

Innovative Dissemination and Breaking-out Mechanisms of Traditional Cultural Symbols in the New Media Environment

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of new media has profoundly changed the pattern of cultural dissemination, providing new opportunities for the inheritance and innovation of traditional cultural symbols. This article, starting from the inherent connection between the characteristics of new media and traditional cultural symbols, systematically explores the innovative dissemination paths and breakout mechanisms of traditional cultural symbols in the new media environment. By analyzing core elements such as the empowerment of new media technology, the reconfiguration of communication models, and the reconfiguration of cultural values, it reveals the internal logic of traditional cultural symbols breaking through the barriers of circles and achieving wide dissemination, providing theoretical support and practical references for promoting the creative transformation and innovative development of excellent traditional Chinese culture.

Keywords: New Media Environment; Traditional Cultural Symbols; Innovative Dissemination; Breakthrough Mechanism.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the current era when the digital wave is sweeping the globe, new media has become the core platform for cultural dissemination^[1]. The interactivity, immediacy and immersion of new media provide technical support for the cross-boundary dissemination of traditional cultural symbols. For instance, Henan Satellite TV, through programs such as “The Palace of the Tang Dynasty” and “The Wonderful Trip of the Dragon Boat Festival”, combined cultural symbols like relics and festivals with modern audio-visual technology, and the single program’s viewership exceeded 120 million times, successfully achieving a breakthrough from the cultural circle to the mass market^[2]. However, such successful cases are still in the minority. The majority of traditional cultural symbols’ dissemination is still limited by issues such as symbol mismatch and circle barriers^[3]. Therefore, how to make traditional cultural symbols “spread across circles” through innovative language design has become a key issue in our cultural inheritance and development. The existing research discusses the communication mechanism of traditional cultural symbols in the new media environment from semiotics, communication and cultural studies. From the perspective of semiotics, scholars emphasize the reconstruction of the referential relationship between signifier and signified^[4]. From the perspective of communication, researchers focus on the influence of media technology on communication effect. For example, VR/AR technology creates an immersive scene, which brings a brand-new immersive experience to the tourists visiting Dunhuang Mogao Caves^[5]. From the perspective of cultural studies, scholars point out that the spread of traditional cultural symbols needs to find a balance between “fun and truth”^[6]. For example, “Nezha’s children make trouble in the sea” recreates the oriental symbol through a three-level transcoding mode, which not only retains the cultural core, but also conforms to modern aesthetics, and finally gains more than 5 billion yuan in box office revenue around the world^[7].

2. THE DUAL IMPACT OF THE NEW MEDIA ENVIRONMENT ON THE DISSEMINATION OF TRADITIONAL CULTURAL SYMBOLS

2.1 technical empowerment: expanding the dimension of traditional cultural symbol communication

New media technology has brought new carriers and expressions to the spread of traditional cultural symbols. Technologies such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and mixed reality (MR) can create immersive experience scenes, allowing traditional cultural symbols to break through the limitations of physical space and change from static display to dynamic interaction. For example, the restoration and re-creation of Dunhuang mural by digital technology not only preserves the aesthetic feeling of the original art, but also gives it new vitality through dynamic narration. Blockchain

technology provides security for the digital communication of traditional cultural symbols and promotes the open sharing of cultural resources. The application of artificial intelligence (AI) in content generation, through algorithm recommendation and personalized customization, can accurately match the traditional cultural symbols with the audience's needs and improve the communication efficiency.

2.2 Communication Reconstruction: Challenge the communication mode of traditional cultural symbols

The interactive and decentralized characteristics of new media have brought challenges to the communication mode of traditional cultural symbols^[8]. In the era of traditional media, cultural communication is like a straight line, from “center to periphery”, which is decided by authoritative organizations and elite groups; In the new media environment, user-generated content (UGC) and professional production content (PGC) appear together, and the subjects of communication become diverse. This change makes the spread of traditional cultural symbols encounter two problems: on the one hand, the fragmented spread can easily make cultural symbols lose their original background and lead to misinterpretation of meaning; On the other hand, the tendency of entertainment may destroy the seriousness and depth of traditional cultural symbols. For example, on some short video platforms, traditional operas have been adapted and spread more widely, but their artistic value has been discounted because they want to attract attention too much. How to find a balance between technical assistance and maintaining the original flavor of culture has become a key issue in the innovative communication of traditional cultural symbols.

3. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR INNOVATIVE DISSEMINATION OF TRADITIONAL CULTURAL SYMBOLS

3.1 From the perspective of cultural semiotics: the production and reproduction of symbolic meaning

Cultural semiotics holds that symbols are carriers of meaning transmission, and its meaning production depends on the interactive process of coding and decoding. In the new media environment, the coding method of traditional cultural symbols has changed greatly: from a single text or image expression to a complex symbol system that integrates multiple media. This change requires communicators to rethink the relationship between signifier and signified, and to enhance the visual impact and emotional resonance of symbols through technical means. For example, Palace Museum turns traditional symbols such as “dragon patterns” and “cloud patterns” into modern design languages through digital creative products, which not only retains cultural genes, but also gives them fashion attributes. In the decoding stage, attention should be paid to the cultural background and cognitive differences of the audience, and the hierarchical communication strategy should be adopted to meet the needs of different circles and realize the accurate transmission of symbolic meaning.

3.2 From the perspective of Communication Ecology: Media Ecology and Cultural Adaptation

Communication Ecology emphasizes the dynamic balance among media technology, communicators and cultural environment. In the new media environment, the communication of traditional cultural symbols needs to adapt to the changes of Media Ecology and build a trinity communication system of “technology-content-audience”. Technically, we should make full use of the interactivity and immersion of new media to create attractive communication scenes; In content, it is necessary to dig deep into the contemporary value of traditional cultural symbols and enhance their appeal through story narration and emotional expression; In terms of audience, it is necessary to accurately locate the target group with the help of big data analysis and improve communication efficiency through personalized recommendation. For example, Henan Satellite TV's “Chinese Festival” series combines intangible elements with modern technology, successfully building a bridge between traditional culture and young audiences, and maximizing the communication effect.

3.3 From the perspective of cultural identity theory: symbol communication and identity construction

According to the theory of cultural identity, cultural symbols are important symbols of group identification, and their spreading process is actually the process of building cultural identity. In the new media environment, the spread of traditional cultural symbols can not only convey information, but also stimulate cultural identity through emotional resonance and value sharing. This requires communicators to pay attention to the symbolic meaning and emotional value of symbols, and enhance the sense of belonging and pride of the audience through ritualized communication and collective memory awakening. For example, during the Spring Festival, activities such as “Cloud New Year greetings” and “traditional cultural products” initiated by the video sharing platform strengthened the cultural identity of overseas Chinese and expanded the boundaries of communication.

4. PRACTICAL PATHS FOR THE INNOVATIVE DISSEMINATION OF TRADITIONAL CULTURAL SYMBOLS

4.1 Technology Convergence: Creating an Immersive Communication Experience

Technical integration is the core driving force for the innovative communication of traditional cultural symbols. Restore historical scenes through VR/AR technology, so that the audience can “cross” to a specific era and experience the original context of cultural symbols; Digital reconstruction of cultural relics with the help of 3D modeling and animation technology, giving them dynamic expressive force; Use AI algorithm to analyze user preferences and realize personalized and accurate content generation. For example, the “Digital Dunhuang” project launched by the National Library, through high-precision scanning and virtual roaming technology, allows users to experience the artistic charm of the Mogao Grottoes, greatly enhancing the immersion and participation in communication.

4.2 Content innovation: reconstructing the narrative logic of traditional cultural symbols

Content innovation is the key to the cross-border communication of traditional cultural symbols. We should jump out of the traditional narrative framework, turn from “resource mining” to “value remolding” and reinterpret the connotation of traditional cultural symbols from a modern perspective. On the one hand, focus on the core symbols of Chinese civilization, such as “benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, wisdom and trust” and “harmonious culture”, and deeply explore their contemporary value and social significance; On the other hand, the traditional cultural symbols are integrated into popular cultural scenes by using younger and networked expressions. For example, the domestic animated film “Nezha the Demonic Child” gives a brand-new interpretation to the traditional symbol “Nezha”, endowing it with the modern theme of “resisting fate” and “self-growth”, successfully arousing the emotional resonance of young audiences and achieving a double harvest at the box office.

