

The Distribution Path of Cultural Documentaries in the Age of Melting Media—Taking "And Yet The Books" as an Example

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Abstract: Facing the arrival of the era of integrated media, "And Yet The Books" draws closer to its audience through the innovation of narrative language, contrasting creative techniques, and a more life-like narrative language. By joining the diversified dissemination subjects and expanding the dissemination path as well as the volume of dissemination, it opens a new door for the dissemination idea of cultural documentaries. In order to adapt to the rhythm of video in the era of integrated media, each episode of "And Yet The Books" uses thirty minutes to string together three stories, expressed in the form of online micro-documentary, while for the main character focuses on choosing one side for portrayal, and the typology of the record to make the content more deeply rooted in people's hearts.

Keywords: Integrated media; Cultural documentary; Narrative language; Distribution paths

1. Introduction

The CPC Central Committee Office and the China General Office of the State Council issued the *Opinions on Accelerating the Deep Integration and Development of the Media* in 2020 and issued a circular requesting all local departments to conscientiously implement them in the light of actual practice. The promulgation of the opinion marks that the deep integration of the media will continue to accelerate the development of media convergence, media convergence is to interconnect the media, and the acceleration of the development of media convergence is also with the continuous development of the network, the interconnection of all things of the beautiful wish to be detached from the relationship. In the context of media convergence, how should cultural documentaries cope with new challenges. "And Yet The Books" offers a new way of thinking and opens new doors.

The documentary takes its name from the short poem "And Yet The Books" by Polish poet Czesław Miłó in which he writes: "But books will be erected on the shelves, privileged to be born, born of men, and born of the sublime and the light." *And Yet The Books* may seem to be describing books and recommending them, but a real downward and deeper look reveals that it all lands on people, and on everyone associated with books. Whether it's the author or the reader or the ferryman editor between the author and the reader, or even the owner of a bookstore, they're all connected by their books and have a richer life because of them.

2. Narrative Language Innovation in the Context of Integrated Media

In December 2019 "And Yet The Books" went live on the video site bilibili until it reached 25,526,000 views so far. 9.8 out of 10 on bilibili's website 9.0 out of 10 on Douban. On July 17, 2020, it was shortlisted for the Magnolia Award at the 26th Shanghai Television Festival, and on October 18, 2020, it won the Best TV Documentary Award at the 30th Golden Eagle Awards of Chinese Television. Unimpressive results and good word-of-mouth have made this documentary, which lasts only thirty minutes per episode and has only five episodes, a small hit on the Internet wave. This cultural documentary is not crowd-pleasing, not trendy, and even a slightly cold niche subject, yet it has managed to win unanimous acclaim on the Internet, where information is so abundant, and the number of broadcasts has continued to rise, while its series of documentaries, "And Yet The Books 2" and "And Yet The Books 3" have all received great deal of attention as well. This cannot be separated from the innovation of its narrative language.

The documentary "And Yet The Books" adds enjoyable animation elements and cheerful soundtrack,

through the presentation form and narrative mode of mass innovation, with the "niche subjects + mass narrative" contrast creation method, to realize the marriage of television and literature, the two-dimensional space of the text into a more intuitive three-dimensional audio-visual works. Three-dimensional audiovisual works.^[1] There are only five episodes in the documentary, and each one is just over thirty minutes long. Every episode has a book and is book-related, but in it there are no classics, no bestseller recommendations, no so-called author interviews, and they are never follow the herd. They put the spotlight on a group of idealists who hide behind their books. Whatever it is Zhu Yue, the book editor of Post Wave Publishing Company, Yu Guolin of the Zhonghua Book Company, the bookstore specializing in the collection and sale of old books and old books at the Old Fragrant House, or the book collector specializing in second-hand books. The creation of the documentary establishes a dialogue field by telling the stories of these protagonists, which makes the language expression closer to the audience and the narrative communication more popular, and also makes it more acceptable to everyone.

Respecting the value of the individual, it combines niche subjects with a new narrative style. As a new media platform, bilibili's main audience is young people and its acceptance of "grand narratives" fluctuates. As the "grand narrative" that was once inherent in the narrative logic of mainstream media documentaries, to a certain extent, in the context of integrated media, the core proposition of thematic narrative works at the level of creation and expression is to innovate the form of expression of the "grand narrative", and to promote the "grand narrative" to realize the turn of the narrative mode in the context of integrated media, make the expression of the theme grounded while allowing the rationality of the audience to be present.^[2] *And Yet The Books* utilizes a more down-to-earth language to record the daily life of the protagonists and the books, while at the same time describing the attitudes and "craftsmanship" of these "idealists".

The use of living narrative language enhances audience acceptance and sets out a clear theme with a unique perspective by starting with a perspective that is relevant but different from that of the book. Under a clear thematic framework, three main characters are chosen for each episode, around whom a specific description of a character event is carried out, focusing on stories related to the book, and focusing on events in the individual's life, to enhance characterization without losing sight of the bigger picture. It allows the audience to recognize books more clearly from their point of view and to learn more about this group of people who are associated with books. It also made everyone realize that a book is not just created when the author writes it, but it takes a lot of hard work in all areas to make the book meet the readers.

