

Study on international communication strategies of traditional Chinese culture in the age of intelligent media

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Abstract. The advent of the Age of Intelligent Media has brought new opportunities and challenges to the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture. This paper analyzes the new characteristics of communication in this context: the diversification of communication subjects, the precision of communication channels, and the community-based distribution of audiences. Meanwhile, the study also reveals the prominent problems currently faced: cognitive biases in the process of cultural translation weaken communication effects, technological empowerment may lead to an imbalance in the communication ecosystem, and it remains difficult to achieve in-depth cultural value identification. To address these issues, this paper proposes corresponding development strategies: establishing a precise cultural symbol translation system to bridge cognitive gaps, strengthening human-machine collaboration to optimize the communication ecosystem, and building an interactive platform with multi-subject participation. The aim is to promote the effective international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture.

Keywords: age of intelligent media, traditional Chinese culture, international communication

1. Introduction

With the arrival of the Age of Intelligent Media, the global information communication pattern is undergoing profound changes. Intelligent media technology has not only reshaped the ways of information production, distribution, and reception but also created new possibilities and challenges for the cross-border communication of culture. As the spiritual symbol of the Chinese nation, the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture is not only a manifestation of cultural confidence but also a strategic need to enhance international influence. Based on the context of the Age of Intelligent Media, this study aims to systematically answer the following questions: What challenges and risks does intelligent media technology bring to the international communication of Chinese culture? How should we formulate forward-looking and operable communication strategies to promote more effective, in-depth, and sustainable communication of Traditional Chinese Culture worldwide? It strives to provide a valuable strategic framework and action guide for relevant institutions and practitioners in practice.

2. Characteristics of the international communication of traditional Chinese culture in the age of intelligent media

The Age of Intelligent Media refers to an era in which Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology is fully applied in the media field. In this era, "everything is media". AI technology is widely applied in various media forms, and the media industry leverages AI to realize automation, personalization, customization, and intelligence in information production, distribution, and communication, thereby reshaping the media ecosystem. The changes brought by the Age of Intelligent Media have affected multiple aspects such as the media ecosystem, information production methods, and information communication models. Against this backdrop, the subjects, channels, and audiences of the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture have presented new characteristics.

2.1. Diversification of communication subjects

In the Age of Intelligent Media, the participants in the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture have shifted from the previous single model dominated by the government to a new pattern with the participation of various social forces,

forming a multi-subject communication network involving the government, enterprises, non-governmental organizations, individual creators, and intelligent technology platforms. This transformation has not only enriched the perspectives of communication but also deepened the depth and breadth of cultural reach.

In this diversified pattern, official institutions still play a strategic leading role, while non-governmental forces have achieved "cultural breakthroughs" through carriers such as short videos, games, and cultural and creative products, in ways that are closer to overseas audiences. For example, in 2024, the "Village Super Football League" organized by a non-governmental organization in Guizhou, China, was live-streamed by non-governmental communication subjects through platforms such as TikTok and YouTube. The event integrated intangible cultural heritage elements of China, such as the Miao Lusheng Dance and the Dong Grand Chorus, into the stadium, with the total online views exceeding 460 million. This allowed overseas audiences to appreciate the charm of Traditional Chinese Culture through sports events.

The increasing maturity of digital technology has broken the temporal and spatial barriers of traditional cultural communication, and technological upgrades have enabled multi-subject collaboration in scenarios that integrate the virtual and the real. In 2021, institutions including the Sichuan Museum and the Sanxingdui Museum jointly launched the metaverse project "The World of Gods and Humans: Special Exhibition on the Ancient Shu Civilization of Sichuan". Through VR technology, overseas audiences could "travel" to the Sanxingdui sacrificial site and interact with cultural relics such as the bronze sacred tree and the golden mask. Within 5 days, the exhibition was reported by more than 70 media outlets from 13 countries, and the views of the related topic on TikTok exceeded 20 million. In this event, official institutions provided cultural resources, technology enterprises developed technology platforms, and overseas KOLs conducted secondary creation. These three types of communication subjects jointly activated the overseas communication of Traditional Chinese Culture.

