

The Research on the Dilemma and Strategies of Chinese Culture IP

—— Take the Film “Creation of The God: Kingdom of Storms” as an Example

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Abstract: In recent years, with the rapid development of entertainment mode, entertainment has gradually become an impossible part of the public's life. The effective dissemination of entertainment is also one of the important ways of cultural dissemination in a country. Among them, the formation of cultural IP can better promote cultural promotion, so that the country can develop more efficiently. As a country with rich cultural background, China is unable to come up with a highly representative IP image when mentioning cultural IP. China has fallen into a contradictory situation on the road of cultural communication, leading to the restriction of cross-cultural communication. Therefore, this study takes Chinese cultural IP and the film “Creation of The God: Kingdom of Storms” as the research object, and uses literature reading and case analysis to analyze the characteristics of Chinese cultural IP and its difficulties in the development process and communication countermeasures. According to the research results, it is found that the dilemma of Chinese cultural IP mainly include the differences in cross-cultural communication, the neglect of IP value, and the lack of cultural confidence. In the future countermeasures, China can start with the diversification of IP communication and the recovery of cultural initiative.

Keywords: Chinese culture, cultural IP, development dilemma, strategies

1. Introduction

With the development of science and technology, the importance of media and entertainment in society is emerging. IP is also constantly developing, “IP has been endowed with increasingly rich connotations and constantly updated. IP is intelligent content created by authors and users, which attracts many users [1]. IP, as the transmission of ideas and values, is not only designed to entertain the public, but also can be used as a means of cultural communication. In cross-cultural communication, there is no proportion between China's cultural heritage and its communication impact. By observing the countries with relatively successful cultural export, such as Disney in the United States, Japanese animation, South Korea K-pop, etc., people can find that one of the keys to cross-cultural communication is the formation of at least one national representative cultural IP. As the medium of cultural transmission, cultural IP can pass the core value of culture to the audience

more efficiently. Taking Marvel IP as an example, politically, it is market-oriented with less government intervention; economically, the United States is an important guarantee for the establishment of IP; technically, the IP level is guaranteed by combining technology and realism; socially, the ideology of IP is consistent with the mainstream consciousness of the United States [2]. Through the combination of different levels, the commercial value and cultural value of IP can be matched to form an IP industry chain with certain standards, so as to help the external spread of culture and promote cultural exchange and integration. On the road of creating cultural IP, China has not yet produced an IP industry chain that fully matches Chinese culture. Despite its rich cultural heritage, it may struggle to effectively communicate its message to the public. This paper uses the method of reading literature and case analysis, combined with the case of “*Creation of The God: Kingdom of Storms*”, trying to analyze the reasons why cultural IP construction needs to be paid attention to. The first part takes the film “*Creation of The God: Kingdom of Storms*” as a specific example, and analyzes the situation of “*Creation of The God: Kingdom of Storms*” in the film industry to reflect the current situation of the communication of Chinese cultural IP. The second part specifically lists the difficulties of cultural IP construction, and analyzes the causes of the difficulties from different dimensions. In the last part, according to the above research, this paper gives several improvement plans to for cultural IP construction. The main purpose of this paper is to explore how China can create a cultural IP with wide influence on the existing basis. The author hopes make a certain contribution to the field topic through this research.

2. The Current Status of Chinese Cultural IP Communication

2.1. The Significance of Cultural IP

Media entertainment has a wide range of influence in the world, influencing people’s lives in various ways. For people today, it is possible to have access to the information brought by the media and entertainment to the public under any circumstances. For example, advertising, radio, film and television, novels, etc., which can also be divided into passively receive and active excavation. It can be seen that media entertainment contains the function of stimulating people to explore actively. Before exploring, people need to be implanted with relevant concepts. In passively accepting a concept, an IP with obvious characteristics, easy to understand and rich connotation is the key to transmission. IP is the abbreviation of intellectual property rights, while culture can effectively reflect the image and history of a country. For a country, to establish a good cultural image, it can be more efficiently understood by other cultures, so as to make the external communication more convenient.

When media entertainment and cultural IP are combined, the mutual influence is not only the communication of information. The promotion of cultural exchange has contributed to the growth of cultural industries and boosted economic development. At the same time, cultural trade feeds back to cultural exchange, and while making profits, culture is more comprehensive and lasting dissemination [3]. With the accelerated development of society, the fragmented information age has gradually changed the forms people accept media entertainment. Different from the previous forms of entertainment centered on traditional media, the current information is being disassembled and released on a variety of social platforms, such as Tik Tok, Twitter, YouTube and other [4]. IP can recombine these scattered information sources together, and change people from passive to active, to further understand the things related to IP. At the same time, IP also creates a new form of consumption—symbol consumption. Usually, people conduct consumption behavior to meet their basic needs, but the symbol consumption will pay more attention to the symbols behind the goods. Commodity is not the main body that really attracts consumers, and the value of commodity symbols is far greater than the commodity itself [5]. It can be seen that when cultural IP becomes a symbol, the external dissemination of culture will become more efficient and convenient.

