

Research on National Culture and Cross-cultural Communication Based on Audiovisual Symbols

Taking CCTV Documentary, "A Bite of China" as an Example

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Abstract—"A Bite of China", the documentary combines culture and food perfectly, and presents them with audiovisual symbols, which has achieved great repercussions in China and foreign countries. The concrete and intuitive audiovisual feeling not only stimulates the taste bud of the audience, but also shocks the soul. Each nation has its own cultural origin and dietary characteristics, and has a long history. Diet is also an intuitive manifestation of national culture. From the perspective of figurative audiovisual symbols, this paper takes the CCTV documentary "A Bite of China" as an example to analyze the cultural representation of the Chinese nation in gourmet food, discusses how to express it by audiovisual means, and explores the cross-cultural communication of national culture.

Keywords—"A Bite of China"; audiovisual symbols; cross-cultural communication

I. INTRODUCTION

"A Bite of China" is a self-made documentary on CCTV documentary channel. Since the first season of 2012, it has gone through three seasons, which has aroused good reputation and strong repercussions in China and foreign countries. "A Bite of China" is a gourmet documentary. From the cultural and symbolic point of view, "A Bite of China" under the audiovisual symbols not only depicts the beautiful rivers and mountains of the motherland and Chinese delicacies, but also shows the essence and inheritance of Chinese culture. Integrating excellent national culture into gourmet documentaries based on audiovisual symbols reflects cultural self-confidence and national self-confidence, and is more conducive to cross-cultural communication.

II. CULTURAL SELF-CONFIDENCE AND NATIONAL SELF-CONFIDENCE IN "A BITE OF CHINA"

Feng Youlan wrote in the "Inscription on the Monument of Southwest Associated University". "The world's great powers are new but have no history. Greece and Rome have the history but don't exist at present. However, China has the history and exists now. China is new and old. The so-called Zhou is the old state, and its mission is to reform." The prosperity of a country and a nation can not be separated from the prosperity of culture, which is cultural self-

confidence. For 5000 years, Chinese civilization still stands in the east of the world, which is the source of national self-confidence. Xi Jinping, the General Secretary expounded the significance and path of socialist cultural construction in the report of the Nineteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China. He pointed out that without high cultural confidence. There would be no cultural prosperity, nor the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

"A Bite of China" selects audiovisual symbols as the carrier, and takes ordinary people's diet on the dining table as the shooting object, records the dribs and drabs of people's lives in different regions. "A Bite of China", the documentary series has been completed for three seasons, and its ratings have reached new highs one after another. It is a model of the perfect combination of spreading gourmet food and Chinese culture. It brings the audience spiritual enjoyment and the shock of Chinese culture through concrete and intuitive audiovisual symbols. "A Bite of China", the documentary series not only reflects the "eating" culture of Chinese people, but also appreciates the cultural charm of ancient civilizations and local customs.

Cultural self-confidence is the premise of national self-confidence. Only by achieving cultural self-confidence can the spiritual strength of national self-confidence become stronger. The third season of "A Bite of China" is completely revised, which is divided into eight episodes: Utensil, Fragrance, Banquet, Nurture, Cook, Crisp, Four Seasons and Integration. It not only shows the Chinese delicacies with attractive taste buds, but also permeates the ancient culture and humanistic feelings. Food contains the cultural concept and spirit of a nation. The primitive cooking utensils that have been passed down for a long time are the epitome of the development and inheritance of national culture. Harmonious coexistence between man and nature is the essence of Chinese culture. Ancient people have known the way to get along with nature: conforming to nature, utilizing nature, revering nature, which is also the common theme of "A Bite of China", the documentary series. [1] This is particularly evident in the third season. The use of kitchen utensils has separated human beings from the era of eating animal flesh raw and drinking blood. The first episode of the third season of "A Bite of China" introduces kitchen utensils culture in various places. For example, the stone slabs of Nujiang in

