University Library: The "Third Place" for Students

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Abstract

Although user satisfaction on libraries is currently a hot topic in China, the mainstream thinking still focuses on traditional service sector. The university library's situation remains the same. Meanwhile, the university students are looking for their Third Place on campus. This article intends to put forward that university library should become the irreplaceable Third Place for students and also a Public Sphere in general.

Democratic thinking has been gradually accepted by public in China. However, Discussion about democracy within library circle is usually limited in public libraries, not in university ones. In fact, we should pay more attention to role of university libraries in the development of democratic society. Universities should be the places to cultivate future social elite. If social elite have no spirit of democracy, how can we expect the same from the general public? Thus, university libraries should and can provide a special public sphere with democratic atmosphere for students as well as faculty members.

Although the "Third Place" is a new concept in China library circle, a few libraries' practices have fallen into this category. This paper introduces Chinese libraries' experience and lays out some suggestions based on the discussion of the necessity of making university libraries as the "Third Place".

Keyword(s): Library; Third Place; Public Sphere; China.

1. Introduction

There is a popular parlance in Chinese library that Readers First, Service Supreme. Although the library's existing environment has changed a lot

because of the popularization of Internet, which results in librarians' sense of crisis, the library's mainstream thinking still remains in traditional service sector, which simply focus on promoting the service quality, the scale and the efficiency, rather than the fundamental innovation such as creating new demand (Wang, 2007). Currently, library experts pay too much attention to detailed technical issues that reduce humanistic thought. The university library's situation remains the same and in some sense out of date.

Third place，a term coined by Ray Oldenburg in his 1990 book *The Great Good Place*，is defined a public place where people can gather, put aside the concerns of home and work (their first and second place). It is a communal gathering place to unwind, meet, chat and connect. Third Places are crucial to a social community. In the current structure of social activities, as Mr. Oldenburg mentioned, bookstores, cafes, and bars seems to surpass libraries, playing as "Third Place". Libraries should reclaim it, becoming a true and irreplaceable "Third Place" for our citizens.

2. University Library and Third Place
2.1 Third Place and Starbucks

Starbucks uses the term "Third Place" in its marketing because it aims to ply as the "extra place" where people can gather frequently beside home and work. Starbucks believes that life include relationship between people, thus, they need gathering places. Of course, Starbucks is also for individuals. It is a place to relax, where one can feel safe and have a sense of belonging. You can order a cup of coffee, stay in a Starbuck store for any length of time you like as long as it is open, and no one can disturb you.

Starbucks gives priority to satisfying customers' demand of emotion. They change their focus, from selling coffee to coffee culture, from product to customers' experience and feeling. The environment there is favorable, which caters for modern cultural consumption. Coffee is only a carrier, which delivers a unique atmosphere to customers. In an attempt to make Starbucks a "home away from home", the café section of the store is often outfitted with comfortable chairs, as well as the usual tables and hard-backed chairs found in cafés. Free electricity outlets are provided for patrons, and many branches also have Wi-Fi access. Many larger retail stores also host "mini-concerts" for local musicians. Music, as the organic part of the Third Place, has already risen to the product second to coffee.

2.2 Third Place Essential for Students

The university is a small society. The students, the main body of university population, need a Third Place to relax and communicate with each other.

There are a lot of cafes, bars and tea shops in Chinese cities, and they do provide wonderful environments for leisure gathering. But they are almost casinos for youth night life. Book bars are more favorable for intellectuals compared with others. But they are not for free either. Most of such kinds of

"Third Place" are too expensive for ordinary college students. They can only afford to go there once in a while, and there are very few such "Third Places" on campus for students.

Mr. Oldenburg said, "In the absence of informal public life, living becomes more expensive. Where the means and facilities for relaxation and leisure are not publicly shared, they become the objects of private ownership and consumption."

2.3 University Library: the Essential Third Place for Students

Currently, University library's service in China mainly relies on providing information resources, so as to meet the needs of teaching and scientific research. Therefore, the university library is the "Second Place" for students' learning beside their classroom.

There are two purposes that students go to the library. One is for study and research. The other is reading for relaxation which is neglected by the libraries but is the main focus in many book bars. Reading for relaxation is an approach of diathesis education which is a weak part in Chinese education at present. Thus, the library, which is the second classroom, has the responsibility to provide such service. If reading is always related to course work and to examination, students must be tired of reading after going through years of examination-oriented education for National College Entrance Examination. If reading is just only for their academic purpose, then in most cases it does not make them feel happy. Therefore, librarians should guide them to enjoy reading.

Actually, many famous polts of literature works took place in libraries, though there have been a lot of negative descriptions on librarians: stereotypes, ice-face，mean or stern，single/unmarried，stiff and in glasses. In reality, we librarians are not like that, but we should show more warm and welcoming faces for our "customers" and let them feel that library is another warm space for them.