"Drawing a circle with the book as the dot and the occupation as the radius" typifies the people involved and enhances the audience's impression of them. For example, an editor in the book "The Sea of Books" describes his work like this: "Once the bench sits, it will be cold for a lifetime." A short but vivid language makes everyone realize the professional life of editors more clearly, and at the same time, it also typifies the editing profession and makes the audience remember it more deeply. There are also translators in the documentary who see their work as "a vocation", or book collectors whose self-indulgence comes through loud and clear. In this group, people have a strong personality and charisma, they can not see the so-called trend wrapped by the times, but only see them in a slow and prudent attitude, in the sea of books, or in the hustle and bustle of the environment to maintain a piece of their own spiritual corner. This group of interesting people is also committed to the "craftsmanship" that we have been advocating.

3. Expanding the volume of communication through multiple communication actors

The multi-platform and multi-media communication method adapts to the communication habits in the era of media convergence. The marketing communication of "And Yet The Books" chooses bilibili, Sina Microblog, Tiktok, Wotobuy and other social network platforms as the main user groups of the youth circle culture to carry out marketing communication, which is more in line with the characteristics of the current information dissemination scenario of fragmentation, shallow reading and visualization, and is more adaptable to multi-environmental and multi-methods of reading needs. At the same time, the strong interactivity of the new media platform is utilized to make up for the limitations of the traditional television medium, which is low in storage, long in cycle and passive in transmission. The current trend is to rejuvenate the documentary audience, and the multi-platform and multi-media distribution method has become an important reason for the great attention paid to "And Yet The Books". According to statistics as of October 2023, "And Yet The Books" has been played 25,526,000 times on the bilibili platform, and "And Yet The Books 2" has been played 36,060,000 times on the

bilibili platform, making it another phenomenal documentary following the "The Story Of Chuaner Season" and "The Guardians of Jiefangxi" documentary series, among others.

The creative team's secondary creation of the documentary's informational content has also been key to the phenomenal distribution. In addition to its own broadcast platform bilibili, many mainstream media also focus on the craftsmanship of the creative team, as well as the characterization of the documentary protagonist. The stories of those who are too late to be shown in the documentary are disseminated through other media platforms and the stories are dug deeper so that everyone can understand the documentary and the people in the documentary more comprehensively through various perspectives. By creating an all-media communication matrix on the new media platform "news portal + video platform + social media + self media", it gives a new direction and idea for the communication matrix of cultural documentaries in the era of media convergence.

Add the voiceover module to the star reputation to increase the body of communication. Compared to the grand narrative style of traditional voice actors, "And Yet The Books" chose Hu Ge, a star actor with his own traffic flow, to dub the story in a more life-like and straightforward language on one hand, and to use the star's reputation on the other hand to carry out a "merging" of traffic to expand the volume of communication. On the day of the launch of "And Yet The Books", Hu Ge tweeted to publicize it, and this kind of "traffic + content" provides a new way of thinking for the creation and dissemination of cultural documentaries in the era of integrated media. What can't be ignored is the fit between Hu Ge himself and the documentary, and the cultural temperament he carries with him is a perfect match for the documentary.

The positioning of the whole program is also an important reason for the success of this program, in the whole documentary not only about the book but also about the people related to the book. Luo Yingluan, one of the creators of the documentary, puts it this way, "No matter how noisy and impetuous the times are, no matter how anxious and desperate the human heart is, but there are still books." And this is also their original intention of making this film, when the form of mass media is constantly developing and changing, the print media seems to be under attack, but different media have different meanings to the public. McLuhan believed that "the medium is an extension of the person: the medium is an extension or expansion of each sensory faculty; the print medium is an extension of the sensory faculty, radio is an extension of the auditory faculty, and television is a combined extension of the visual and auditory faculties."^[3] In the era of information fragmentation, reading has become an increasingly difficult thing to do, but no matter how the river of history develops, the real touch that paper brings to us, the significance of words for us, is still indelible, and they also hope that through a film they can record all sorts of book lovers in this era, and capture the wonderful stories related to books. That's why books are spoken of everywhere in this documentary, and people everywhere, and each book is imbued with power, memories, and carries the stories and memories of every different book lover of this era.

4. The content structure of And Yet The Books

In *Outline of Communication* Schramm mentions, "All television programs have an educational function, and people's primary motivation for watching television is for pleasure, but we must not underestimate how much is unintentionally learned in the midst of that pleasure."^[4] In *And Yet The Books*, audiences can see that the original book is not just a communication and exchange between author and reader, but also contains the thoughts and heart of the editor, the ferryman. Reflecting the current situation of traditional media and the publishing industry from one story to another, the program allows viewers to understand and feel what the book industry is like from the side, and Learn how a book is born while watching the program.