Online literature is also a key subject in the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture in the Age of Intelligent Media. According to the 2024 Annual Report on the Development of Chinese Online Literature released by the China Audio-Video and Digital Publishing Association, by 2024, the overseas market scale of Chinese online literature had exceeded 4 billion yuan, with 230 million visiting users covering more than 200 countries. Taking Webnovel (under China Literature Limited) as an example, it adopted the model of "AI translation + local editors" to translate works such as *Joy of Life* and *Lord of the Mysteries* into 10 languages including English, Spanish, and French. More notably, overseas authors accounted for 48% of the creators of "Chinese-style" novels. For instance, an American author incorporated Taoist philosophy into *The Head of the Cultivation World*, realizing localized re-creation in the communication of Traditional Chinese Culture and forming cultural feedback.

In addition, games and foreign self-media bloggers have also become important subjects in the communication of Traditional Chinese Culture. The 3A game *Black Myth: Wukong*, based on *Journey to the West*, used Unreal Engine 5 and full-ray tracing technology to accurately replicate ancient architectural structures such as the Chongqing Dazhu Rock Carvings and the Shanxi Hanging Temple in the game scenes. Within the first month of its launch, the game sold over 20 million copies worldwide, with overseas players accounting for more than 30%, triggering a research boom on "Journey to the West culture" on the Steam platform. The "Laowai Research Association" founded by Israeli blogger Raz Galor has produced a series of videos such as *Foreigners Celebrating the Spring Festival in China* and *Experiencing Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage Skills*, gaining over 5 million followers on platforms such as YouTube and Bilibili.

In the Age of Intelligent Media, the subjects of the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture have presented a new pattern of universal participation and multi-subject collaboration, enabling Chinese culture to go global more rapidly, richly, and in-depth.

2.2. Precision of communication channels

In the era of traditional media, China mainly relied on government-led channels for international cultural communication. It primarily used mass media such as news agencies, overseas-targeted international TV channels, international radio, and foreign-language newspapers and periodicals to promote information to all audiences in a "broadcast-style" manner. This approach focused on wide distribution and one-way communication, lacking precise screening of target groups.

With the development of digital technology, communication channels have gradually become intelligent, realizing precise reach in communication. The precision of communication channels refers to the use of technical means such as big data analysis, user portraits, and algorithmic recommendation to deliver appropriate information to the most needed people through the most effective channels. This achieves a high match between information and target audiences, forming a personalized communication ecosystem and improving communication efficiency and conversion rate [1]. Taking TikTok as an example, its short video platform constructs precise user portraits by analyzing user browsing history, interaction behaviors, and language preferences. For instance, for users in Southeast Asia, the platform prioritizes pushing content related to Chinese traditional festivals and cuisine; for the European and American markets, it focuses on themes such as martial arts culture and Chinese-style music. In 2023, the number of views of videos under the "#ChineseCulture" hashtag on TikTok exceeded 120 billion, with content recommended by algorithms accounting for over 70%. This precise distribution of communication channels not only improves

communication efficiency but also deepens the depth of overseas recognition of the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture.

2.3. Community-based distribution of audiences

In the era of traditional media, the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture was mostly one-way indoctrination, with limited feedback channels, making it difficult to form effective interaction and community connections. In the Age of Intelligent Media, the in-depth application of intelligent media technology has promoted the transformation of the audience of the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture from "the general public" to "communities". The form of the audience has shifted from dispersed and passive individuals to a "community-based" network with high interaction, emotional connection, and identity recognition, transforming from "passive receivers" to "active participants".

With the development of intelligent media technology, overseas audiences of the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture are no longer isolated individuals in terms of how they access and accept Traditional Chinese Culture. Driven by big data and intelligent algorithm recommendations, they gather into various forms of "online virtual communities" on social media platforms due to their shared interest in Chinese culture—namely, the "circle of friends" for Chinese culture.

Platform-based communication has shaped the prominent characteristic of "community-based audiences" in the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture. In this model, ordinary individuals such as Li Ziqi and Dianxi Xiaoge have become cultural expressers. With the help of intelligent media such as short videos, they transform the idyllic life of self-cultivation and harmonious family into vivid cultural content. The key to their success lies in the fact that through daily and storytelling narratives, this content embeds abstract cultural concepts such as "harmony between man and nature" and "the concept of a harmonious and happy family" into concrete and perceptible life scenarios. This approach transcends superficial cultural symbols and directly touches the in-depth recognition of overseas audiences for universal human emotions such as nature and family affection, thereby stimulating strong emotional resonance.