The library has unique culture details compared with cafes and tea bars. The purpose that we go to the library may be for reading or simply for enjoying the comfortable environment. So the library should provide more free space for students to relax and communicate. The library should be a unique Third Place which can not be replaced. But why do some university libraries become just study hall, while public book bars are booming at present?

The Third Place represented by Starbucks, as well as by book bars, pays much more attention to environment and atmosphere, while the university libraries look too serious. Some new library buildings in China look like courthouse, which should be described as being magnificent and solemn instead of being friendly. You can hardly imagine there will be a comfortable leisure site in such building. Besides, inside construction style also need to improve so as to creat humanistic atmosphere and book-fragrant environment. University libraries should create unique, comfortable and inviting atmosphere

for students who are pursuing new novel fashion beside just education. Someone may argue that moving toward Third Place with multiuse facilities seems to diffuse our sole goal of education for a university library. But I don't think so.

I think it is necessary for a university library to act as the Third Place. For a long time and even up to now, the university library in China has been regarded as service institution for academy. In order to enhance library's status, we used to mainly emphasize its academic aspect while neglecting other basic services. Library being the first academic lab is still the sole objective, which need to be changed or reformed. Meanwhile, there is a transition in education occurring in China: popular education is starting to replace elite education, and diathesis education is taking over examination-oriented education. Therefore, based upon the concept of Third Place, library can and should help students learn through playing. Furthermore, so far there are few non-commercial places as the Third Place on campus.

"Among the many new roles that libraries are assuming is the role of library as community center. Not just warehouses for books, they are social assembly places, participating in their larger communities. It makes a great deal of sense for libraries to look for new, broader service opportunities within their communities." [1]University library, as the library in students' community, can also become a community center which plays an important role in the health of communities.

University students are attracted by network which also makes their life and study convenient. Young people are always active and curious for new ideas and concepts, they are eager to try too. Thus, librarians should create not only physical Third Place but also digital and virtual ones. Physically library can be a community center; digital library can also be a virtual community center.

3. University Library being not Only an Ordinary Third Place but also a Public Sphere for Students

3.1 Public Sphere

Starbucks, as almost a pronoun and a case note for Third Place, is related to leisure mostly. In fact, "Third places, are central to local democracy and community vitality," states Ray Oldenburg, on his Web page, Project for Public Spaces. It means Third Place can be a public space when connected with democratic issues.

The public sphere is an area in social life where people can get together and freely discuss and identify societal problems, and influence political actions through self-organized discussions. It is "a discursive space in which individuals and groups congregate to discuss matters of mutual interest and, where possible, to reach a common judgment." [2]

The public sphere mediates between the "private sphere" and the "Sphere of Public Authority"."Through the vehicle of public opinion it put the state in

touch with the needs of society." [2]The study of the public sphere centers on the idea of participatory democracy, and how public opinion becomes political action.

There are four necessary conditions for ideal Public Sphere. Firstly, it should be open and free, people should have a fair opportunity to discuss and express whatever they want to express. Secondly, information collection and provision must be integritive and subjective, thus not controlled by political and economic power. Thirldy, there are field for rational and critical discussions. Healthy Public Sphere is the necessary condition for democracy, and liberty of speech is the basic element for democratic society.

3.2 Public Sphere in China

Some scholars thought lack of Public Sphere put forward by Juergen Habermas is one of the key issues that obstruct Chinese modernization, which was mainly signed by industrialization and democratization. In fact, Public Sphere can only exist in democratic society. Its origin and development relies on democratic mechanism, meanwhile, Public Sphere can improve democratic society. There were almost no Public Spheres because of despotism in more than 2000 years of feudal society in China. The right of free public speech was robbed. People tended to obey the authority and forget individual thinking because of submission mentality. Personal debate which is fair, rational and open, was hard to spread among ordinary citizen due to collective unconsciousness. Thus, there is no citizen society tradition that people challenge the authority through public discussion for such long time in China. Such situation remains even after the last feudal dynasty ended about hundred years ago.

Although there are so call the Third Place like cafés and tea bars in China, they are just entertainment venues rather than the important places where intelligentsia brew masterpieces, discuss about social and political topic, and create public opinions. They are unlike salons in Europe in 18th and 19th century.

Democratic thinking has been accepted by public gradually in China, and the tradition of overwhelming main stream ideology is also changing gradually.

Chinese president Hu Jintao's report to the Seventeenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China on Oct. 15, 2007 pointed out, people's democracy is the lifeblood of socialism（Hu, 2007）. The essence and core of socialist democracy are that the people are masters of the country. We need to improve institutions for democracy, diversify its forms and expand its channels. We need to carry out democratic election, decision-making, administration and oversight in accordance with the law to guarantee the people's rights to be informed, to participate, to be heard, and to oversee.

