

Discussion on Improvement of Soft Power of Chinese Culture from the Perspective of Films and Television Program

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In order to walk towards the world, China not only needs economy as the bond, but also requires culture as its bridge. As an important carrier to disseminate culture and carry forward value, film and television programs display the cultural value and artistic magic of the country. International dissemination of Chinese film and television programs is an important approach to improve the soft power of Chinese culture.

Keywords: Chinese culture, film and television program, soft power of culture

Introduction

As an important component of the national soft power, soft power of culture should perform its attraction and emotional appeal in the process of enhancing the comprehensive national strength and release invisible influencing power. As a kind of cultural product, film and television programs are an important carrier of soft power in culture. Excellent film and television programs are able to disseminate the spirit and disposition of the nation and let the whole world know about the national culture and value. As part of soft power in culture, film and television programs have an influencing power that can't be ignored.

Relationship between Improvement of the Quality of Film and Television Programs and Development of Soft Power of Culture

As a kind of cultural product, film and television programs are a component of soft power in culture. Improvement of the quality of film and television programs play a promoting role in enhancing attractive force of Chinese culture and can influence and change the attitude and opinions of foreigners in China and also unite Chinese people to step forward. As one kind of cultural products, film and television programs are able to convey the spirit and soul of a nation, disseminate the value and magic of a culture, attract a batch of foreign pursuers who are in pursuit of common value, influence the stubborn cultural opponents and resolve cultural conflicts, etc.

Film and television program is an approach for China to go out to the world, and is not only a carrier for dissemination of Chinese culture, but also an important component of soft power in culture.

In the meantime, on the contrary, improvement of the soft power of Chinese culture also helps to facilitate development of film and television programs. Development of Chinese culture also provides a new development platform for film and television programs. In the process of foreign dissemination, it is necessary to continuously absorb new culture, learn new technology and improve the quality of film and television programs and then continue to promote development of Chinese culture and improvement of soft power of Chinese culture. Thus, there is a benign mutual promotion relationship between improvement of the quality of film and television programs and development of soft power of Chinese culture.

The Status Quo of Soft Power of Chinese Culture and Film and Television Programs

The status quo of soft power of Chinese culture

Ever since the reform and opening up in China, its economy has been rapidly developed and its foreign exchange reserve and its ranking of GDP in the world have been continuously enhanced. Accordingly, cultural construction has achieved certain achievement. However, compared with economic development, its cultural construction is relatively slow and soft power of Chinese culture is relatively weak.

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Soft power of culture does not fit in with the entire development level of the economic society

Domestically, economic development in China is swift and all aspects of the hard power have been rapidly developed, which has aroused high attention of the whole world. With successful holding of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing and the successful completion of the following Shanghai World Expo as well as the fact that China took the lead in walking out of the crisis under the influence of the financial crisis, the economic strength of China is obvious to all. Nevertheless, the soft power of Chinese culture is out of line with its economic level and the development level of the whole society. The rate of contribution made by the cultural industry in China to the GDP is less than 10%. By contrast, the cultural output in US accounts for more than 20% of the total GDP and cultural enterprises account for 60% of the total number of the richest enterprises in US. Thus, it can be seen that the soft power in Chinese culture is extremely weak. And this is specifically reflected in low technical content of Chinese cultural products, weak innovation of the cultural products, relatively low degree of organization of cultural industry and weak competitive force in the market, etc.

The global influence of soft power of Chinese culture is relatively small

Since the cultural industry in China has been developed later and its global competitive force is weak, the attraction and influencing strength of Chinese culture are relatively weak. For the time being, Chinese cultural products lack a stable marketing market and sales channel in the world. It is neither likely to play and display the advantage of local culture in cross cultural dissemination nor likely to well deal with the cultural crisis in the globalization. When refining and sublimating the core content of Chinese culture, it usually ignores the acceptance degree and cultural background of the audience of external dissemination and fails to integrate with them well. The dissemination means is relatively laggard and can't well play the attraction and influencing strength of culture.

The status quo of Chinese film and television programs

Considering the developmental history of Chinese film and television, the efforts China has made in the field of film and television are obvious to all and a lot of film and television programs have come out. Nevertheless, after enormous cost is paid, the effect is either positive or negative, so the status quo of

Chinese film and television programs makes one can't help reflecting.

External film and television programs lack representativeness

In the recent years, China has attached great importance to shaping of the national image and dissemination of film and television programs is also one of the approaches. The most typical case is the broadcasting of the China national publicity film in foreign countries, especially broadcasting of "Chinese national image slices – characters" in the New York Times square on January 17, 2011. It leaves such an impression on US students why those who look like tycoons just stand motionless? (Note 1) Thus, it can be seen that the dissemination effect of the publicity film is not as expected. The characters in the film neither convey the spirit and temperament of Chinese people nor have extensive representativeness and influencing strength, making the audience confused.