The theme of each episode is set out clearly and concisely, and readers can visualize the main content from the title of each episode. The first episode, "The Story of Boating in the Sea of Books", is from the perspective of editors and translators, and the second episode, "The Fantastic Drift of Used Books", tells the story of used books during their migration over the years, and clearly expresses the power carried by used books. The third episode, "The Wonderful World of Picture Books," begins with the statement that "Picture books are a gift from adults to children" bridging the gap between the world of adults and the world of children. The fourth episode, "The Designer's Paper Kingdom", looks at the book from the perspective of a binding designer, giving the book a form that matches its content. In the final episode, "A Guide to Reading in the Fast Era", we explore the ways of reading in this fast era, and suggest to the audience how to keep the fire of reading burning, rather than passing like a shooting star.

For example, in the second short story of "The Sea of Books", Yu Guolin, an editor at the Zhonghua Book Company, spent thirteen years publishing "Zheng Tianting's Diary of the Southwest Associated Universities". Starting from why this book was published, let us understand that in this book, because of Mr. Zheng's in-depth observation of the society and concern for people's livelihood and suffering, as a diary, Mr. Zheng Tianting recorded a lot of information that can reflect the life of the time. The records of living information including but not limited to prices, salaries, subsidies, etc., as well as the changes about them, are detailed and clear, and have also become the first-hand information for the study of economic history.^[5] Japanese air raids, professors, students "run the alarm" and other records, the time, place, manner, characters and many other elements are included, but also become a precious material for the study of the history of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. This book serves as a record of eight years of life at the Southwest United University, in which the poverty and perseverance of the scholars of the time are recounted to the point of truth and are read with admiration. *Zheng Tianting's Diary of the Southwest Associated Universities* with its large scope, wide range of contents, detailed records, and rigorous writing, has become an indispensable historical material for the study of the history of SWAU, modern academic history, educational history, cultural history, social history, and economic history, and it centrally embodies the spirit of a generation of scholars who have persevered in the study of the University in the midst of arduous and desperate conditions. Starting from the story of an editor who spent thirteen years to write a meaningful book for social research and historical research, it also let the audience directly feel why editing is "a bench, a lifetime of cold" work, and let everyone understand that a good book is not only a book, but also a carrier of social civilization and historical memory.

The clear subject of the audience has been determined. From the analysis of the platform, bilibili is one of the video websites with the most dense gathering of young people at present. The overall program is also full of unique bilibili platform style, and the documentary is interspersed with lovely illustrations, light-hearted voice-overs, various lovely protagonists, and humorous language style. They don't use obscure specialized words to make the overall style of the program seem so "highbrow", instead, they choose words that are easier for people to accept and understand, making the overall program more "grounded". In the era of reading for all, young people's thirst for culture and the need for reading is gradually increasing, but with the fragmented rhythm and the increasingly frenetic environment, how to make them pick up a book again with pleasure and read a good book with a quiet mind has become the main purpose of this documentary. Simple line caricatures and witty and cute language voice-overs all make this documentary more appealing to the younger crowd.

From the language expression, no more "high up in the cold" of the text Zouzou commentary, as "secondary" started bilibili chose to organic integration with youth culture, and the youth culture. The use of a light and lively tone of words becomes a strength throughout the documentary that makes it impossible to ignore. In the second season, "The library, the quietest corner of a city, but the most active ideas, it preserves the seeds of civilization, but also nourishes new knowledge of the future, it is the peach blossom source for some people to rest their souls, and the window for others to look at the world". The opening narration establishes the library's position in easy-to-understand but uncluttered language. The language throughout the documentary manages to make you smile and still feel warmth everywhere you look. The 30-minute duration determines that the whole documentary is presented in the form of a micro-documentary, so it is inevitably impossible to cover everything in terms of content, but these lively words and expressions, adapted to the new media communication channels, also make it easier for young people to empathize with the expression. After all, in the fast-paced era, short and concise documentaries are also more appealing to young people.

5. Conclusions

Mr. Chen Hong once said that a documentary is a car, and ideas are the goods inside. It follows that documentaries are also bearers of ideas. *And Yet The Books* also carries the message that in the current era of information fragmentation, it opens up a "paradise" for everyone to meditate and read. We begin to look again at the purpose of reading, the meaning, and why I want to read, and as one idea comes back to mind, we also begin to pick up a book again.

The whole documentary is full of human touch. In the director's note of director Luo Yingluan wrote this paragraph: "A thirty-minute documentary is always limited in what it can say, so hopefully we can do better next time. Back to the beginning, our film is just a small spark to ignite your reading thoughts, but to keep it burning, you have to pick up the book again and again and keep reading without looking back." In this impatient and noisy era, a corner for rest and relaxation is especially

important. *And Yet The Books* tells us that perhaps this corner is the moment we pick up a book, no matter how noisy the outside world is, no matter how confused the heart is, or perhaps there are a lot of things in life that are not as good as we would like them to be, and yet the books.

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