Mass media is the major part of western Public Sphere nowadays. In China, mass media is defined as the government and people's voice, expressing public opinion in some degree, although there's room to improve.

However, viewpoints spreading through mass media come from decision makers mainly, which are opinions of the minority of the society. It is not the real public opinion. There are the silent majority which is the main body of the society.

This situation is changing due to rapid development of information technology. According to the China Internet Development Report issued by China Internet Network Information Center（CNNIC,2008）in Jan.2008, the number of netizen in China reached 0.21 billion. 70% are youth below 30 years old. Although they can not represent the public, they cannot be ignored. Internet is changing the habit and behavior of communication, and reconstructing the power framework and cultural ecology. The digital technology has been improving equality enormously. BBS (Bulletin Board System) and blog have become the platform of free speech for ordinary citizens.

The public discussion initiated by the "Shen Hongjia Event" in March 1998 was carried out like a raging fire on the Internet. In March 1998, *South Weekend*, a famous newspaper in China, published a letter written by Shen Hongjia, a professor in Shandong Science and Technology University. Shen doubted the Monopolization of Chinese Telecom, and declared to sue. The letter caused a large scale of discussion on the newspapers which eventually was interfered by related authorities. However, the discussion continued on Internet.

The Chinese public seemed to cram a span of thousands of years within a few years. They became independent "citizens" with the capability to debate rationally, instead of "individuals" in a private society. The public discussion via the Internet caused by the "Sheng Hongjia Event" came across some twists and turns, but it nearly perfectly practiced the concept of Public Sphere given by Habermas. The frequently issued articles and the large amount of delivery suggest that "the rational debate" is carried out among the "private" netizens; the topic of public discussion is elevated from "the spiritual support" to Shen Hongjia to the comprehensive consideration of Chinese Telecom system. This indicates that the topic of public discussion is elevated to "the issue of common interest." Consequently, China Telecom consented to adjust telephone fees in front of the public opinion and started their system reform. Since many public forums on the Internet came forth and the public attached themselves to it actively, the Chinese public made a "democratic control" on "state action" successfully. Thus, although there were some set backs in the process, we were still be able to obtain quite a number of significant achievements. It is a very successful constructional practice of Public Sphere. Apparently, if the new digital media (Internet) did not greatly intervened, the widespread discussion on China Telecom could not take place in China, and the system reform and innovation of China Telecom that were in a special monopolistic status could not be launched. The event was a milestone of the progress of Public Sphere in China (Chen,1998).

Habermas stated in his answers to the questions about the Public Sphere in Aug. 1998, a letter in reply to a Chinese scholar, that the early western Public Sphere, which was loose, open and bouncy, formed among private citizens who like to read newspapers, weekly or monthly review. They gathered together through academic association, reading group, freemason, and religious league. Theater, museum, odium, café, teahouse, and salon offered public space for them. Their topics were all-embracing; the focus changes from literature and art to politics (Habermas, 1999). It is obvious that the development of Public Sphere is not always related to politics. We need not be serious on any particular purpose to cultivate democratic consciousness.

Critical public opinion is the basic character of Public Sphere. Internet, which is a Public Sphere, can realize democratic expression and foster the public democratic consciousness. Such kind of training not only relates to political criticism, but also to ordinary social events, even entertainment events, especially to youth including university students.

The following three events are examples which are influential among youth. Their common characteristic is that authority has no words supremacy, while ordinary citizens get free speech, and have influential force.

Event 1: Edison Chen Sex-Photo-Gate

The photo scandal initiated with the uploading of hundreds of sexually-explicit photos starting on Jan. 27 featuring Edison Chen, a 27-year-old Canadian-born Hong Kong entertainer and various Hong Kong starlets. The pictures have spread like wildfire on the Internet ever since then. Chen allegedly sent his laptop to a repair shop, leading to the leak and on-line circulation of the photos.Hong Kong and Mainland police have investigated the situation. The scandal has triggered widespread discussions about web privacy and liability.

Simson Garfinkel wrote a book titled *Database Nation: The Death of Privacy in the 21st Century* in 2001. It seems that *the speed of Death of Privacy* is faster than people's expectation.

The event urged netizens and website staff to be self-disciplined and prevented the postings and dissemination of such images by pledging not to download, spread or speculate on the photos.

Event 2: TV Reality Show

In fact, TV reality show is a kind of event rather than individuals, such as Good Boys, My Show, Super Girls, Win in China, etc. Its characteristic is real and interactive. The competitors are common instead of actors/actress. The competing result depends to a high degree on ordinary citizen's vote via online and text messages. The competition in the TV reality show is mainly decided by audience's votes. The audiences have opportunities experience grass root democracy. According to an investigation, 70% of TV reality show's audiences are 14 to 26 year-old, 54.7% are students   (URLCS, 2007).