Film and television programs neglect local cultural connotation and national spirit

Currently, a large majority of famous Chinese film and television products depend on the powerful all-star lineup and high amount of producing costs. Most products blindly pursue visual impact instead of concentrating on the quality of the drama or wonderfulness of the story plot. Most of commercial films that have been on show in the movie theatre in the recent years are those that reflect the urban life, including some recomposed classical Chinese legends. The commercial films excessively focus on the need of the audience and pursue the box office returns, but ignore the local cultural connotation and national spirit in the process of the pursuit. Furthermore, the subject of Chinese film and television products is too single. For example, the ancient costume martial arts chivalry walked out to the world by means of Chinese kungfu. Then, one after another, all the following film products are almost the same subject and some of the content is nothing more than just continuous repetition, such as, "Hero", "Ten-Sided Ambush", and "The Promise", etc. After the herd phenomenon, the audience has sensory fatigue in such a subject. Besides, the producers fail to extend the subject from the perspective of cultural connotation and national spirit, as a result of which, without doubt, the Chinese film loses its market (Note 2).

Film and television industry is delicate and the management system is rigid

The Chinese cultural industry is relatively lagged and fails to transfer the abundant cultural resources into realistic competitive force. As one part of the cultural industry, the film and television industry has started later, so the management system of the film and television industry is relatively conservative and rigid and is deficient of vigor and innovation. Film and television program market has been marketized, but the government fails to provide appropriate intervene and adjustment, which causes producers of film and television programs excessively pursue market profits, but ignore cultural value and artistic creation of film and television programs. US is the largest consumer of cultural products and is also the largest producing country of cultural products. US possesses broadcast and cable television income accounting for 75% of the total in the world, box office returns occupying 55% of the total and family video sales amount accounting for 55% of the total. It also possesses more than half of the total record income and 35% of the total book sales income. (Note 3) Compared with US, the film and television industry in China is still fragile and the influencing strength of film and television programs in the world in also weak.

The numerous problems encountered in the field of film and television unconsciously affect cultural dissemination of China and relate to development and expansion of soft power of Chinese culture.

Improving Film and Television Programs and Enhancing the Soft Power of Chinese Culture

Selecting excellent film and television subject and disseminating Chinese image and values

Subject is one of the cores film and television programs and a good subject is able to skillfully disseminate the values of a nation and shape a perfect national image. It is not feasible to excessively pursue the currently prevalent subject and it is necessary to innovate new elements, as unalterability will only lead to insipidness and will be finally sifted out from the market. Then, at the time of pursuing film and television programs with high quality, it is a must to select an appropriate subject. In the process of selecting a subject, it is not only necessary to take control over the current mainstream tendency, but also necessary to have the consciousness of innovation.

Subject and values are the core of film and television programs. Film and television programs ought to carry forward the core value to enhance the soft power of culture. Those film and television programs that carry forward the core value of a nation will have definite shock power both in terms

of emotion and in terms of people's consciousness. China advocates prosperity, democracy, civilization, harmony, freedom, equality, justice, rule by law, patriotism, dedication, integrity, and friendliness, which lead different levels of ideal, spirit and morality and unite all the nations and people, which is helpful to improve the quality of the national citizens and the international competitive force of the nation.

Film and television programs are supposed to fully reflect the core value concept of China, such as, justice, freedom and fairness, which are all values with universality and let the audience all over the world empathize, accept and even approve Chinese culture and value concept. In this regard, it is necessary for us to learn Hollywood. At the beginning of the 20th Century, US displayed its magic to make the whole world fascinated with the novel pattern of "silence" film. With the tide of film, the thinking, culture and value orientation of US unconsciously influenced the whole world. It is Hollywood that enables US to possess the great advantage of soft power. Moreover, with development of science and technology, US has continuously disseminated the US dream and values to the whole world by means of Hollywood films, which, to the largest extent, has enhanced the soft power of US. This has provided precious reference experience for film and television creation in China to satisfy, up to the hilt, the requirement of soft power of Chinese culture. (Note 4)

Focusing on integration of content and form and promoting reform and innovation

Cultural communication and dissemination is a kind of omnibearing, multi-carrier and multi-channel work. As the carrier of cultural dissemination, it is far from enough for film and television programs to merely have a good subject and content, as the manifestation mode and dissemination channel also play a decisive role in whether the film and television programs are successful or not. It seems quite importance to focus on effective combination of content and form. On the basis of the demand, value concept and acceptance degree of the dissemination audience, namely, citizens from all nations with different cultural backgrounds, it is necessary to adopt novel content and innovative manifestation pattern and enhance the attraction and influencing strength of film and television programs so as to disseminate Chinese culture, eliminate cultural estrangement, resolve cultural conflicts and consolidate understanding, recognition and support of people from all over the world in China.

