

Image writing and era innovation in Chinese original cultural programs

Li Yun^{1,a,*}, Gao Zihan^{1,b}

¹Sichuan University of Media and Communications, Chengdu, China

^asobobo@163.com, ^b18981804716@163.com

*Corresponding author

Keywords: Original cultural programs, Image innovation, Aesthetic value, Propagation matrix

Abstract: The exceptional traditional Chinese culture serves as a wellspring for the original cultural program. Since the advent of the present century, national and provincial mainstream media have innovatively enhanced these programs by enriching our splendid traditional culture and highlighting our country's cultural heritage. This has resulted in a fresh approach that emphasizes reality, fosters audio-visual expansion, empowers media technology, and constructs a cultural communication matrix through innovative programming content and communication methods. Notably, it has given rise to a multitude of high-quality cultural programs exemplified by "Chinese Poetry Conference," the "Chinese Festival" series Party, and "Technology Surprise Four Seats." By leveraging video marvels and harnessing the power of cyberspace communication circles, this type of program achieves a seamless integration between state ideological propaganda and the dynamic demands of popular culture. Consequently, it presents a novel development trend in the era of image writing and innovative communication of original cultural programs in China.

1. Introduction

Throughout the development of Chinese television over the past half-century, there has been a concerted effort to strike a delicate balance between heritage and innovation, independent research and development and overseas introduction, thus embarking on a path of autonomous innovation. In recent years, our television industry has faced challenges from modern media, including audience attrition due to homemade online programming and an excessive focus on popular foreign programming formats in pursuit of strong ratings and financial gains. The proliferation of mass entertainment-oriented celebrity reality shows in the media market has had a detrimental effect on our social climate. As a result, there is an urgent need for culturally profound programs that can cleanse the social atmosphere while preserving the essence of traditional Chinese culture.

As a culturally distinctive program, it embodies a gratifying outcome of the innovative development of television culture since 2013. Over the past decade, numerous exceptional TV cultural works have emerged in the realm of cultural programs, including "Reader," "Chinese Poetry Conference," "National Treasure," "Classic Chanting," "China in Classics," and Henan

Satellite TV's Chinese Festival series party and Technology Surprise Four. It is imperative for us to strengthen our cultural confidence, take on our mission, and diligently forge ahead to create a new culture for our time and build a modern civilization for the Chinese nation. In June 2023, General secretary delivered a significant speech at the Cultural Inheritance and Development Forum, emphasizing the new cultural mission in the contemporary era - "Our new cultural mission in this era is to continuously promote cultural prosperity, establish a cultural powerhouse, and construct a modern civilization for the Chinese nation from a fresh starting point. We must enhance our cultural confidence, shoulder our mission, and strive diligently to forge a novel culture of our time and build a modern civilization for the Chinese nation." [1] The inheritance and promotion of China's outstanding traditional culture necessitates the spread of high-quality programs. Recent years have witnessed the emergence of original cultural programming that align with the current media integration and development landscape, cater to market demands, and satisfy the aesthetic preferences of the public in terms of multidimensional programming content and imagery. This has become a contemporary imperative for the production of original cultural programs in China.

2. Original cultural programs in the age of media integration

1980s. Since the start of the new century, while TV cultural programming has been declining under the influence of media convergence, the development of new media has also provided an excellent opportunity for TV cultural programming to be transformed. In January 2014, the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television issued a circular on the proactive launch of original cultural programs to carry forward and inherit the outstanding traditional culture. Since then, the term "original cultural programs" has appeared in the public eye for the first time in the form of authoritative documents. The notice mentioned that the radio and television institutions, especially the TV star integrated channels, should dig deep into traditional cultural resources, learn from the beneficial experience of programs such as "Chinese Characters Dictation Conference" and "Chinese Heroes" with the development of the TV industry and the localization of original cultural programs. At this point, such programs introduce new forms of performance, add entertainment factors such as live interpretation and reality shows, and spread and promote the excellent traditional Chinese culture in the form of attracting the audience's favorite, which not only realizes the main purpose of cultural programs, but also gains extremely high ratings, and arouses the national pride and love for China's traditional culture. The formation of an upward atmosphere for learning excellent traditional culture in China has reversed the bad status quo of entertainment programs in the TV market, which is conducive to the establishment of a high degree of cultural confidence among Chinese citizens, the promotion of cultural prosperity and development, and the realization of the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