Baidu Post is the largest Chinese community on Internet in the world. Netizens can search keywords they interested in and build a brand new board

on it. Thus, Baidu Post can react to new events quickly because of interactive model, which results in the largest network platform or Public Sphere for fans of each TV reality show, and forms the unique Post culture of reality show.

(comment: Baidu post does not belong the TV reality show !!!)

Event 3: Opposing Tibet Independence, Supporting Beijing Olympics

"Post-1980" is a special word in China, which refers to people born in the 1980s. It is the pronoun of Chinese youth including students. As a unique social group, most Post-1980s are singletons who advocate western freedom and gastronomy, but are not interested in politics and criticized being self-centered. They expect Olympics cheerily, and did not understand why it is connected with politics. Perhaps the movement of opposing Tibet independence and supporting Beijing Olympics is the very first time that Post-1980 are participating in political event.

Anti-cnn.com was established to expose the lies and distortions in the western media. The site, not associated with any government officials, is maintained by volunteers including 23 year-old Rao Jin who graduated from Qinghua University. The website said, we are not against the western media, but against the lies and fabricated stories in the media. We are not against the western people, but against the prejudice from the western society.

Netizens, most of them are youth, debated whether Chinese should boycott Carrefour those days intensely. A major shareholder of Carrefour was accused by Chinese Internet users of supporting the Dalai clique, which Carrefour China denied in a statement. Online and text messages began to call for boycotts of Carrefour and other foreign retailers to protest western supports to "Tibet independence" secessionists after the disruptions of the Olympic torch relay in Paris and other foreign cities.

Meanwhile, another voice said Boycotts are an outdated reaction. They thought some self-styled "patriotic" actions have damaged the interests of those Carrefour staff, damaged the interests of China and damaged China's image. Patriotism is a good thing, but it must be guided by reason. Should we boycott Beijing Olympics simply because Olympics was found by French man named Pierre De Coubertin? They said it will be a better way to win understanding and support worldwide by introducing the positive side of the country and people, and called on the public to choose a rational way to express their love for the country.

The debate has been spread in Chinese world at home and abroad through Internet. It was another milestone of China Public Sphere after "Shen Hongjia Event".

3.3 Democracy, Public Sphere and Library in China

Journalism, Public Sphere and democracy are regarded as the three components of the triangle relationship by social scientist. Jesse Hauk Shera stated, "Perhaps it would not be excessive to say that the mass media are basically authoritarian, the library essentially democratic." (Shera, 1976)

Shera's opinion may be lopsided. But the reason he said, that people can select information freely in the library and indicate the library's importance. Therefore, we should probe into the relationship among democracy, Public Sphere and China's libraries.

Library community in China pays a lot of attention to the relationship between democracy and public library, although Public Sphere is a new word to them.

UNESCO Public Library Manifesto said, constructive participation and the development of democracy depend on satisfactory education as well as on free and unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture and information (UNESCO, 1994). It illuminates that information right is the basic human right, as well as the necessary condition that citizen take part in the decision-making for social management. Public library is the production of modern democracy. As pilot lamp of democratic progress, it reflects the degree of a state's democracy.

Public libraries have been existing in China for about 100 years. However, the spirit of providing free service for any member of the society fairly has not been implemented veritably till now. The libraries' development in China reflects the hard progress of Chinese democratization in a century.

Chinese Democracy is a song by the American rock band Guns N' Roses. But what is the exact situation in China?

Democracy consciousness began to sprout in the end of Chinese feudal society when Chinese realized public library for the first time. May Fourth New Culture Movement was inaugurated by the creation of the *New Youth* journal, established in 1915. The movement holding high flag of democracy and science was a great thinking that enlightened Chinese in the early 20th century. The political effect of the New Culture Movement was to politicize and radicalize Chinese, particularly Chinese students. The New Culture thinkers published their theories of government, education, culture, economics, and western science prolifically in books and journals. Never before in Chinese history had political and social issues been discussed so openly and so publicly. In the year of 1900-1925, China learned from the west, reforming traditional loft libraries, establishing new style modern public libraries. Whereafter, China library undertaking developed rapidly and each kind of libraries were built universally. There were 502 libraries in 1925. Thenceforth, the library's number increased quickly, reaching 5812 in 1935. However, foreign invasion and civil war were ceaseless in succeeding decades. Thus, the live or die of Chinese nation was priority, while establishing a real democratic and fair social mechanism became a faraway dream. The public libraries' development stagnated. Chinese democratization made a great progress for a time after 1949, the P. R. China established. During 1949-1952, the main task was to take over and reform old libraries, and make them state-owned. China library undertaking developed rapidly in 1953-1957, the number of public libraries enhance from 83 in 1952 to 400 in 1957. But