Yunnan province are taken from the shales of cliffs and heated with fire. The use of such utensils is one of the original utensils that still exist. In addition, Yunnan stone pots, the nine-hole stoves of Sanmenxia in Henan province, and the kitchen gods, mountain gods, etc. consecrated by the Chinese folks are all examples of the expression of awe and harmony to the nature. These cultural ideas have been branded in every ordinary people. Cultural self-confidence is an important prerequisite for a strong national culture. National culture is also an important symbol for a nation to distinguish itself from other nations. Relying on the powerful attraction of ethnic culture, ethnic and national civilization can last for thousands of years and flourish forever. Adhering to the national culture and the development of the Chinese nation, the Chinese nation has strong national self-confidence in whatever situation it is in. This is true not only for the ancient oriental countries, but also for any nation and country in the world. Cultural and national self-confidence complement each other and are inseparable.

III. AUDIOVISUAL SYMBOL EXPRESSIONS OF NATIONAL CULTURE IN "A BITE OF CHINA"

Audiovisual symbols are the language carrier of film and television art dissemination. Through the visual and concrete expression of the combination of picture and sound, cultural thoughts can be more accurately and deeply disseminated. "A Bite of China" uses figurative audiovisual symbols to disseminate the cultural connotations it implies. Through lens, color, sound, editing and other different audiovisual creative techniques, it embodies the national culture.

Firstly, "A Bite of China" uses full HD equipment to shoot, which enhances the visual enjoyment from a visual point of view. In the shooting process, different shooting techniques are used to express different cultural connotations. "A Bite of China" always brings the audience in with the storytelling beginning. It begins with the discovery and search of food materials and utensils. The macro aerial photographs are combined with the close-up shots of characters' work. The grand scenes show the natural features and geographical landscapes, while the small scenes and close-up shots show people's hard-to-get materials and good attitude toward nature, so as to reveal the origin of food culture, which originates from nature. It fully embodies the national culture, and also expresses the cultural thought of harmonious coexistence between man and nature. Seamless transition brings the audience's perspective from one region to another. The purpose is to explore the origin of food culture. In the eighth episode of third season of "Integration", it takes the spice of pepper as a transitional thing. The scenes turn from Sichuan to Jiangsu and Zhejiang, and then to Guizhou. It describes the origin and evolution of pepper from ornamental plants to the Chinese food table, which is the embodiment of culture. The performance of contemporary audiovisual symbols is not enough to completely restore the scene at that time, and it can fully strengthen the audience's understanding of culture.

Secondly, the use of color symbols in "A Bite of China" is abundant and appropriate. From an ornamental point of view, a variety of color symbols give a richer expression to

food. Moreover, the expression of color symbols in "A Bite of China" highlights the changes and diversity of national culture. The title of the third season of "A Bite of China" is a combination of colors, including colorful fields, golden wheat, colorful dishes, beautiful and unique porcelain bowls and dishes. Each picture will be harmonious and vivid. The development and changes of the times have led to the cultural change. In the eighth episode of the third season, originally rich and diverse Sichuan cuisines now run through by spicy peppers. The bright red peppers highlight the current spicy in Bashu, but also highlight the complexity of the gradual disappearance of Sichuan cuisine culture in the changes of the times. In the eyes of the inheritors, this bright red spicy has become the strong stimulation of traditional culture salvation. China is a vast region with great cultural differences between the north and the south. The food culture also reflects the diversity of Chinese culture. In the north, cooked wheaten food is the main food. In "A Bite of China", warm yellow is used to represent the staple food of wheat, pastry and noodles in the north. It reflects the simplicity and enthusiasm of the northerners, and highlights the solid and heavy northern culture. Fresh, elegant and rich colors are the main hues of southern food. Rice, vegetables and other staple foods in the south reveal the delicacy and style of southern culture.