At the time of focusing on integration of content and form, it is also necessary to ponder on how to reform and innovate: all elements, such as, drama, shooting, art and performer, should be internationalized in order not only to contain local culture, but also to let the whole world accept it. Reform and innovation is the motive of cultural development and is a necessary requirement for film and television programs. Only after the thought is further emancipated and innovative consciousness is reinforced, can the important status and effect of culture be realized, so as to enhance the self-consciousness and initiative of cultural reform. The pattern and content are also an important aspect of innovation and reform. Both the production pattern and dissemination pattern of film and television programs are continuously updated together with development of science and technology. In the meantime, in the face of the diversified demands from the audience in the world, it is necessary to inject new elements and create new products to satisfy the demands of different cultures and different countries. Establishment of a rational and sound system is a vigorous assurance for innovation and reform. Only a sound system is able to make the content more attractive, the pattern more diversified, the coverage scope more extensive and the international influencing strength and competitive force gradually intensified in the process of expanding the field of film and television.

Enhancing the level of film and television producers

The central motive of film and television programs is film and television producers, including the writer, the scriptwriter, the director, the performer and the art director. Each film and television program is finished by a whole creation team and each film and television producer is an indispensable part. The scriptwriter is the source of film and television programs, so he has to provide the story plot and character image, etc. Then, the scriptwriter has to stand on a certain height and possess powerful imagination, logic thinking, literature level and national spirit, which are the premise to create a representative drama. The director is the major player of film and television creation and he defines the style and the technique of expression of a film through his intention and artistic views. Thus, the director has to possess particular opinions in artistic and cultural connotation and national spirit. Then, his work can have particularity and connotation. Of course, a program manifests the story and the characters through performance of the performer, in which way the quality and performance technique of a performer can be reflected in the film and television programs. Film and television producers are an

integration of all kinds of artistic categories, so their level represents the level of the film and television programs.

In order to enhance the level of film and television programs, it is necessary to follow the following several aspects. Firstly, it is to learn and grasp the cultural quintessence and national spirit to make the products more representative. Especially for the scriptwriter, he can play the advantage of the team and gather wisdom of the whole team. Different opinions in culture and national spirit make the logic of the products stronger, the story plot more free and easy and the characters more flexible. Secondly, it is to strengthen self artistic level and to make the products more attractive. It is necessary to try to learn Chinese culture and professional arts, improve the content and pattern of film and television programs, input new elements and satisfy cultural demand of different groups at different levels. Thirdly, it is to reform and innovate, learn newly emerging technique, make extensive use of dissemination means and enhance the soft power of the national culture (Note 5).

Completing the rational system and promoting development of the field of film and television

A rational system is the assurance of film and television production, which promotes film and television production and directs the direction for development of film and television. Currently, the feedback approach of dissemination of Chinese film and television programs, the management system of the field of film and television and relevant laws and regulations are incomplete. So far as the feedback approach is concerned, either external dissemination or internal dissemination can't avoid the phenomenon of few feedback approaches and low feedback efficiency of the mass communication. Establishment of an effective feedback approach is a necessary requirement to improve the soft power of culture. Feedback information not only contains the influencing degree and attraction degree of film and television programs, but also reflects problems existing in film and television programs. All the above has positive and promoting effect on improvement and enhancement of film and television programs.

At present, relevant laws and regulations in China are still not yet complete and the management system in the field of film and television is relatively rigid and carries with it a political color, which might make a dent in the artistic creative force and international competitive force of Chinese film and television. It is necessary to break through and innovate such rigid management system, improve

relevant laws and regulations, direct a direction for development of the field of film and television, stimulate the vitality and creative force of Chinese film and television and enhance its competitive force. Firstly, sound laws and regulations are needed to standardize the behaviors in the field of film and television and ensure successful ongoing of film and television creation. Conscious self-management of the subject will be gradually realized in such compulsory and passive management system, namely, the usual evolvement from law to morality, which makes the field of film and television more rational and orderly. Secondly, it is necessary to develop self-motility in the field of film and television, strengthen self-management, set up a set of management system that adjusts measures to local conditions, avoid rigid political interference and give full play to the creative force of the field of film and television. Thirdly, it is necessary to form self-adjustment and a creative atmosphere. When faced up with scientific changes that take place increasingly and difficulties and problems that emerge in endlessly, we need to have flexible response mechanism to adjust ourselves and have enough courage to follow the mainstream of the times, ensure the development direction of the field of film and television and enrich its mode and content.

Notes

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