countermarch because of Culture Revolution (1966-1976) known as 'the ten traumatic years'. In the early 1980's right after Culture Revolution, the discussion about "Practice is the only criterion of truth" started the most activity and diversity era of the social thought. The Chinese reform started in economic area firstly because China faced the extreme economic scrape and great difficulty of politics mechanism reform. From that time on, China has been in the economic-central period for about 30 years. The public pays more attention to efficiency comparing with equity. Thus, reform in political area related to social democratic mechanism was lied over. In the early 21th century, people began to focus on their own democratic rights along with great achievement of economic reconstruction. Social democratic progress speeded up obviously, and the society became more open and diversified. People self-quested many issues that caused the thought of "efficiency first" when enjoying reform achievement (Chen, 2004).

Numbers of public libraries with excellent hardware appeared all over the country along with enhancing of state's economic power. There were 1732 public libraries at county level and above in 1980, and 2406 in 1986. The number changed a little after 1986; attention was paid to improving service quality and constructing new library building.

However, some lagging concepts block the development of public libraries in China. For example, the public library's spirit is that everyone has fair right of enjoying public library service. In reality, government officers and prestigious scholars take much more advantage than ordinary citizens.

Library experts paid too much attention to technology issues after Information technology got into library area completely, and they neglected the thinking of library basic value. Besides, some library scientists even gave up public standpoint that library should be free, freedom, and equality due to marketing logic. As a consequence, the public care less and less about libraries.

In the past hundred years, Chinese library community did not regard public library as a mechanism for information fairness and ensure ness seriously. Now some scholars have realized it and consider it seriously. Fan Binsi, Professor of East China Normal University, pointed out that there are two social trends let us reconsider this issue. Firstly, China is going to democracy at unprecedented speed, and information fairness is the premise of democracy. At this background, orientation of library development should be related to social democratic progress tightly. Library construction should be a part in such progress. Librarians should stand together as defenders of the people's right to know. That is public libraries that take humanistic care as the spirit priority.

Secondly, the development of information technology force public libraries to drops out the industrial competition of information service, backing to the original function to protect information fairness (Fan, 2004).

It is obvious that the library community in China focus on information fetch right when researching the relationship between democracy and public library.

Some public libraries have already put such kind of idea into practice in a way. We should also pay attention to balance collection. Thomas Jefferson said Information is the currency of democracy. Librarians should ensure that materials are available to meet the needs and interests of all segments of their communities (Budd and Wyatt, 2002). Based on it, the Public Sphere can be enhanced. Besides, library should not only provide a place for public to freely express opinions, provide assistance for the establishment of Public Spheres, but also become Public Sphere itself for readers to communicate directly.

Public Sphere, some believe, exists only on the Internet in China, but it should exist as well. So far there is very little Public Sphere existing in the physical world in China.

Professor He Weifang, of Peking University Law School, pointed out that most of ordinary citizens in China have their Internet connection dependently. Lacking of public participating channel results in China Internet bears too much on expressing public opinion. One way out in solving this issue is that public can have stable ensuring mechanism and more channels for expression.[3]

Habermas emphasized aspectant and oral communication when talking about Public Sphere. Although he paid attention to printed media when exploring bourgeois Public Sphere, his concept of "real Public Sphere" was still based on oral communication.

Libraries can become an ordinary Third Place only if they change mind and innovate service. But being a Public Sphere can not be done over night. A Third Place can become a Public Sphere, but not necessarily and automatically. Public Sphere is not simply equal to a public space for free speech. The key is its topic, the degree of public participation, and influence. Public Sphere needs to be cultivated.

Perhaps the "Third Place" nowadays in China can not afford to bear such important responsibility, but nothing is impossible during the period of social transformation.

Comparing with other Third Place, library, serving as a public dining table of thoughts, seem most likely to be a so called Public Sphere physically in China. Libraries have responsibility and ability to do their best for the development of the Third Places to Public Sphere.

Virtual world is the simulation of real world. Libraries should not be absent in virtual Public Sphere, or be just marginalized.

3.4 University Library as a Public Sphere

University libraries are better than public ones in terms of hardware generally in China, while public libraries seem go ahead in front of university libraries in some aspects, although there are aspects to be improved. In fact, at the existing conditions, our university libraries should pay more attention to the relation between democratic progress and academic libraries. Universities aim to cultivate future social elites. If elites have no spirit of democracy, how can we expect the ordinary public to have? In fact, Peking Univ. is the birth place of

The May 4th New Culture Movement, called Chinese Renaissance, which promoted democracy and science in the last century.