From 2013 to 2014, most of the original cultural programs focused on the production of language and poetry programs, such as "Chinese Character Dictation Conference", "Chinese Idiom Conference" and "Chinese Riddle Conference"; the production of "Chinese Lantern Riddles Conference" of Yunnan Satellite TV, "Love of China" of Tianjin Satellite TV, "Love of Chinese Characters" of Heilongjiang Satellite TV, etc., highlights the problems of single theme, monotonous form and unsustainable appeal of early original cultural programs in the era of financial media. As of 2016, cultural programming with homogenized content is bound to face transformation in the face of competition from satellite TV and audience expectations. For example, Shanxi Satellite TV takes "national Fans-Chinese style" as its channel positioning and produces and broadcasts the TV program "People Say Shanxi Beautiful Scenery". With the channel concept of "Excellent poetry, good folk songs and excellent family style", Hebei Satellite TV has successively launched a series of programs of "Good Chinese Poetry", "Good Chinese folk songs" and "Good Chinese family

Style". In February 2017, the large-scale cultural emotion program "Reader" produced and broadcast by the China Media Group was broadcast on the comprehensive channel of CCTV, which turned the cultural variety "clear stream" into the "mainstream" leading the audio-visual direction and triggered the upsurge of reading literary classics by the whole people. Policy and the market are important fulcrums for the innovation and development of original cultural programs. Under the continuous encouragement of policy documents such as the Notice of the National Radio and Television Administration on Further Strengthening the Management of Radio, Television and Online Audiovisual arts Programs, and under the guidance of requirements such as "adhering to the people-centered innovation orientation, encouraging high-quality content to win, and constantly innovating program forms [2]", Original cultural programs are increasingly highlighting the development advantages of rich content and subject matter, integration of program forms and obvious technological innovation. "National Treasure" is the first cultural variety show; "Classic Chant Spread" combines ancient poems and songs with modern popular grafting; scene reading "A Good Book" immersive experience literature; "Thousands of miles Walk alone" experience the world's intangible heritage disclosure and reality show interaction. Looking at the original TV cultural programming that is active on the screen at this stage, there is no lack of valuable exploration and innovative consciousness, regardless of the topic setting, content composition, presentation mode, or means of integration, production level, and communication mode.

3. Multi-dimensional construction of image core

In the increasingly fierce competition in the production of audio-visual new media, original cultural programs continue to cultivate in the innovation of image content, and thus stand out from the diversified program types, in which the shaping of the scene to the audience's image presentation has realized the transformation from flat static to multidimensional dynamic. CCTV launched the original cultural program "China in the Classics" on the basis of the concept of panoramic interpretation, "The original cultural program "China in the Classics" launched by CCTV "creates an immersive large-scale 'story field' for the audience through a 270-degree panoramic original stage, so that the stories in the classics are concentrated in front of the audience across time and space. "[3] The three major scenes of present, history and ancient and modern communication established in the program break the dilemma of audiences unable to construct historical scenes through film and television interpretation, and transform the lengthy, static and simple classic book stories into visual and three-dimensional space presentation. Jointly created by Henan Satellite TV and Bilibili Platform, "Dance Millennium" deviates from the indoor performance mode of traditional dance programs, places the dance performance scene in the natural environment and under the ancient architectural complex, integrates the beauty of Chinese dance into the splendid mountains and rivers, and enriches the diversity of dance art communication from the audio-visual level, and arouses the audience's strong identification with the excellent traditional Chinese culture.

