

# Research on the Innovation of Traditional Cultural Programs in the Era of Convergence Media

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**Abstract:** Traditional culture is the "root" of the Chinese nation, and traditional cultural programs are an important part of the construction of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics. In the context of convergence media, traditional cultural programs, as a carrier of national sentiment, have enhanced national cohesion and identity, and promoted creative transformation and innovative development of culture.<sup>[1]</sup> However, traditional cultural programs are also facing problems such as lack of solemnity and seriousness, crude production and single audience. This paper explores the innovative ideas of traditional cultural programs through the organic combination of traditional culture and technological empowerment, narrative system, and idol guidance.

**Keywords:** Convergence media; Traditional culture; Empathic communication; Embodied communication

## 1. Introduction

Culture is the sum of a nation's material and spiritual wealth, and cultural self-confidence is a nation's firm confidence in its own cultural value and vitality. For a long time, cultural programs have occupied an important position in the construction of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics as a carrier for spreading excellent traditional culture and improving the cultural literacy of all people. Since the explosion of large-scale traditional cultural programs such as "Readers" and "National Treasure" in 2017, there have been a steady stream of high-quality traditional cultural programs in recent years, such as "Roundtable", "Thirteen Invitations", and "I'm Reading on an Island". These programs are colorful in form, fascinating in content, and internationally influential, forming a cultural phenomenon. In the contemporary context of convergence media resources and content, cultural programs face multiple challenges from multiple media and cultures, and need to explore and innovate in order to maintain their vitality and vigor.

## 2. The mission of traditional cultural programs in the era of convergence media

### 2.1. Building national identity and enhancing international influence

National cohesion is the spiritual bond that binds the people of a country together, and national identity is the source of a sense of spiritual belonging for everyone in that country. Our country has clearly put forward the requirement of "enhancing the influence of Chinese civilization's dissemination power", which means that we should construct the national sentiment of traditional culture internally and strengthen the international influence of traditional culture externally. Traditional cultural programs in the era of melting media play an important role in the construction of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics with its advantages of wide dissemination and strong sense of the times and nationalism. Traditional culture programs include both popular cultural explanations and the conveyance of socialist core values, allowing viewers to learn and understand traditional culture and traditional thinking, and at the same time, internalize the core of the Chinese spirit of gentleness and generosity, knowledge of etiquette and promoting goodness contained in traditional culture and be nurtured by the heart. For example, in the "Chinese Poetry Conference", a wave of poetry appreciation has been triggered through different forms of competition, and the judges' understanding and appreciation of poems have become a cultural phenomenon by nurturing and inculcating the people's cultural literacy like spring breeze and rain. Our country has different cultural tasks and needs at different stages of development, and traditional cultural programs can, with their vigorous vitality, guide viewers to establish a correct world view,

outlook on life and values, and improve the cultural literacy and cultural connotation of the whole society.

## ***2.2. Promoting the creative transformation of culture and inducing its innovative development***

Each era has its own cultural characteristics and cultural needs. Under the background of convergence media, if traditional cultural programs want to be everlasting and new, the forms of expression should not be generalized and stereotyped, but should be creatively transformed and innovatively developed in accordance with the characteristics and needs of the times, and give the programs new connotation of the times. For example, the large-scale cultural program "Chinese Characters Dictation Competition", which has exploded in popularity before, has done a good job of innovating the culture of Chinese characters. As digital media become more and more developed and people become more and more accustomed to typing, the opportunity to handwrite Chinese characters becomes less and less, and the phenomenon of forgetting to put pen to paper often occurs, and the survival of Chinese characters is challenged to a certain extent. The program is designed to bring the love of Chinese characters back into the public eye through a competition between the best and the brightest. In this process, China's excellent traditional culture can be revitalized and have a more lasting vitality and momentum. The process of producing traditional cultural programs is also a process of "abandonment". Those parts that meet the requirements of the times and have positive energy will be retained and passed on, while those feudal dregs that do not meet the requirements of the times will be discarded promptly. At the same time, the same culture will be given different connotations in different times, such as the "Spirit of Lei Feng" of doing good deeds without leaving one's name, or the "Spirit of Craftsmanship" of doing only one thing in one's life, which will have different forms of expression in the new historical period. In this process, traditional culture is able to renew and develop itself, becoming stronger and more powerful as the times progress.

