang to serve as the director of the translation and Translation Institute of the commercial press.

##### *(3) University Teachers*

"University" is a basic concept that often appears in the research of higher education. It is the cradle of cultivating higher talents for our country. As early as October 1912, the Ministry of education of the Republic of China issued the University order, which stipulated the purpose of running a university and emphasized that the university should take "teaching advanced academic knowledge, cultivating great talents of master's degree and meeting the needs of the country" as the purpose of running a university. At the same time, the university is one of the important forces to establish the magazine, because the university is an academic holy land that can contact with advanced science, technology and culture, and the university teachers are the disseminators of these advanced science, technology and culture. Therefore,

many university professors became the main force of founding journals and part-time editors. They were the backbone of all editors at that time.

##### *(4) National and international students*

At that time, the national affairs were weak and the people's livelihood was not improved. More and more scholars realized that only learning advanced western science and technology, strengthening national strength and saving the country with science and technology were the first choice. A large number of young scholars have set foot on the road of studying abroad. Through the analysis of the founders of modern periodicals, it can be seen that domestic students and overseas students are one of the main forces in the establishment of modern scientific periodicals in China. They have advanced scientific and cultural knowledge and high patriotic enthusiasm. If they want to make a living in academic or cultural fields, it is a very good choice to join the publishing industry. Among them, the commercial press is the publishing institution with the largest number of overseas students.

From the above analysis of the identities of the founder and editor of the journal, it can be seen that the vast majority of the founders have multiple identities, including missionaries who promote doctrines, royalists who advocate old morality and ethics, and overseas students who simply promote western science. No matter what their original purpose is, they have made certain contributions to the transmission of advanced western science and the development of China's modern publishing industry..

### **III. THE TREATMENT OF MODERN PERIODICAL EDITORS**

Typesetting and printing expenses, author's remuneration, editor's remuneration and miscellaneous expenses are the main expenditure items of modern publishing funds. Among them, the remuneration of editors is a very important one, and also the core issue of the remuneration of editors. Specifically, the provisions of remuneration will help the stability of work. If the remuneration rises step by step, people will be happy to serve and have little thought of moving [14]. Reasonable salary is the guarantee of editors' stable work and life.

#### *A. There is a big difference in treatment between editors*

In the late Qing Dynasty, China's printing media were dominated by Shanghai in terms of technology, quantity and circulation. In the 1930s, when the publishing industry was at its peak, there were more than 11000 direct employees in Shanghai's publishing industry. [4] In terms of the number of newspapers and periodicals, from 1875 to 1894, Shanghai concession issued more than 30 kinds of Chinese periodicals and newspapers, accounting for 40% of all Chinese newspapers and periodicals in the same

period. From 1896 to 1898 after the Sino Japanese War of 1894, newly created newspapers and periodicals in Shanghai accounted for half of the total number of newly created newspapers and periodicals in China. Therefore, taking Shanghai as an example, it is representative to analyze the remuneration of periodical editors.

#### (1) Different levels and different treatment

On the economic income of the press and publishing circles in Shanghai, GE Gongzhen pointed out in the history of China's newspaper studies 1912-1927 that the prime minister is the leader of a museum, and his monthly salary is about 300 yuan (silver yuan, the same below); The chief editor is the leader of the editorial department, and his monthly salary is between 150 yuan and 300 yuan; Next to the chief editor is the chief editor, whose monthly salary is about 150 yuan; Under the chief editor, there are important news editors and local news editors, whose monthly salary is about 80 yuan. However, with the work achievements, the salary can be increased year by year, but there is still a large gap between ordinary editors and the premier and the editor in chief. This was also one of the contradictions between editors and publishers at that time. For example, Zheng Zhenduo, one of the founders of the Literary Research Association at that time, edited the novel monthly in the commercial press in the 1920s, earning a monthly salary of 100 yuan. He once complained: "working for the Commercial Press, you only get about 100 yuan a month, but if you publish a book, the press can earn hundreds of thousands of yuan!" [2].