4.3 Reconstruction of communication mode: Create a diversified interactive communication matrix

The reconstruction of communication mode is the only way for us to expand the influence of traditional cultural symbols. We have to break the boundary between traditional media and new media and build a diversified communication matrix of “long video+short video”, “live broadcast+social media” and “online+offline”. The content of long video focuses on value, and systematically shows the historical context and cultural connotation of traditional cultural symbols through documentaries and special programs; Short video content focuses on expanding influence, attracting audience’s attention through fragmented editing and interesting expression; Live broadcast activities focus on strong interaction, and enhance the audience’s sense of participation through real-time communication and scene display; Social platforms focus on wide communication, and through topic discussion and user co-creation, the explosion point of communication is formed. For example, CCTV’s program “National Treasures” successfully attracted a large number of young viewers through the fusion mode of “star interpretation+cultural relics stories”, which spread synchronously on TV and new media platforms and promoted the cross-border spread of traditional culture.

5. THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE BREAKTHROUGH MECHANISM FOR TRADITIONAL CULTURAL SYMBOLS

5.1 Breakthrough Circle: From Cultural Elite to Mass Communication

The breakthrough of traditional cultural symbols needs to break the original spread in the circle of cultural elites and extend to the mass groups. This requires communicators to lower the acceptance threshold of cultural symbols and use more popular and life-oriented expressions to make them closer to the cognition of ordinary people. For example, the inheritors of traditional crafts show the production process of traditional crafts on the short video platform, and attract the attention of ordinary users with the narrative strategy of “craft+life aesthetics”; Museums develop cultural and creative products, turn cultural symbols of cultural relics into daily necessities, and integrate traditional culture into public life scenes. This “de-elitism” communication strategy can eliminate the distance between the audience and traditional culture, and promote it from “minority hobby” to “mass culture”.

5.2 Intergenerational Breakthrough: From the Old Group to the Young Audience

Intergenerational breakthrough is the key direction for traditional cultural symbols to break through and spread. Young viewers are the main consumer groups in the new media environment, and their cultural needs and aesthetic preferences directly affect the communication effect. It is necessary to create communication products that conform to the cultural context of young people through technical empowerment and content innovation. For example, the game “Black Myth:

Monkey King” is based on “Journey of the Monkey King”, which recreates the traditional symbol “Monkey King” with high-quality pictures and narrative reconstruction, and successfully attracts a large number of young players; Bilibili’s “New Rhythm of National Style” series of videos has built a bridge between young people and traditional culture through ancient music, Hanfu display and other content forms. These cases show that only by meeting the cultural needs of young audiences can the intergenerational transmission and breakthrough of traditional cultural symbols be realized.

5.3 Going International: From Local Communication to Global Sharing

Going international is the ultimate goal of traditional cultural symbols to break the boundaries and spread. Nowadays, there are more and more cultural exchanges all over the world. We need to spread cross-cultural stories and figures to bring traditional cultural symbols to the world stage. On the one hand, we should tap into the universal values of traditional cultural symbols that everyone can understand and tell everyone what they mean today in an internationally understandable way; On the other hand, we should make good use of the global coverage of the new media platform and establish a system that can spread in multiple languages and forms. For example, Li Zeyi’s short video works, with the theme of “Slow Life”, show China’s traditional farming culture and food production, attracting the attention of users around the world and successfully turning traditional cultural symbols into a world language; In addition, Palace Museum and international brands jointly launched joint cultural and creative products, which promoted the symbol “Court Culture” to the international market and made the influence of China culture stronger in the world.

6. CONCLUSION

The new media environment has brought unprecedented opportunities and challenges to the spread of traditional cultural symbols. Through technical empowerment, content innovation and reconstruction of communication mode, traditional cultural symbols have broken through the original boundaries and achieved cross-border development from cultural elites to the public, from old audiences to young groups, from local communication to global sharing. This process not only requires communicators to dig deep into the contemporary value of traditional cultural symbols, but also to establish an innovative mechanism to adapt to the law of new media communication. In the future, with the continuous progress of technology and the continuous evolution of communication ecology, the innovative communication and cross-border mechanism of traditional cultural symbols will be continuously improved, injecting new vitality into the creative transformation and innovative development of Chinese excellent traditional culture.

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