## **3. The traditional cultural program survival predicament in the era of convergence media**

### ***3.1. Popular elements dominate and traditional culture becomes a mere formality***

In the era of convergence media, traditional cultural programs tend to cater to the audience, from the enhancement of technology, the integration of other cultures to the choice of expression, all of which are based on the underlying logic of satisfying the psychological needs of the audience, gradually broadening the audience from a narrow range to achieve the purpose of "out of the circle". The advantage of doing so is that it can quickly capture the interest of the audience, choose the current popular elements such as "black technology" and program integration, so that the program audience increased, but the defect is that it is very easy to fall into the "pleasing" circle, one-dimensional use of popular elements to fill in the self will be lost, so that the program is gradually homogenized, and dissolved the original media personality contained therein. For example, although the combination of traditional musical instruments and technological effects in "INCHINA" has increased the popularity of the program among young people, it has inevitably weakened or even dissolved the classical temperament of traditional musical instruments, and has become a modernized expression of rock and hustle and bustle. There is also such a problem in "Youth Guard Artist", the combination of acrobatics and film and television stage, the combination of Peking Rhythm Drums and modern technology is indeed very innovative, but the unique flavor of traditional acrobatics and drums can not be shown in its original form, and can only rely on modern technology to send out a weak light. The effect of such "noisy" type of program often fails to achieve its original purpose of broadcasting, or even " $1+1 < 2$ ". Therefore, how to grasp this "degree" in such programs is particularly important.

### ***3.2. Loss of solemnity and seriousness as a result of the creation of flashpoints for the sake of attention***

In the era of media integration, "data is king" seems to be the common pursuit of all kinds of media, "pan-entertainment" and "consumerism" are prevalent, and it is difficult for traditional cultural programs to escape such a "strange circle". If we don't examine our own way of coming in time, it is easy to lose the original value of perseverance, distort the connotation of traditional culture, and dissolve its seriousness and solemnity. In order to attract the audience's attention, some programs will often deliberately create some "explosive point", a series of "spoof" of traditional culture. For example, in the skit "Mulan enlisted" in the "Top Funny Comedian", Jia Ling played Hua Mulan dressed in ancient costumes, gnawing on roasted chicken, portraying her as a gluttonous, unfilial, unambitious, fearful of death, deceived by her father to serve in the army, and seeing a strong man is even more nosebleeds of the vulgar image. The original positive image of Hua Mulan as a woman is distorted, and the typical

characters of traditional culture are vilified, making it difficult for the audience to accept. In the program, Zhou Libo even scandalized the traditional Chinese dress, this kind of spoof reprocessing, remanufacturing usually does not achieve the effect of innovation, but will cause the audience's disgust, the seriousness and solemnity of the traditional cultural program itself has been lost, and the significance of its promotion of family and national sentiment, and the increase of the national cohesion has been dissolved. Therefore, it is not desirable to blindly create "explosive points" to attract the audience, how to arouse interest to retain the audience, but also to maintain its solemn and serious characteristics, has become a traditional cultural programs need to explore the problem.