"Cultural participation is an effective way for individuals to have a spiritual connection with the space in which they live, and it must be preconditioned by a clear spatial environment." [4] Original cultural programs shape the communication field for the construction of scenes and create the environment for ritual communication. The stage space creates a specific ritual atmosphere for the audience through visual elements, so that the participation of culture permeates and the communication of the audience can be "smooth and silent". The first cultural exploration program "National Treasure" is quite ingenious in stage design. Against the backdrop of the giant ring screen, the "National treasure debut" link will slowly roll out the central national treasure yarn box, and nine transparent icicles will adjust and move to complete the scene transformation, highlighting the unique program quality; the original program "Poetry and Painting China", which takes Chinese

classic paintings as the content carrier, focuses on landscape painting as the main element of the stage, and integrates Chinese garden structure: mountains, pools, bamboo, and bridges, providing the audience with an aesthetic space to immerse themselves in poetry and painting. The beauty of the changing scenery also carries the shaping of the ceremony, such as the unchanged seal and guardian oath of the national treasure in the "National Treasure"; the feelings of returning to the reading of paper letters in "Letters Alive" are all manifestations of ritual procedures. The audience repeatedly participates in the fixed process as if in a grand ceremony, forming an identity under specific circumstances, and this sense of ritual is incorporated into the video content in order to inspire the audience with shared faith and cultural confidence.

In original cultural programming, characters, as vital visual symbols, also broaden the dissemination of images and create emotional connections within and outside the scene. For example, Henan Satellite TV's Chinese festival series "Dragon Boat Festival Wonderful Tour" leads the audience to walk in the strong cultural atmosphere of traditional Chinese festivals from the perspective of four Tang sisters; the host of "China in Classics" crosses the long river of history and talks with the sages as "contemporary readers" to create a perspective for the audience; in "National Treasure", the audience is immersed in the ritual atmosphere and has a high degree of emotional resonance with the guardian of national treasure. "Visual symbols play a positive role in visualizing cognition and emotion, constructing the audience's conceptual beliefs and cultural identity." [5] In the face of images, the audience has been able to complete the transformation from the spectator perspective of "others" to the subjective perspective of "self", from passive acceptance to active participation. Original cultural programs shoulder the mission of cultural transmission and inheritance, and pay additional attention to how to achieve "soft arrival" of traditional Chinese culture with abundant audio-visual images.

4. Aesthetic choice of media presentation

Entering the digital era, the media has achieved deep integration with science and technology. The comprehensive application of artificial intelligence, virtual reality (XR), augmented reality (AR), holographic projection and other "technologies has broadened the creative field and visual space of original cultural programs, satisfying all the imagination of the audience for the innovative development of excellent traditional culture. In the sixth season of "The Chinese Poetry Competition," "A Thousand People in the Cloud group" realized the spatial interaction between online players and the TV studio. The original acrobatic competition show of Guangdong Satellite TV, "Technology Shock Four", uses VR and panoramic surround stage to make acrobatic performance more visual impact; iQIYI's original panoramic cultural exploration program "Glory is Back" uses electronic technology and animation special effects technology to restore the damaged murals and vividly reproduce the spirit of the murals. These excellent programs are based on a close combination of traditional culture and modern technology, resulting in a high degree of unity of content, audio-visual and programming temperament, bringing immersive visual enjoyment while also accommodating the audience's higher aesthetic choices in the era of intelligent media.

The report of the Party's 20th National Congress pointed out that "we must strengthen the construction of the all-media communication system and shape a new pattern of mainstream public opinion." "Multiplatform resonance, small screen and large screen linkage" has become an important strategy for the effective promotion of current original cultural programs, broadening the communication channels of TV cultural programs with traditional culture as the core, and gradually establishing a communication matrix. "Bravo Youngsters!" is the first "network interactive" national style youth program created by CCTV. The program was broadcast simultaneously in traditional TV media and multiple network video platforms such as Central Video and Watermelon