#### (2) Different seniority and treatment

Although the work is the same, there is a big difference in salary. Editors with high academic qualifications, especially those who have returned from overseas studies and have a certain degree, and strong administrative ability, have higher salary. The first class is graduates studying in Europe and America, with a monthly salary of 200-250 yuan; The second class is graduates studying in Japan, whose monthly salary can reach 120-150 yuan, which is higher than that of domestic university graduates. In 1922, Zhonghua Book Company gave Tian Han a monthly salary of 100 yuan at the beginning, because Tian Han had the qualification to study in Japan. Later, Xu Zhimo was invited to edit the literature monthly, and the editing fee was 200 yuan per month, because Xu Zhimo had the qualifications to study in Britain [2]. The starting salary of domestic university graduates who work in the commercial press is 60 yuan per month, and generally increases by 10 yuan or 20 yuan per year.

This phenomenon was clearly reflected when Hu Shi visited the commercial press in 1921. Hu Shi made a statistics on the monthly salary of 169 people in the

Translation Institute [15].

Table 1 monthly salary distribution of editors in the compilation and Translation Institute of the commercial press in 1921.

Monthly salary (yuan)	Number of people (person)
300 and above	2
250 and above	1
200 and above	4
150 and above	8
120 and above	17
100 and above	5
70 and above	14
50 and above	17
30 and above	46
30 and below	62

#### (3) Different publishing houses have different scales and different treatment

According to the size of publishing houses, there is a big gap in the remuneration of editors. For example, there were 114 staff in the editorial office of the commercial press with a monthly salary of more than 30 yuan in 1921, including 7 with a monthly salary of more than 200 yuan and 37 with a monthly salary of more than 100 yuan. From 1923 to 1939, the average annual income of more than two-thirds of Chinese urban workers was between 200 and 400 yuan. It can be seen that their income and expenditure situation and living standard were relatively high. However, for some small-scale publishing houses, the treatment of editors is low. For example, in 1924, Zhang Jinglu and his friends founded Guanghai book company. Although the overall development was very good, "our so-called bosses each took only 10 yuan and 8 yuan a month's fare without salary" [16].

#### *B. Compared with other occupations in the same period, the salary is medium*

##### (1) Compared with professors, the treatment of the editor in chief is similar

In the 1920s, the monthly salary of the editor in chief was 150-300 yuan, while the highest salary of professors in the same period was 180-280 yuan. Although the minimum wage is 30 yuan lower than that of level six professors, the maximum wage is 20 yuan higher than that of level one professors. It can be seen that the remuneration of the editor in chief and the professors is equal.

##### (2) Compared with senior employees of banks and foreign-funded enterprises, there is still a certain gap

In the 1930s, more than 50% of the income of the staff of Tianjin Haihe Engineering Bureau was between 20 and



80 yuan per month [17]. The salary was similar to that of the General Editors, but there was a certain gap compared with the senior staff. In Tianjin Haihe Engineering Bureau, 60% of the senior staff earned between 200 and 800 yuan [18]. In the same period, the income of editorial directors and chief editors in Shanghai newspapers and periodicals was between 120 and 300 yuan, with a large gap. For example, in 1915, when Chen Duxiu founded New Youth magazine in Japan after returning from Japan, he agreed to pay 200 yuan per month for editing and writing [19], that is to say, in terms of personal livelihood, Chen Duxiu, who was almost destitute and with his wife and children, could alleviate the economic hardship. However, in Shanghai at that time, it was still a problem to support his family.

(3) Compared with the workers living at the bottom of society, the treatment of editors is still much higher

In the 1930s, "in Shanghai, the monthly income of workers was 80% of the total amount of less than 20 yuan", and the salary of the most general editors was more than 20 yuan [20]. Therefore, compared with the life of other industries in the same period, the living standard of editors is still medium or above.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

At that time, modern editors were both a new and special group. They often had advanced ideas and enthusiasm for patriotism and saving the country, and made great contributions to the dissemination of modern science and technology and the publishing industry in China; At the same time, the better economic living status of various industries in the same period also provided the necessary material foundation for them to invest in the publishing industry, thus promoting the rapid development of the modern publishing industry in China.

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