University library can be regarded as a special public library based on the concept that university is a special community consisting of special citizens. Thus, academic libraries should and can provide a Public Sphere with democratic atmosphere for students to access information fairly and communicate directly and indirectly which create unique thoughts. Students, having access to a variety of information, have independent thinking and self-reliance research, thus, cultivate students' democratic spirit. As a result, the academic libraries may turn into one of cradles of democratic thought.

We should be practical and realistic. Perhaps we should go in for academic democracy and academic freedom first, and not hurry to pursue political democracy.

In recent years, Chinese are probing into how to change "made in China" to "made by China". Thus, how to cultivate innovative talent should be the emphases of educational reform, and democratic spirit is the basic diathesis of innovative talent, even for pure technical talents. Science and democracy are always hand-in-hand in human history. For science is democratic and free rather than dictatorial, innovation relays only on no blind faith, no following like sheep, and dare to doubt and thinking independently.

University library can provide a democratic and free learning space. Learning from all parties is crucial. However, a student usually can only attend certain classes of certain teachers. Examination-oriented education has been gradually changing to quality-oriented in China's universities. Some teachers begin to change their teaching method from monotonic lecturing style to a multi-media teaching and discussion style. In the new method, students are encouraged to participate in the classroom discussion and multi-aspect reference reading for knowledge broadening. Therefore, library should offer related documents of different scholars belonging to various fields, and provide communication site.

4. Our Experience

If you conduct a search in CNKI, the biggest Chinese full text journal database in China, looking for the subject term "Third Place " and "Public Sphere", combined with "library" respectively, you will find no paper. Although Third Place and Public Sphere are new important concepts in Chinese library community, a few libraries' practices have fallen into this category.

4.1 Establishment of Comfortable Reading Room for Leisure

The original intention of Nanjing University of Science and Technology (NUST) library to establish literature and arts reading room is for education for all-round development. Readers can enjoy comfortable reading environment there where we hung calligraphy and painting and put sculpture and broadcast light music. Comparing with ordinary reading room, it is welcome for well-chosen books and favorable reading atmosphere.

Everyday in the library of Liulin Campus of South-west University of Finance and Economics (SWUFE) in Sichuan province, there is a music performer playing Guzheng, a traditional Chinese musical instrument which belongs to the zither family of string instruments. In fact, the library made great efforts to build a refined environment for reading. Each floor has its own style. For example, the fourth floor is Chinese style where there are old-fashioned wooden armchairs, square tables and carved wooden door and windows among bookshelves and seats. [4]

Students' reaction is different for reading environment library elaborating. It is difficult to cater for all tastes. Thus, libraries should pay attention to partition of functional area, for fear of disturbance.

4.2 Leisure Public Space and Café House

Some university libraries moved toward multi-use. For example, public areas and coffee bars were introduced into libraries for leisure, like Tongji University library. Library is not just warehouses of content, but also community center, where students can lie fallow, chat and or contemplate. We university libraries can learn from public libraries in this aspect.

4.3 Interactive with Readers through OPAC

Some libraries use OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue) to offer statistics of pop books on loaning and reading, and readers can also appraise books, which can obtain the feedback from readers and further provide reference information for other readers. The librarians can also use such information of other libraries as reference for stock.

4.4 Holding Reading Festival

Books are the ladder for human being's progress. Reading is not just a learning style but a living style as well in nowadays knowledge-oriented modern society. It is significant that holding reading festival on campus, which encourage reading and enhance civilization.

Nanjing University library holds reading festival every October, which lasts a week, in order to promote humanity spirit, enrich campus culture, and build a wonderful atmosphere of loving reading, learning and intensive study.

Many popular activities were hold for the festival in 2007. Both the competition of book-comment papers and famous scholars' lectures are two most welcome ones. Another one is the annual outstanding reader's competition which encourages readers reading more fine books so as to accumulate knowledge and realize technical innovation. Another popular activity is so called "sleeping admission card activation" which includes canceling overdue charge, calling for the return of overdue books and encourage readers back to library again.[5]

4.5 Providing Stage for Students' Activities and Organizing Various Salon

Xiamen University Library provides seminar rooms for group discussion, league or club activities, communication and small scale meetings, etc. Readers can book the room through library's website with library cards.[6]

Peking Univ. library also provides multi-media seminar rooms with projector, big screen TV, sound equipment, computers and network. The time span is within 3 hours. [7]

Guangzhou University Philosophy Study League holds subject salon reflecting on culture phenomenon in café house of the university library. Every student on campus is welcome to participate. The salon's purpose is to use the form of salon to discuss culture phenomenon, meditate problems underneath, and probe into countermeasures. Through such kind of salon, the students understand hot spots of society completely. Everybody joins in the discussion actively, expressing their thinking, and communicating freely.[8]

4.6 Fetchtism

There are report halls in many university libraries, where famous scholars can be invited to make lectures. However, not every library can afford to do this. Fortunately, libraries can use Fetchtism, broadcasting video of excellent lectures, programs on special subject and movies. Popular films result in popular original works, and many readers read the original works right after watching the adapted films which is a nice promotion way for the books.