### ***3.3. Single scope of program audience and lack of cultural leadership***

In the era of convergence media, various "subcultures" are prevalent, and there seems to be a "generation gap" between different age groups, so that the cultural community has been split into many small-scale interest layers. In people's stereotypical impression, traditional culture seems to belong to the interest layer of the middle-aged and the elderly, such as traditional opera, history and scripture and other traditional cultural programs, more and more out of touch with the younger groups, the inheritance of these traditional cultures is also facing great problems. The ancient Chinese classic opera, Huangmei Opera, is seldom inherited by young people nowadays, and is even regarded as unintelligible and boring by some young people, while European and American pop culture, such as street dance, rap and skateboarding, is prevalent among young people, and popular culture programs such as THE RAP OF CHINA have become popular and well-known to all households, and have been widely welcomed for their strong and rebellious cultural formations. However, as a cross-cultural form of subculture, these programs often simply copy and replicate the styles of American hip-hop artists, losing Chinese characteristics and Chinese expression. Especially when creating works for contemporary young people who are increasingly pursuing local cultural identity, only works with "Chineseness" can realize the reproduction of identity in cultural consumption. Therefore, traditional cultural programs need to be explored and innovated, so that they can be accepted by young people, and Chinese traditional culture can become "popular culture" again.

## **4. The traditional cultural program innovation policy in the era of convergence media**

### ***4.1. "Culture + technology": moderate use of science and technology to drive physical communication***

With the development of the era of convergence media, "data is king" has gradually become the biggest pursuit of some programs, "crudely made" of the prevalence of the wind of shoddy production, so that the quality of cultural programs of varying quality, science and technology, and other elements of the "clamor for the main body" often occurs. Therefore, the control of the "degree" of the use of technology is crucial. Moderate technological empowerment driven by embodied communication can not only become a good medium for cultural output seeking a common language, but also bring the audience a different experience through the immersive advancement of human-scene integration. In order to create scenarios and colorful effects in embodied communication, it is necessary to use virtual reality technologies such as VR and AR, artificial intelligence technologies for human-computer integration, and various computer network technologies to set up the stage, adjust the lighting, and assist with sound effects, and even create virtual characters and display virtual scenes.<sup>[2]</sup>The integration of culture and science and technology can bring the audience an immersive artistic experience, make the audience more intuitively experience the audio-visual feast brought about by culture, and more easily accept the cultural ideas shown in the program and the conveyance of the excellent traditional Chinese values. For example, in Henan TV's dance performance "Palace Banquet in Tang Dynasty", through the appropriate addition of 5G + AR technology, a number of cultural relics such as Jiahu Bone Flute, Lotus and Crane Rectangular Hu, Riding Map, and Beauties Wearing Flowers, etc., were presented on the stage in a virtual form, so as to let the audience feel the grandeur of the Tang Palace in those years. In the "Upped New ,Old Palace", in some cases through the three-dimensional animation of the three-dimensional display, the audience will be able to directly understand the complexity of the corner of the mortise and tenon process, in an easy-to-understand way to explore the subtleties of which to appreciate the wisdom of the ancient working people and creativity. In the cultural program "Bravo Youngsters", which takes young people as the main body of expression, the emergence of the role of "Plume" has injected fresh blood into the traditional cultural program, realizing a new leap forward in cultural programs. Through the appropriate combination of artificial intelligence technology, the performance characteristics of Meipai Peking Opera are perfectly reproduced into the virtual character's every move, and virtual reality technology also allows

this virtual character to compete with real players on the same stage, realizing the fusion of classical and modern, traditional and fashionable, and making it easier for young people to accept. Empowering embodied communication through science and technology is the only way to seek a common language of culture and make traditional culture go farther. However, it is worth noting that the use of technology must be moderate and not overpowering. Appropriate combination of science and technology with traditional culture can add interest and novelty to the program, but if there are too many elements of science and technology that overshadow the sharpness of traditional culture itself, it will be difficult to achieve the expected broadcasting effect and broadcasting significance of the program.