This model, based on value recognition and emotional connection, enables audiences scattered around the world to spontaneously gather into online communities with shared cultural interests. They interact through liking, commenting, and sharing, which not only greatly enhances the sustainability of communication but also provides continuous external impetus for the contemporary transformation and innovation of Traditional Chinese Culture, forming a new communication ecosystem centered on communities.

3. Development dilemmas of the international communication of traditional Chinese culture in the age of intelligent media

3.1. Cognitive biases caused by cultural translation

Elements of Traditional Chinese Culture such as philosophical thoughts, traditional operas, and festival customs have profound historical and cultural connotations, creating a high threshold for understanding among overseas audiences. In the process of international communication, the profound heritage of Chinese culture leads to understanding biases or even misunderstandings among overseas audiences due to differences in symbol systems and narrative methods, resulting in meaning dissipation and cognitive biases.

There are a large number of unique cultural symbols in Traditional Chinese Culture, such as concepts like "qi", "yin-yang", and "five elements", which often lack precise corresponding words in the translation process. Taking "clearing heat and detoxifying" in herbal medicine culture as an example, it is often translated as "Heat-Clearing and Detoxifying" in English. Although it borrows the concept of "Detox" familiar to Western audiences, the rich connotations of "du" (toxin) in TCM theory are simply equated with "toxins" in modern medicine, leading to the reduction and distortion of the original meaning. Similarly, the English translation of the four diagnostic methods of TCM—"observation, listening and smelling, inquiry, and palpation" (Inspection, Auscultation and Olfaction, Inquiry, Palpation)—accurately conveys the diagnostic behaviors themselves but fails to convey the philosophical foundation of the holistic concept and dialectical thinking contained within. This translation dilemma is further exacerbated by algorithm-driven automated translation in the Age of Intelligent Media: although machine translation improves efficiency, it lacks in-depth understanding of the subtle meanings and contextual connections of culture-loaded words, causing cultural symbols to lose their original rich connotations during communication.

Traditional Chinese cultural products often face cold receptions in international communication because their narrative methods do not match the cognitive habits of audiences in the target market. For example, although the film *The Great Wall* adopted a Hollywood narrative framework, the collectivist values contained within conflict inherently with the Western narrative tradition of individual heroism, making it difficult for international audiences to generate emotional resonance. In contrast, successful cases such as *Black Myth: Wukong* have achieved effective transmission of cultural values by downplaying the direct interpretation of cultural symbols, emphasizing visual aesthetics and gaming experience, and carrying Chinese cultural elements

through a global universal adventure narrative framework. Such differences in narrative compatibility directly affect the acceptance and communication effects of cultural products [2].

3.2. Imbalance in the communication ecosystem caused by technological empowerment

In the Age of Intelligent Media, while technology has significantly expanded the breadth of the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture, it has also intensified the structural imbalance of the communication ecosystem, leading to high dependence on a few platforms. Excessive focus on visual spectacles and algorithmic recommendations in technological empowerment has resulted in the superficiality and fragmentation of cultural communication. At the same time, international communication channels are highly concentrated on global platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram, making the discourse power of the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture largely subject to the commercial logic and algorithmic biases of these platforms, further deepening the imbalance of the communication ecosystem.

The algorithm mechanisms of these platforms often embed mainstream Western cultural values, placing Traditional Chinese cultural content in a structurally disadvantaged position in cross-border communication. Taking YouTube as an example, although some videos related to "Maijishan Grottoes" have performed well (e.g., one video received 291,000 views), half of the top 10 videos on this topic have less than 30,000 views, indicating limited overall communication power. On TikTok, content with strong visual impact such as "Peking Opera facial makeup painting" can receive 5 million views per video, while content analyzing singing styles—which requires cultural background knowledge to understand—has significantly weaker communication power. Such algorithmic preferences have subtly guided content producers to actively cater to the platform's logic, focusing on superficial visual expression at the expense of the depth and integrity of culture.

