

International Communication Strategies for National Style Dance Programs

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ABSTRACT

Under the wave of globalization, culture has become an important part of the competition for national comprehensive strength, and the international dissemination of national style dance, as a vivid carrier of Chinese traditional culture, is of great significance to enhance the national cultural soft power. This article focuses on Henan TV's variety show "Dance Millennium". This paper focuses on Henan TV's variety show "Dance Millennium", uses theories related to communication and cultural studies to analyse the innovative initiatives and practical experience of the show in the process of international communication of national style dance, and sums up the effective international communication strategies of the national style dance show, so as to provide useful theoretical references and practical reference for the promotion of China's outstanding traditional culture to the world.

KEYWORDS

National style dance; International communication; "Dancing millennium"; Cultural soft power; Communication strategy

1 Introduction

In the era of globalisation, cultural communication builds an important bridge for inter-country exchanges, and the modern presentation and international dissemination of traditional culture is a key way to enhance national cultural influence. National Style Dance is a clever fusion of traditional Chinese dance elements and contemporary art aesthetics, and has become a new focus in the field of cultural communication in recent years due to its unique artistic appeal. Henan Satellite Television launched "Dance Millennium" in the innovative form of "dance + history", vividly demonstrating the deep heritage of traditional Chinese culture, the programme set off a frenzy in the country at the same time, but also gradually stepped into the international arena, triggering a wide range of concerns and discussions ^[1].

From a realistic background, as China's international status continues to improve, the world's attention to Chinese culture is increasing, but due to cultural differences, communication methods and other factors, the international dissemination of traditional Chinese culture still faces many challenges. In cross-cultural communication, the phenomenon of cultural discounts is common, and many excellent traditional cultural works fail to give full play to their influence because they are difficult to be understood by audiences from other cultural backgrounds ^[2]. As an intuitive and infectious art form, national style dance has the potential to cross language barriers, yet how to make it recognised and accepted in the international market is an urgent problem to be solved at present. The success of Dance for the Millennium at home has laid the foundation for its international dissemination, but its dissemination effect overseas, the problems it faces and the experiences it can learn from are all worthy of in-depth study.

This paper explores the effective strategies of national style dance programmes in international dissemination through a comprehensive analysis of the content creation, dissemination channels and cross-cultural adaptation of Dance Millennium. The study adopts the literature research method to sort out the domestic and international literature on cultural communication, cross-cultural communication, and dance art communication to provide theoretical support for this study; it uses the case study method to take Dance Millennium as the object of the study, and analyse in depth the characteristics of the programme, the communication methods and the communication effects; at the same time, it will also be combined with the content analysis method, to quantify and qualitatively analyse the cultural symbols and the narrative style in the programme. Analysis ^[3].

2 Content innovation and national style expression in dancing millennium

2.1 The fusion of historical narrative and dance language

"Dancing for a Thousand Years" takes the dynasties of Chinese history as a clear vein, from Xia, Shang and Zhou to Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties, organically combining many classic dance works, such as "Night Banquet at the Tang Palace", "Water Fugue of the God of Luo", "Confucius", "Lillian's Journey", etc., with the ups and downs of historical stories, and with the help of vivid dance language, it will re-present the dusty traditional cultural scenes in front of the eyes of the audience. Taking "Tang Palace Night Banquet" as an example, the work is based on the Tang Dynasty music and dance, and the dancers are dressed in exquisite Tang Dynasty costumes with patterns borrowed from the style of Tang Dynasty murals and fabrics, which are brightly coloured without losing their elegance. Through dynamic body movements, such

as light dance steps and elegant gestures, together with carefully designed costumes and props, such as imitation Tang dynasty musical instruments and utensils, they perfectly restored the prosperous life scene of the Tang dynasty court. The dancers, sometimes playful and sometimes dignified, portrayed the life of women in the Tang court to the fullest.

Another example is the dance work "Confucius", which takes the life of Confucius as a clue and shows his experience of travelling around the world and preaching through dance. The dancers demonstrated Confucius' firm beliefs and unyielding spirit through their vigorous and powerful movements; through their soothing dance posture, they showed Confucius' care for his disciples and his pursuit of rituals and music. The whole dance incorporates the thoughts and spirit of Confucius, so that the audience can feel the profound connotation of Confucian culture while enjoying the dance.