#### ***4.2. "Culture + storytelling": content is king and empathetic communication triggers emotional resonance***

In the context of the era of convergence media, traditional cultural programs are constantly challenged by new media and short videos, as well as the influence of various international and domestic subcultures. For example, Li Ziqi, who burst into flames some time ago, has succeeded in cultural exportation with his short videos shot with the background of life in rural idleness and the process of food production that have exploded both at home and abroad. Therefore, the traditional cultural programs need to do "both good and popular", not only to be based on the deep cultural heritage, read and understand the connotation of traditional culture, to maintain their own solemnity and seriousness of the advantages of the mainstream media to take the lead, but also to actively innovate in the form of a more innovative, contemporary way to retain the audience, to avoid falling into the dull and uninteresting "didactic propaganda". Through empathetic communication, mobilizing the audience's emotions in the form of storytelling, triggering the audience's sense of cultural identity and sense of cultural belonging, and bringing profound and difficult-to-understand cultural ideas and ancient cultural relics with rich connotations to life in front of the audience, it not only leaves a deep impression on the audience, but also helps more people to understand and read the profound connotations behind these cultures. For example, in the large-scale traditional cultural program "National Treasure", there is a touching historical story behind each piece of treasure, and through the narration of these stories, the audience is able to get a glimpse of the past and present life of these treasures and decipher the genetic code of Chinese culture. And new for 2022, "I'm Reading on an Island" features guests such as Yu Hua and Su Tong, who convey the weight of words and human emotions through their conversations and storytelling. The program opens with a reminiscence of Shi Tiesheng's story, describing him as a man "full of love for the world," and his deep remembrance of his late friend makes the audience weep and is deeply touching. It can be seen that the emotional power contained in culture is infinite, and cultural empathy will cross time and space at a certain moment, hitting the audience's heartstrings and generating a resonance between culture and culture to achieve the desired communication effect.

#### ***4.3. "Culture + Idol": playing the role of an icon to lead and broaden the scope of the audience***

In the environment of convergence media, data algorithms are becoming more and more accurate, making information people received gradually narrowed, and "amusing ourselves to death" prevails. Only by accurately capturing and combining with the audience's interests can traditional cultural programs help to broaden the age group of the audience and contribute to the dissemination and promotion of traditional culture. And inviting stars to endorse traditional culture can stimulate the audience's interest in watching, increase the discussion, and these idols can also use their own influence to promote the cultural atmosphere of the whole society. Such as the popular traditional cultural program "National Treasure", the introduction of 27 "national treasure guardian", by the current flow of stars, each treasure has its own star "national treasure guardian", by these stars to tell the "big country heavy weapon" of the past and present life.<sup>[3]</sup> Through the core elements of the program, it can be seen that the program tries to create a connection between artifacts and people, bringing contemporary people closer to historical artifacts. "China in Classics" is an innovative form of celebrities acting in dramas, with the expression of "drama + film + cultural interviews", telling the origin and flow of the canonical books in the 5,000 years of history, as well as the glittering stories in the books.<sup>[4]</sup> The "Contemporary Reader" is played by Sa Beining, which is a bold and innovative take on the traditional host's function. For "Ancient Readers," each episode highlights a major character through whom the canon is visualized, personified, and storytold. Through the colorful performances, the actors and the historical figures in the canonical books opened a dialogue between the ancient and modern times spanning thousands of years, and told the audience the literati style and philosophical thoughts contained therein with easy-to-understand explanations, which aroused widespread concern and discussion, and achieved a good dissemination effect. At the same time, this also requires the flow of stars to do to discipline themselves, improve their

own cultural cultivation, play a leading role, in order to help the formation of a good social and cultural climate.

## 5. Conclusions

The development of science and technology has accelerated the arrival of the era of convergence media, and in the face of the blossoming market competition of various media and the market chaos of data as the king, crude production and other good and bad market, the traditional cultural programs urgently need to improve their own competitiveness, give up the traditional clichéd narrative system, take modern science and technology as a strong support, and get rid of the limitations of the age of the audience in the traditional media, so as to seek for a more long-term development in the trend of the era of convergence media. Only through the organic combination of traditional culture with technological empowerment, narrative system, and data guidance can we truly carry forward the core socialist values, promote the creative transformation and innovative development of traditional culture, construct national sentiments and national identity, play the leading role of culture in the new era, and tell China's story in a more vibrant and dynamic manner.

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