NUST library relays news programs live and plays some wonderful video of famous scholars' lecture such as Lecture Room. Lecture Room is a popular TV program of China Central Television (CCTV), which invites scholars to provide lectures on various disciplines. Lecture Room has become very popular in recent years in spite of many controversies. It has become a cultural phenomenon and a cultural space in which various powers voice and combat. It also reflects the conflict and combination of Chinese scholastic culture and popular culture in the mass media age,

4.7 Activities of Students' Rights Week

Readers' democracy consciousness can be cultivated by what they constantly see and hear when accepting libraries' service. Libraries' humanity environment, service philosophy, and the way to ensure readers' rights, all transfer the democratic signal.

NUST Students Association held activities of Students' Rights Week each year, in order to improve students' consciousness of rights safeguarding. NUST library participated as well. The deans of the library were invited to listen to students' complaint and suggestion, and put into effect.

5. What We Can and Should Do in Virtual Environment

Almost all Chinese university libraries have their own websites. Many libraries provide navigation by subject and virtual reference service.

The navigation links to various digital resources including National Level

Excellent Courses (http://www.jpkcnet.com/new/). Construction of National Level Excellent Courses is the important part of the project of university teaching quality and reform by The Ministry of Education (MOE). MOE plan to establish 1500 excellent courses within 5 years (2003-2007). Such high quality teaching resources can be shared through Internet freely in order to enhance quality of talent cultivation.

Virtual reference desks are the interface for communication between librarians and readers, which usually be used for answer readers' questions. We should improve service based on it.

The library community pays much attention to advanced information technology. Many papers introduced new technical methods such as wiki, blog, RSS, etc. They want to improve service and enlarge influence with them. However, we should not use technology just for technology's sake, and use form just for form's sake. Mona Lisa painted by ordinary paintbrush is masterpiece, but many pictures resulted by digital technology may just be trash.

As a virtual community, it is important that digital libraries should get people together and build up authority, so that they are not be marginalized. Someone's lesson can be the best reference for us. We can use the experience of television media for reference.

Along with increasingly fierce competition, TV media often use marketing methods like match and appraise through comparison, which are the ways to create news hotspots, attract attention, enhance brand's value, and intensify speaking right and leading position in certain area. TV media can grasp attention, enhance audience rating and cultivate audience loyalty constantly through such kind of methods.

Besides providing stage for students' activities, the libraries may also pay attention to hot social topics, and organize various salons in both physical and virtual environment, such as literary, philosophic, and educational ones, discussing about issues like environment, population, family, and mentality. Libraries can also organize salons combined with excellent films and programs on special subject. Salons should invite not only readers on but off campus, and extend the discussions on the Internet. In this way, recessive course culture, which is free, easy, and amused, is formed.

The libraries can establish a new digital Third Place, and can also do something on existing ones. Libraries should establish the Third Place on famous website. Wherever there are readers, there are libraries. At present, there are over 40 libraries in Second Life. And the list is growing.

Many universities established their own BBS since 1996 in China. Some BBS are official while others were established by students. After 10 years development, BBS is very important for students, and it becomes to students' virtual community or digital Third Place. Chinese university libraries should also be on BBS. Libraries' information such as navigation and reading guidance should not only be on libraries' websites.

Compared with book bars, libraries have plenty of collections, convenient OPAC, and have tradition of providing book reviews and reading guide, but cater to readers. Therefore, the libraries should be able to develop their professional skill and use of Internet platform to fulfill this kind of service.

The libraries have not gotten the advantage on establishing virtual Third Place or Public Sphere, and many libraries unlikely have such strength. Thus, the author thinks Fetchtism is more feasible and efficient compared with building up from nothing to them. The libraries can commend excellent resources by navigation and reading guidance.

At present, library navigation aims on each kind of documents, especially full text digital resources, while reading guidance aims on literature mainly printed books. In comparison with each other, navigation is shallow, it only offer links to website or databases, while traditional reading guidance is in-depth, for example, it can provide book review.

The libraries should navigate for excellent blogs and personal websites, although they are dynamic and may not exist for all the time. Opinion leaders are necessary, but the opinion should be multi-channel instead of mono. There are usually a sentence that personal opinions and does not necessarily represent the views of the channel at the end of the TV program. The channel just provides a platform for different viewpoint, as well as the libraries.