Taking the Maijishan Grottoes as an example, as one of China's four major grottoes, it possesses profound artistic and cultural value, yet its influence in international communication is far from matching its cultural status. Studies have shown that the communication of the Maijishan Grottoes on the three major international social platforms is obviously unbalanced: on YouTube, individual videos perform well, but the overall influence is limited; on TikTok, although interactivity is strong (with the highest number of likes reaching 36,000), the number of comments is generally less than 100, indicating insufficient communication depth; on Twitter, the communication effect is the weakest, with the highest number of views only 12,000, presenting a fragmented pattern of "active on a single platform, silent on multiple platforms".

More notably, to adapt to the user habit of "15-60 second fragmented content" on short video platforms, Traditional Chinese Culture is often split into isolated visual clips, making it difficult to fully convey its integrity and in-depth value. This practice of sacrificing cultural depth to cater to platform characteristics further exacerbates the superficiality and fragmentation of cultural communication, highlighting the new type of communication imbalance caused by technological intervention [3].

3.3. Difficulties in constructing cross-cultural value identification

Another bottleneck in the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture in the Age of Intelligent Media lies in the dilemmas in the construction of cross-cultural sharing and value identification. This dilemma makes it difficult for Traditional Chinese Culture to move from technological output to value identification and from cultural display to cultural sharing.

The unique worldview, values, and view of practice contained in Traditional Chinese Culture—such as the worldview of "harmony between man and nature", the values of "harmony in diversity", and the view of practice of "unity of knowledge and action"—provide Eastern wisdom for addressing the crisis of modernity. However, in cross-cultural communication, they often struggle to gain recognition due to their differences from the Western-dominated modernity discourse system. For example, in the international communication of herbal medicine culture, the communication content mostly focuses on technical applications and health preservation knowledge, while the interpretation of theoretical connotations such as yin-yang, five elements, qi, blood, and body fluids has long been marginalized, with little mention of cultural roots and philosophical logic. This has led international audiences to limit their understanding of herbal medicine to a "therapy" rather than a "cultural system". Although this instrumental interpretation facilitates short-term acceptance, it hinders the formation of in-depth cultural value identification, making it difficult for Traditional Chinese Culture to truly be shared globally as a civilizational resource.

4. Development strategies for the international communication of traditional Chinese culture in the age of intelligent media

4.1. Establishing a precise translation system

To bridge linguistic and cognitive gaps and achieve effective communication in the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture, the key lies in establishing a "precise translation system". This involves not only technical conversion at the linguistic level but also in-depth cultural adaptation and emotional resonance. Its core is to explore shared meanings between the

source culture and the target culture, transcending simple symbol replacement. Establishing such a system is a strategic bridge to promote Chinese culture from "going global" to "integrating in" and to achieve a leap from cultural visibility to cultural intelligibility. It is also a fundamental guarantee for promoting effective civilizational dialogue and value resonance.

In the process of establishing a precise translation system, practical efforts can be carried out from the following three dimensions:

First, integrate technology to create an immersive cultural perception field. With the help of modern technological means such as VR/AR and digital light and shadow, transform abstract cultural elements into perceptible and experiential embodied scenarios. For example, Datang Never-Sleeping City uses 3D projection technology to make Li Bai's poems flow and be displayed on Tang-style buildings, transforming static cultural heritage into a dynamic cultural theater; the Along the River During the Qingming Festival 3.0 Art Exhibition realizes the living preservation and reconstruction of the painting through high-tech means, achieving cross-contextual transformation of cultural content and accurately conveying the historical atmosphere and life aesthetics contained within.

Second, drive by data to achieve precise reach of content communication. By analyzing user behavior data, construct clear user portraits and intelligent recommendation systems to realize personalized promotion and customized output of cultural content. On this basis, establish a dynamic feedback mechanism of "monitoring-analysis-optimization", and formulate differentiated communication strategies according to the cultural characteristics and audience preferences of different regional markets, promoting the "going global" of culture from "mass communication" to "precision communication" [4].