This "dance + history" narrative breaks the boring and abstract nature of traditional history communication, and transforms the original abstract cultural symbols into concrete and vivid artistic expression. For international audiences, who may lack in-depth knowledge of Chinese history, dance is an intuitive art form that can help them cross the barrier of historical knowledge and understand the connotation of traditional Chinese culture more easily. Through the historical stories embedded in dance, international audiences can gradually come into contact with and learn about Chinese history in the enjoyment of beauty, opening a window for further understanding of Chinese culture. For example, after watching Night Banquet in the Tang Palace, overseas audiences may become interested in the history, costumes and music of the Tang Dynasty, and then take the initiative to learn about related cultural knowledge.

2.2 Modernisation and translation of traditional elements

While adhering to the core of traditional dance, the programme boldly incorporates modern technology and artistic techniques, achieving a perfect fusion of tradition and modernity. Luo Shen Shui Fu" is an outstanding representative of this concept, the work uses advanced underwater photography technology, during the shooting process, the photographer needs to overcome the underwater light, buoyancy and other difficulties, through the precise control of the lens, to capture the dancers' every movement. In Cao Zhi's "Luoshen Fu", the beautiful mood of "fluttering like a thrill, graceful like a swimming dragon" is transformed into a dynamic and ethereal dance picture.

In addition to "Luoshen Shui Fu", "Silk Road Flower Rain" also excels in modernised translations of traditional elements. Inspired by Dunhuang frescoes, the work refines and innovates the dance gestures in the frescoes, incorporating modern dance techniques and expressions. In the stage design, holographic projection technology was used to project elements such as flying skies and Buddha statues from Dunhuang murals onto the stage, echoing with the dancers' performances and creating a combination of real and imaginary effects. Let the audience enjoy the dance at the same time, as if into the Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes, feel the mystery and magnificence of Dunhuang culture. Let the audience enjoy the dance at the same time, as if into the Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes, feel the mystery and magnificence of Dunhuang culture.

This innovation not only makes traditional dance break through the limitations of time and space, but also makes its presentation more in line with the viewing habits of modern audiences. In international communication, the use of modern technology can attract the attention of international audiences, especially young groups, who have a higher pursuit of fresh and unique visual experience. Through modernised translations, "Luoshen Shui Fu" allows international audiences to feel the charm of combining traditional Chinese art with modern technology, thus making it easier to accept and love the national style of dance. According to statistics, the spread of "Luoshen Shui Fu" on overseas social media has attracted the attention and discussion of a large number of young users, and many overseas netizens have expressed that they were shocked by this unique art form.

2.3 Emotionally resonant value delivery

In the work, women are no longer a symbol of weakness, but have their own thoughts and strength. The movements of the dancers are sometimes gentle and soothing, like a weak willow holding the wind, and sometimes strong and powerful, like a sharp sword coming out of its sheath, reflecting the state and emotions of women in different situations. This portrayal of women is in line with the concept of gender equality advocated by modern society.

Jingzhong Reward the Country" is a dance work full of family and national sentiments. The dancers, dressed in armour and holding weapons, showed the determination and courage of the generals to protect the country and kill the enemy through their impassioned movements and determined eyes. In the dance, the cries of the generals and the clash of weapons are intertwined, creating a strong atmosphere of war and making the audience feel a strong sense of patriotism.

Human emotions are common, no matter how different the cultural backgrounds are, emotions such as the love of family and country and the pursuit of human beauty can resonate. By tapping into these common human emotions and incorporating the values of traditional Chinese culture, Dancing for the Millennium enables international audiences to feel the sincere emotions embedded in the process of enjoying the dance, thus transcending cultural differences and developing a sense of identity and goodwill towards Chinese culture. Overseas audiences, after watching "Jing Zhong Hui Guo", expressed that they were infected by the patriotic spirit of the work. Although they may not know much about the

historical background of China, this love for the country is something they can understand and appreciate.

3 Expansion and integration of channels for international dissemination of dancing the millennium

3.1 Global communication based on new media platforms

In today's digital era, new media platforms have become an important venue for cultural communication. Dancing for the Millennium makes full use of internationally renowned social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other platforms to set up an official account, and releases dance clips, behind-the-scenes footage, creation stories and other content in a targeted manner. These contents are mostly presented in the form of short videos, usually less than a few minutes in length, adapting to the fragmented reading habits of overseas users.