Reading guidance's formats are various, which can be based on statistic, such as OPAC borrowing ranking. We can also recommend those book sales ranking of famous websites and bookstores to readers as reference. Librarians regarded as gatekeepers can offer librarian choiceness and editor recommends. Guidance should focus on general and literary history category, and books' number should be moderate, for commending too many books is the same as no commending. From the perspective of books' contents, recommendatory bibliography should be readable for target readers. Otherwise, directing function is hard to realize, and bibliography may not be reliable. Reading guidance and navigation should set up authority, avoiding each does things in its own way, and construct repeatedly on low level.

Opinion leaders such as scholars, experts and celebrities are influential. "Open a Book to Read for 8 Minutes" is a program made by Phoenix Satellite TV. The program's slogan is only 8 minutes for one book each day. Considering people spend less and less time on reading because the modern life rhythm is quicker than before and leisure time is spent on Internet and TV play series, the program introduces a book in 8 minutes each day by different scholars and experts so that audiences can touch books' elite by the most simple and convenient way. The program also helps audiences select books, and they will buy or borrow the books if they think they are worth to read. The program's writing draft is on Phoenix official website.[9] Librarians should pay attention to such kind of programs, recommend it through navigation, and regard it as reference for buying books.

A comprehensive view on the development of blog and BBS in China shows amusing trend, and the majority of the individual blogs are just for self-entertainment, which click-through rate is low, and spread only within a small range. Two conferences blog is a wonderful form to be a Public Sphere.

Two conferences refer to NPC（the National People's Congress, including its standing committee）and CPPCC（the Chinese Political Consultative Conference). The National People's Congress is the highest organ of State power. Its main functions and powers include formulation of laws, delegating authority, policy formulation, and supervision of other governing organs. The CPPCC is a patriotic united front organization of the Chinese people, serving as a key mechanism for multi-party cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, and a major manifestation of socialist democracy. Annual NPC and CPPCC Sessions are held in March each year, which is the significant national political event familiar by public.

A government media website, i.e., people.com.cn, has called for two conferences blogs on Feb. 24th, 2006, which took the lead in covering of the two sessions and providing communication platform with blog. The blogs were written by delegates, correspondents and common blog writers. Meanwhile, the famous portal websites like sina.com and sohu.com also established two conferences blogs. Two conferences blogs are elite blogs for political democracy, which are most popular compared with ordinary ones. Some blog's click-through rate is more than 0.6 million. Thus, the voices are easy to be the mainstream on virtual world. Two conferences blogs lead blog to real Public Sphere, which change the hostility to collaboration attitude between elite and ordinary citizens, and impulse the progress of Chinese political democracy.

Higher education should cultivate students' consciousness of social responsibility. As the second classroom it is necessary that universities libraries introduce such blogs with real Public Sphere's characters to students.

Besides, students come from different area, some of them coming from depressed area have never used computer, Internet and library till they go to the university. Therefore, many basic information literacy training should be fulfilled in universities, so that students are able to take part in activity in Third Place or Public Sphere.

6. Conclusions

At present, discussion about Third Place and Public Sphere are limited in sociology area in China, which is not attached importance to by librarians yet. Although a few libraries' practices have fallen into this category, they are individual action of individual library, rather than forming common consensus that library will become multi-used. Such library practices are not systemic.

A comprehensive view on the library's research and practice shows a distinct characteristic that we usually use sociology thoughts and methods on

library aspect, and make it more suitable for libraries continuously. Consensus in library community should not only be our murmur. We should let public understand it in order to get support from them as well as from authorities.

Youth thinking are active, and have a strong need to socialize. University libraries should and can provide Third Place, multi-used campus community center to students, and come into being Public Sphere for training democratic spirit further.

"I am not in the library, but rather on the way to it". Hope this sentence becomes students' tag line someday.

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The library conceived of purely as a place for lending media is now outdated. The library as a "third place", next to home, work or school, is becoming increasingly important. We need comfortable seating and free LAN. Event work is also important to feature the library as a meeting place. Our events cover all age groups. For the very young, beginning with six months, there's already the "ABC Brownie". She studied public librarianship at the University of Cologne and is particularly interested in the public relations, marketing and quality management. Study Places Utrecht. Students of the Tilburg School of Catholic Theology can also use the IT and library facilities of Utrecht University. Frequently Asked Questions on Study Places. Reservations. How to make a reservation for a student desktop? Go to reservation. You first indicate which day and which location you want to use a student desktop. The system then shows a period chart and map of the chosen location, indicating the available student desktops. A number of PCs at the second level of the library is reserved for students who arrive early at the library. In the workplace reservations system these PCs start with the number 240xx. The PCs cannot be reserved.