Third, conduct narrative transcoding to build a multi-level cross-cultural expression system. In terms of content construction, adopt a strategy that combines macro-narratives with micro-narratives, not only demonstrating the grand pattern of Chinese civilization but also narrowing the emotional distance through specific and vivid details. At the same time, build multiple transcoding mechanisms at the symbolic level, conduct international translation of cultural elements such as color, music, and food, and realize the effective transmission of cultural meanings in a storytelling and vivid manner, truly upgrading from "cultural output" to "cultural dialogue".

4.2. Strengthening human-machine collaboration

In the Age of Intelligent Media, although technological empowerment has expanded the breadth of the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture, issues such as algorithmic biases and communication fragmentation have also led to an imbalance in the communication ecosystem. Therefore, it is imperative to construct a new human-machine collaborative communication paradigm.

The core of human-machine collaboration in the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture lies in balancing technological efficiency and humanistic depth. The specific implementation paths include: first, establishing a dual-leadership model of "cultural experts-AI creation", where scholars ensure the accuracy of cultural connotations and AI is responsible for multi-modal content transformation. For example, the Dunhuang Academy uses AI to restore murals and generate cross-linguistic interpretations, balancing academic nature and communication power [5]. Second, building a matrix of "real anchors + digital humans" to conduct cultural dialogues on social platforms. For instance, the Palace Museum uses digital humans to explain court etiquette, while real experts deeply interpret philosophical connotations, achieving the unity of wide coverage and in-depth interpretation [6]. Third, improving the "data-driven + humanistic calibration" mechanism: using user portraits to achieve precise promotion, while establishing a team of cultural experts to review content and prevent cultural symbols from being simplified and misinterpreted.

Practice has shown that human-machine collaboration can effectively harness the double-edged sword of technology, enabling the communication of Chinese culture to maintain its cultural identity while enhancing its appeal. This is not only an innovation in technical paths but also a reconstruction of communication ethics, providing an effective path for building an equal and diverse global cultural ecosystem.

4.3. Building interactive platforms

To address the dilemma of constructing cross-cultural value identification in the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture, building an effective interactive platform with multiple levels and high stickiness is a core strategy to achieve the shift from "cultural display" to "value resonance". The effectiveness of this strategy stems from its ability to break the one-way linear communication model and promote participants to achieve understanding and identification through embodied experience.

The construction of an effective interactive platform can be carried out along two dimensions:

First, build an immersive cultural experience field empowered by technology. Use digital technologies such as Extended Reality (XR) to create a virtual cultural space that transcends geographical boundaries. For example, the "Forbidden City VR" immersive experience project developed by the Palace Museum not only accurately restores the grand structure of palace

buildings but also allows users to perceive the layout philosophy of "harmony between man and nature" and the craftsmanship wisdom of the "mortise and tenon structure" through interactive design. It transforms abstract cultural values into perceptible and operable embodied cognition, effectively reducing interpretation barriers caused by cultural distance [7].

Second, cultivate a cross-cultural dialogue community in physical platforms. For example, regularly hold seminars themed on "Sino-Western Ethical Dialogue" and "Ecological Wisdom and Sustainable Development", or offer workshops on Chinese calligraphy and opera, and guide participants to conduct cross-cultural comparison and reflection. This process is not only about skill teaching but also about meaning negotiation and discourse practice around common topics, which helps build "interpretive identification" based on mutual understanding among heterogeneous cultural groups.

An effective interactive platform can embed the core values of Chinese culture into shared social practices, thereby providing a path to cross cultural barriers and construct in-depth value identification.

5. Conclusion

The Age of Intelligent Media has brought multiple changes to the international communication of Traditional Chinese Culture, including diversified subjects, precise channels, and community-based audiences, while also accompanying new challenges such as cultural translation biases, technological ecosystem imbalance, and value identification gaps. Looking to the future, we must focus on establishing a precise translation system to bridge cognitive gaps, take strengthening human-machine collaboration as the path to optimize the communication ecosystem, and use building interactive platforms as the link to promote civilizational dialogue. Only by adhering to the cultural core while empowering technology and deepening value communication through innovative expression can we effectively enhance the international communication effectiveness of Chinese culture and enable it to radiate new vitality and charm in the tide of globalization and digitalization.

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