In order to improve the dissemination effect, the programme team will formulate different content release strategies according to the characteristics of different platforms and user groups. On YouTube, full-length versions of the dance and behind-the-scenes production documentaries of relatively long duration are released to satisfy users' demand for in-depth content; on Facebook and Twitter, dance clips and related news and information are released to interact with users in a timely manner; and on Instagram, beautiful dance pictures and short videos are released to attract the attention of young users.

For example, the overseas short video of "Luoshen Water Fugue" quickly attracted attention after its release, with the number of broadcasts exceeding 10 million. Many overseas users left messages in the comment section, expressing their feelings with words such as "shocking", "breathtakingly beautiful" and "amazing", which fully reflects the remarkable effect of the dissemination. The interactivity of the new media platform also aided the programme's dissemination. Users could participate in the dissemination process by liking, commenting and sharing, forming a fission-type dissemination and expanding the international influence of the national style dance. Some famous overseas bloggers also commented on and recommended "Luoshen Shui Fu", further increasing the popularity of the work.

In addition, the programme team will also adjust the content and strategy based on the feedback from overseas users. If a dance clip is popular on a certain platform, the team will increase the promotion of that platform and release more related content; if users show a strong interest in the background story of a dance, the team will release related explanatory videos and articles to satisfy users' needs.

3.2 Leveraging international cultural activities and cooperation

The team of "Dancing Millennium" actively participated in various international art festivals and cultural exchange activities, which built an important platform for the programme to go international. In addition to presenting "Tang Palace Night Banquet" at the Milan Design Week in Italy, the team has also participated in internationally renowned events such as the Cannes International Film Festival in France and the New York International Dance Festival in the United States. At these events, the dancers of "Dancing the Millennium" gave live performances, and their brilliant interpretations attracted the attention of a large audience, including cultural officials from various countries, members of the arts community and the general public.

At the same time, the team also organises cultural lectures in conjunction with the performances to introduce the creative background, historical origins and cultural connotations of the works to overseas audiences. During the lectures, experts and scholars will explain in detail the cultural symbols and historical stories embedded in the dances, so that overseas audiences can gain a deeper understanding of traditional Chinese culture. For example, during the introduction of "Night Banquet in the Tang Palace", experts will explain the historical background, clothing features and music and dance culture of the Tang Dynasty, so that the audience can understand the meaning and value expressed by the dance. This combination of live performances and cultural lectures enhances the immersive experience of overseas audiences and gives them a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the national style of dance.

In addition, the programme has also cooperated with international streaming platforms such as Netflix and HBO to promote multilingual translation and overseas distribution of the content. During the translation process, the team hires professional translators and cultural consultants to ensure that the translated content is accurate, and at the same time, takes into account the cultural differences of different countries and regions to make appropriate adjustments and adaptations to the content. For example, when translating some historical allusions and cultural terms, annotations and explanations are added to help overseas audiences understand them. Netflix has a huge subscriber base around the world, and through its platform, Dancing for the Millennium is able to reach more audiences in different countries and regions, further expanding its communication coverage. This kind of cooperation not only helps to enhance the programme's international popularity, but also provides a broader channel for the international dissemination of Chinese culture. According to statistics, "Dancing Millennium" entered the list of popular programmes in many countries and regions within a short period of time after its launch on Netflix.

3.3 Building a "user-generated content" communication ecosystem

Dance Millennium encourages overseas users to make secondary creations of dance works, such as adapting dance moves, imitating performances, making commentary videos and drawing dance illustrations. The programme team will launch secondary creation challenges on the official social media, setting up awards and prizes to attract users' participation. This approach breaks down the boundaries between transmitters and recipients in traditional communication, forming a communication chain of "official content + user creation".

Overseas users' secondary creations are often closer to the local cultural context and aesthetic habits, which can make the national style dance spread locally in a more natural and acceptable way. For example, some overseas dance enthusiasts imitated the dance movements of "Tang Palace Night Banquet" and innovated them with local dance styles, making videos and posting them on social media, which triggered a new wave of attention. These adaptations have retained the core elements of "Tang Palace Night Banquet" while incorporating local cultural characteristics, allowing more overseas audiences to understand and love the national style of dance.