Video, covering further audience groups and "realizing the sinking from mainstream media to mass media." [6] The "Chinese Festival" series of evening parties in Henan Province uses tiny screens to drive large screens, gives play to the communication characteristics of "short, flat and fast" of social media and short video platforms and the advantages of "lightweight" content carriers, and presents the classic content of the program fragmented and scattered in front of the audience. Works such as "Ode to the Goddess of the Luo River" and "Ink Dance Mid-Autumn Festival Post" have aroused heated discussions among netizens on social media, and the influence of the program has increased. The program itself has also caused wide spread outside the fixed circle with the help of the unique trend of new media platforms. The classic movement "Green waist" in the dance "The Journey of a Legendary Landscape Painting" in the Spring Festival Gala in 2021 has attracted countless netizens to imitate because of its beauty and difficult skills; the highly restored makeup, hair and clothing in "Tang Palace Banquet" caused netizens to re-imitate the popular aesthetic of the Tang Dynasty... New media breaks the communication barriers of traditional media, and the popularity of "going out of the circle" extends to foreign media platforms, promoting the excellent traditional Chinese culture to go overseas, and letting the world understand Chinese culture. Original cultural programs use the form more popular with the public, comply with the current more diversified information receiving habits and the communication environment of all-media links, and realize the penetration of excellent traditional culture.

From the continuous extension of the convergence of media platforms, the cross-media communication of original cultural programs is closely combined with online and offline. "National Treasure" priority in the Bilibili video platform, users through online real-time bullet-screen interaction, participate in cultural content discussions, under the attribute of community culture, the formation of a group of high-viscosity young fans, to create cohesion. Then, "National Treasure" planned a special program "National Treasure · Exhibition Season", and made concerted efforts online and offline, placing 27 national treasures voted by the audience in the Palace Museum Wenhua Hall for exhibition. From online media dissemination to on-site special exhibitions, original cultural programs narrate across media, giving cultural relics continuous vitality and extending the meaning and value of the programs. Today, original cultural programming still needs to delve into the connotations of traditional culture, do a great job in the dynamic integration and dissemination of technology and art, and constantly adapt to the rapidly changing aesthetic choices and spiritual needs of the public.

5. Conclusions

In the era of media integration, original cultural programs push TV culture to a new height through profound cultural connotations. Literature and art are the clarion call for the progress of The Times and can show the style of The Times culture. The Party's 20th National Congress report pointed out that "adhere to creative transformation and innovative development, guided by socialist core values, develop advanced socialist culture, carry forward revolutionary culture, and inherit excellent traditional Chinese culture." While leading original cultural programs to the public's vision, this kind of TV program also explores integration and innovation through the aesthetic characteristics of organic integration of technology and art, combined with network communication and TV communication, and fully reflects the value of the program to art and culture. More cultural programs with rich content and unique forms should appear on the Chinese TV program market, so as to realize the socialist cultural power as soon as possible, keep pace with The Times, tell Chinese stories well, spread excellent culture, and unite the national spirit.

References

- [1] Xinhua News Agency. *General secretary attended the symposium on cultural inheritance and development and delivered an important speech* [Z]. *Central People's Government Website of the People's Republic of China*, 2023, 0602.
- [2] Xinhua Net. *The State Administration of Radio, Film and Television has issued a "salary limit order" to effectively regulate remuneration and combat ratings fraud* [Z]. *Xinhuanet*, 2018,1109.
- [3] Hui Yuesong. *Experience the strong but not cold of classics in immersion—After viewing China in Classics*[J]. *Chinese media studies*, 2022(04):86-88.
- [4] Chen Bo, Peng Xinrui. *A study on the dimension and evaluation of virtual cultural space scenes: A case study of "Yunyu Museum"*[J]. *Jiangnan Forum*, 2020(04):133-144.
- [5] Lu Meiyue, Liu Bing. *Refined sentence: Symbolism and icons: The ritualistic construction of cultural variety shows—An analysis of the visual language in the third season of National Treasure* [J]. *Young journalist*, 2022(08):87-88.
- [6] Yang Shengxuan, Guo Haiwei. *The investigation of the "submergence" of the national style creation show on cultural heritage from a scientific and technological perspective* [J]. *Science and technology think tank*, 2022(03):66-71.

Appendix

This paper is the research result of the 2021 scientific research project "Exploration and Research on the Innovation of the Centennial Theme TV Program" of Sichuan University of Media and Communication.