2.2. Current Situation of Chinese Cultural IP

2.2.1. Current Situation

There are three representative models for building overseas cultural IP: “Market-driven by the United States, resource-driven by Britain and France, and policy-driven by Japan and South Korea” [6]. On the road of cross-cultural communication, China is more influenced by western ideas and does not have too much voice. In addition, in the attitude towards traditional culture, China has always maintained an attitude of awe, and can not well integrate culture into the entertainment. In 2011, under the influence of pan-entertainment, China’s entertainment industry began to produce IP with stronger profit purpose. By imitating the overseas marketing models, the successful cases will be properly localized, and then spread out again. Successfully captured the fan economy, to create the star IP as the core [6]. The pleasure brought by “hedonic consumption” makes people indulge in a short time of happiness [7]. However, the nature of different countries varies. Although it has been modified through localization, the model of other countries can not be fully adapted to China’s cultural IP industry. As a result, China’s IP structure industry chain is not perfect, excessive pursuit of entertainment, but also makes the Chinese cultural IP unable to jump out of the pan-entertainment. The audience’s aesthetic appreciation can not be improved, and there is a certain resistance to accepting new things. Therefore, the echo effect of China’s entertainment industry is strengthened. Similar information is repeatedly circulated in a closed circle, seemingly to form a closed loop, but in fact, it bans itself instead.

2.2.2. The Situation of “*Creation of The God: Kingdom of Storms*”

Most mainstream films in China have a very clear way to make money. Every time a success case appears, there are a bunch of similar films that follow the case. Similar scripts, characters and backgrounds, with the support of major IP, such as star IP [8], famous director IP, large company IP, etc., can soon obtain a lot of box office and heat through the fan effect. The IP of “Creation of the gods” has been adapted and remade for a long time, and after many remakes were not well received, the IP has gradually faded from people’s attention. In other words, when the audience watches too many repetitive movies, there will be obvious aesthetic fatigue. At this time, the capital will look for new success cases, and then use the same way to make profits. After a period of silence, the film IP of “*Creation of The God: Kingdom of Storms*” was selected again, which abandoned the usual profit and publicity means of capital, and opened up a road of its own, but this bold game was not very smooth around the movie’s release.

After the trailer was released, although the gorgeous special effects were promoted, it was criticized because the IP was not separated from the previous bad film images before the release. Some critics said that the shooting style of The film caters to Western aesthetics, and director was also abused by some netizens for mentioning learning the production method of *The Lord of the Rings* in an interview. After the release, the box office was suppressed, and some cinemas used hand-written tickets to steal tickets. The huge cost of “God”, the box office rise trend slowly. The IP itself is also very controversial, and the script has been modified on the basis of the original work, leading to the polarization of the film reputation. From these difficulties, the audience is also looking forward to and observing whether this cultural IP film, which jumps out of the conventional production of Chinese films, can let Chinese films see a new future, and will bring Chinese culture abroad.

3. The Dilemma of Cultural IP Construction

3.1. The Differences in Cross-Cultural Communication

3.1.1. High-Context Culture and Low-Context Culture

In the process of cross-cultural communication, it is not easy to use the other party's language habits to correctly express the content that the disseminator wants to express. China belongs to the country of high-context culture, and its source is from the Confucian culture in Chinese traditional culture. Confucian culture advocates prudence in words and actions, so it deliberately complicates the true meaning to express. Most of the western cultural sources are from the Greek civilization, and they are mostly Christian. People want to communicate directly with God, so language and expression are basically the same [9]. It can be seen that when high context culture and low context culture spread to each other, it is easy to produce expression ambiguity. When the low context culture accepts the output of the high context culture, the complex thinking, which is different from the ordinary language habits, will make the communication process complicated.

For culture, language is a very representative carrier [10]. In the process of cultural dissemination, although it can also be shown in a visual way, the language supplement is essential. Take *Feng God* as an example, the story takes place in the ancient Shang Dynasty. The words used in the movie are derived from ancient Chinese literature and history. After the artistic processing of the film, the audience with Chinese as the native tongue can basically understand it. When translated into other languages, it is difficult to find an accurate correspondence to the meaning of ancient Chinese, but in order to express the meaning of the sentence, in many cases it can only be translated into vernacular Chinese. Relying on language greater than context inadvertently weakens the special charm brought by culture [11].