Some overseas bloggers also produce commentary videos on Dancing the Millennium, interpreting the dance works from different perspectives, such as analysing them in terms of history, culture and art. These explanatory videos provide overseas audiences with more ways to learn about the national style of dance and help them better understand the connotation of the work. Meanwhile, dance illustrations drawn by overseas users have also been widely spread on social media. These illustrations are in different styles, some realistic and some abstract, showing users' unique understanding and love of dance works.

This kind of interactive communication not only reduces the distance of cultural communication, but also enhances the sense of participation and identification of overseas audiences with the national style dance, making the communication effect more lasting and deeper. Through the secondary creation of users, the influence of national style dance has been expanding, forming a good communication ecology.

4 Optimising international communication strategies for national style dance programme

4.1 Content level: strengthening the recognition and inclusiveness of cultural symbols

Cultural symbols are an important bridge between national style dance and international audiences, and it is crucial to refine the core cultural symbols. From the patterns of traditional costumes, the tones of musical instruments to the gestures of rituals, such as the wide robe and big sleeves of Hanfu, the distant sound of the guqin, and the solemn connotation of the clasping fist salute, they can all be used as representative elements. Incorporating these elements into the choreography of dance movements, through repetition and close-up presentation, international audiences will gradually become familiar with and remember these symbols in the process of watching, so as to deepen their impression of traditional Chinese culture. For example, the ethereal beauty of Hanfu is shown many times in the dance, so that the international audience will have a deep memory of the Hanfu as a cultural symbol, and then develop an interest in Chinese dress culture.

In terms of musical instruments, the performance of traditional instruments such as guqin, guzheng and flute can be incorporated into the dance, so that international audiences can feel the charm of traditional Chinese music. In the design of dance movements, the rhythm and melody of musical instruments can be combined to make the dance and music perfectly integrated. For example, in the soothing melody played by the guqin, the dancers make gentle movements, showing the serenity and elegance of traditional Chinese culture.

While preserving the essence of tradition, it is necessary to balance the relationship between tradition and modernity in order to enhance the international compatibility of the work. A successful example of this is "Silk Road Flowers and Rain" in "Dancing for the Millennium", which combines the classical vocabulary of Dunhuang dance with the freedom of expression of modern dance, showing the simplicity and gravity of Dunhuang culture while matching the aesthetic interests of contemporary audiences. This fusion is not a simple splicing, but on the basis of understanding the kernel of the two art forms, to find common emotional expression points, so that the traditional dance in the modern context of renewed vitality, more easily accepted and loved by the international audience. This fusion can be tried in more works, such as combining classical dance with jazz dance to create a unique dance style. In the process of fusion, care should be taken to maintain the core elements and cultural connotations of traditional dance to avoid excessive modernisation and loss of its essential characteristics.

4.2 Channel level: building a multi-level communication matrix

Targeted communication is a key part of enhancing the international communication effect of national style dance programmes. Audiences in different regions have different cultural backgrounds and aesthetic preferences, and the

communication content should be customised according to these differences. In Southeast Asia, due to the deep influence of Confucianism, we can focus on selecting dance works related to filial piety and benevolence to trigger the cultural resonance of local audiences. For example, the dance work on the theme of the Twenty-four Filial Piety conveys the connotation of filial piety culture by presenting the stories of ancient filial sons, which is easily accepted and understood by audiences in Southeast Asia.

In Europe and the United States, the audience pays more attention to the uniqueness and innovation of art, which can highlight the "oriental aesthetics" of traditional Chinese art, such as white space and artistic techniques, to satisfy their curiosity and desire for exploration of exotic cultures. For example, national style dances with strong visual impact and unique creativity were presented to Europe and the United States, such as "Ink Rhythm", which was inspired by Chinese ink paintings and showed the mood and flavour of ink paintings through the movements of the dancers and the light and shadow effects of the stage.

5 Conclusions

In the future, national style dance programmes should further strengthen cultural self-confidence and constantly innovate artistic expression forms and communication strategies. The rich connotation of traditional Chinese culture should be deeply excavated, and creative transformation and innovative development should be carried out in accordance with the needs of the times. At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen the research on the international market and audience, and formulate personalised communication programmes according to the cultural characteristics and audience needs of different regions. It is believed that through continuous exploration and practice, the national style dance can become an important messenger of Chinese traditional culture to the world, play a more important role in international cultural exchanges, and make a greater contribution to the enhancement of the country's cultural soft power.

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