3.1.2. Lack of Cultural Background

A Culture has two very important features, synteny and diachronic [12]. With the cultural development of a country, its background and history are constantly updated. From the stage of birth to adulthood, people will subtly accept and learn the background of local culture from TV, books, oral stories and other media. Therefore, when some cultural IP is born, most local people do not need too much supplementary explanation, and can naturally understand what the IP wants to express, but for people from other cultural backgrounds, there is a gap in the default background knowledge. Take the "founding legend" as an example, the Chinese myth world was born in Pangu to create the world, Nuwa made the earth to create human beings; in the west is God created Adam and Eve, two people stole the forbidden fruit of Eden, human to extend [13]. If Chinese cultural IP wants to be fully spread, it is quite important to supplement the background knowledge that other cultures do not know. In particular, the immortal and martial themes that are widely spread in the current Chinese market involve more complex knowledge framework such as Taoism and Buddhism.

Cultural IP works are analyzed by the audience as a medium, and they can feel the diversity of the culture while exploring [14]. For foreigners, when watching a story with strong cultural characteristics, if the cultural part is not enough for them to understand, then the story itself will become the focus. However, most of the mainstream film and television works in China rely on the rich cultural background and ignore the core of the story, cause rely on the flow effect, can still obtain an extremely high exposure in China. Although during the cultural export, some foreign audiences became interested in Chinese culture for these works. However, it is difficult for the radiated audience to reach a qualitative change from quantitative change, so as to form a representative cultural IP in China.

3.2. The Differences in Cross-Cultural Communication

In recent years, the concept of IP appears more frequently, the abuse of cultural IP is becoming increasingly evident, and the purpose of cultural IP is increasingly distant from cultural communication. Nowadays, IP, which represents Chinese culture, most often appears in the field of film and television investment. Compared with creation, it is more inclined to take the purpose of management as [15]. Cultural IP has gradually become a product of serving the benefits of stars, and is forced to reduce its own value. Take the IP of “Creation of The God”, for example, except for the hotly discussed film series in the summer of 2023. In 2016, there was a film, The Legend of God, which also used this IP. The film at that time gathered many big Chinese stars to shoot, and made many modifications to the original background and characters. Before the film was released, it was widely publicized through the star cast and special effects. It was released poorly, even winning the eighth Golden Broom film in 2017. As a variety of films like “*Creation of The God: Kingdom of Storms*” brought a not very good impression to the audience, the IP itself was implicated, and the reputation declined. In addition, a very famous IP, like The Romance of the Gods, has a highly complete story and rich character Settings. Thus reducing the original ability, it is difficult for the audience to see innovative stories, more likely to produce aesthetic fatigue [16]. Although wearing the shell of cultural IP, but its essence is still “fast food culture” [17]. After IP is abused until the basic value is eventually consumed, it will look to the next IP in order to continue to profit, thus falling into an endless cycle.

In addition, the single transmission symbol of cultural IP is also a major problem that hindering cultural communication. Through some common means of communication, such as film and television works, short videos, it is difficult to form their own characteristics. It is also difficult to establish a clear cultural image in the generalized entertainment communication [18].

3.3. Lack of Cultural Confidence

In the process of cultural dissemination, in addition to self-continuous exploration, but also can not avoid learning and reference. Tracing back to the source of communication science, it flourished in Europe and the United States. The purpose of communication at that time was not cultural exchange, but the use of war in the rule of politics and capital [19]. Therefore, in the process of referring to the original transmission, public can not avoid the influence of capital. In addition, in the learning stage, China is difficult to have a say in cultural communication. People are used to passive acceptance, lack of active output of thinking habits. In addition to the dissemination of ideas, the guidance of public opinion is also an important part of cultural communication [20]. However, with the operation of capital to public opinion, the people fall into the mistake that the greatness of Chinese culture has been recognized by the world. Excessive cultural confidence becomes a kind of conceit to avoiding the dilemma of cross-cultural communication. Even because “God” made changes that did not conform to the capital market, in turn hit the oppression of excellent films appeared in the market.

4. The Strategies for Improving the Creative Path of Cultural IP

4.1. IP Communication Diversification

In the transmission of high and low contexts, more or less will produce errors in understanding, in order to completely solve the gap of language communication, can try to avoid difficulties in another way, for example, make more use of non-language communication to explore the deep connotation of cultural symbols. Then in pictures, videos, music and other more intuitive ways, as much as possible to show the cultural characteristics. In addition to the conventional mode of communication, fan creation also has a positive influence in the process of IP transmission [21]. Different from the official

publicity, the dissemination of fan creation basically comes from the fans who have a passion for IP works, and IP secondary creation works radiate to the audience group, except for those passers-by who are attracted because of IP itself. There are also some groups who attracted by other labels after the second creation, thus indirectly understanding the IP itself. In the promotion of the release of “God”, not only based on the content of the work itself and the IP background, officials have also created special topics on various social media platforms to promote the body shape of the characters. In the direction of this topic, film staff guide fellow creators to create IP and increase the spread of IP in other fields. At the same time, the secondary biography works increase the interest and richness of cultural IP, and more efficiently attract fans to enter the early stage of cultural IP understanding. In the later propaganda, the film returned to the film production, which further showed the cultural charm, and made the cultural IP receive more attention. Thus it can be seen that encouraging and guiding fan creation and creating ecological is a powerful measure of cultural IP communication [21].

In addition to the content, formal diversification is also an important channel for cultural IP communication. The connotation of Chinese culture is profound, and the cultural image is easy to bring people the impression of being ungrounded. For some foreigners, it is difficult to integrate into the daily life [22]. Therefore, the form should develop more social media communication space, take into account the change of communication forms, and build a diversified cross-cultural communication platform.

4.2. The Recovery of Cultural Initiative

Due to the cultural discount [23], it is difficult to spread the single transmission of cultural content widely. Therefore, it is one of the important ways to refine and integrate new expressions from Chinese and foreign countries and construct the discourse system of cultural stories. Cultural identity needs to be based on emotional resonance, and should not be ignored because of the fear of cultural invasion. In the process of cultural export, other cultures can be properly combined for dissemination, or it can also combine the world topic to show the local culture IP with a more popular image. IP image can also not cater to stereotypes, and can be assisted by creating a unique brand nature IP cultural communication. Take Hayao Miyazaki’s films for example. As a well-known Japanese animation IP film, it exports Japanese culture in Japan as the background. Miyazaki also created a lot of hit films with other cultural backgrounds, and finally formed a personal animation IP film. The audience can learn about the film IP through the culture of their own country, and then have a deep understanding of other films. Instead of cultural communication as the first goal, but first to attract audiences through cultural differences, and then the nature of fans [24]. In 2023, “God” still focuses on the original spread of Chinese culture, which is difficult. However, the director once learned from *the Lord of the Rings* team, it has also caused a lot of discussion abroad. It can be seen that through the combination and interaction of culture, Chinese culture can enter into the vision of foreigners and find the initiative.

5. Conclusions

Based on the film “*Creation of The God: Kingdom of Storms*”, this study analyzes the current situation, the difficulties and future development strategies on the road of building cultural IP in China. Combining the film case, the relevant implementation strategies and improvement plans are proposed. At first, this paper proposed the significance of cultural IP. Cultural IP can constitute symbol consumption and promote economic development. Therefore, for a country, creating an influential cultural IP is an important means of external communication. After understanding the importance of cultural IP, this paper analyzes the different situation of the film before, during and after the release, and speculated that the current situation of Chinese cultural IP communication is limited. Influenced

by the star effect and the echo effect, the innovative thinking of Chinese culture IP is suppressed. The film “God” is controversial in the communication stage, but it still adheres to itself, and opens up a new idea for Chinese cultural IP film. Then, this paper studies the dilemma of cultural IP construction. When cross-cultural communication occurs, it is important to recognize that due to differences in cultural contexts and backgrounds, there may be variations in the content of the communication. Relying solely on pure cultural content output, it is difficult for fans to change from quantitative change to qualitative change, and produce cultural IP with wide influence. Moreover, due to the neglect of IP value, excellent cultural IP is abused. While the IP image is damaged, the influence decreases and the reuse degree decreases. In addition, under the influence of pan-entertainment, the single cultural symbol hinders the establishment of cultural image, coupled with the weak cultural confidence and the preconception of western thoughts, which lead to the suppression of excellent cultural IP works. By studying the dilemma of Chinese cultural IP construction, this paper obtains the corresponding improvement scheme, such as using non-language communication to avoid cultural discount, diversified communication forms, encouraging fan creation, helping the official to further spread information, regain the cultural initiative, combining with non-local culture, increasing the exposure of cultural IP, etc. This study hopes to analyze how to build cultural IP and help promote cultural promotion and dissemination. In terms of research limitations, this paper lacks a certain degree of market research. If future scholars want to study this topic in this field, they can pay attention to quantitative research and conduct audience analysis combined with market research, so as to further optimize the construction process of cultural IP and help China create cultural IP with wide influence.

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