Thirdly, the other part of film and television language is sound, including voice, music and sound effects. The voice in "A Bite of China" includes two parts: explanation and monologue. From the magnetic and meaningful explanations, we can feel that "A Bite of China", the documentary series is not only a simple introduction of food, but also reveals the essence of national culture. Whether it is the acquisition of food or the precipitation of regional culture, the meaningful explanatory words collocate with deep voices, and the sentences are full of interpretation and aftertaste of the ancient national culture. Monologues almost use regional dialects, and dialects are the most intuitive representative of regional culture. Rich and simple dialects not only reflect strong local feelings, but also express Chinese regional culture from the linguistic level. Music and sound effect symbols in audiovisual symbols are used to assist pictures and render the atmosphere. Music in "A Bite of China" has become a symbol representative in the period of hot broadcasting. The rhythm is slow, impatient, rich and diverse. Just as the scholar has been telling about Chinese civilization for thousands of years, it further enhances the cultural experience. The exaggerated and freehand sound effects are matched with pictures to enhance the authenticity, intimacy and entrance of the documentary, and quickly close the distance between the film and the audience.

IV. ETHNIC CULTURE AND CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

The popularity of "A Bite of China" has not only achieved good results in domestic ratings and word-of-mouth, but also attracted worldwide attention and aroused heated discussion. "A Bite of China" is shot all over the country. The food and scenery are not disappointed. For overseas Chinese, they feel nostalgia. For international friends, they

experience the beautiful scenery, delicious food and profound Chinese culture in the vast land of China. Culture is the blood of a nation and the nation is the world. National culture not only affects the hearts of the nation in the world, but also is an important part of world culture.

A. The Concrete Representation of National Culture

First of all is "people-oriented" cultural spirit. "To achieve hegemony or kingship, the people should be the foundation; when the people are governed, the country will be stable, and when the people are in turmoil, the country will be in danger." (Guanzi kingship saying) It can be seen that ancient Chinese wise men had realized the people-oriented cultural thought and its importance as early as the Spring and Autumn Period. Food is the basis of human survival and reproduction. People take food as their heaven. "A Bite of China" seemingly tells about delicacies. It does not simply tell the practice and process of each delicacy, but closely combines food with people's life and culture. The audiovisual symbols are presentation, while what behind the food symbols are people's stories and the perception and inheritance of the Chinese nation's culture.

Second is the cultural thought of "harmony". "Harmony" is an important concept in Chinese philosophy. "Taoism follows nature" and "harmony between man and nature" are the root and essence of Chinese culture. In Guoyu Zhengyu, Shibo stated, "When harmony is achieved, all things can grow and develop. If they are identical, they cannot develop and continue. If we abandon them or select the same, it is not far from the death." Yin and Yang are in harmony with all living things, and nothing is born of exactly the same thing. Harmony contains the differences among things. Only when contradictions are diverse and unified can all things be born and developed. This is similar to the "diversity" generally accepted by the world, and is also the contribution of Chinese culture to the world. From connotation to extension, from the inside of documentary manuscripts to the externalization of audiovisual symbols, "A Bite of China" contains rich Chinese culture. For the temptation of delicious food, the author believes that no one can resist. "Eating" is a common topic in the world, which can shorten the distance between people in a short time. Chinese cuisine pays attention to the harmony of five flavors, color, fragrance and taste, and has a strong inclusiveness. It absorbs various tastes of different ingredients, and also integrates the sour, sweet, bitter and salty of life. The "harmony" in "A Bite of China" contains the harmony between man and nature and the harmony between man and man. Since ancient times, utensils and food are natural gifts. If we don't go deep into nature, we can not obtain them. Whether it is the slab stone in the depths of Nujiang Grand Canyon in Yunnan, or wild honey in the mountains, people have to pay hard work. "People have the human nature, and mud has its nature." Compared with machine-made tableware, hand-made tableware is more suitable for gourmet food. The perfect integration of gourmet utensils and gourmet food is not only a complete gourmet experience, but also a harmonious blend of human and nature. Natural gifts are not endless. Only by conforming to natural laws and not violating agricultural

time can we make better use of nature. More than one episode of the documentary series "A Bite of China" tells about the "harmony" between human and nature, but it runs through the documentary series and integrates the "harmony" cultural ideas into each episode and each delicious dish. In addition, there is harmony between people in each episode of the documentary series "A Bite of China". At the end of each delicious meal, the whole families sit happily together. The old people are peaceful; the children are happy; and they love each other and enjoy delicious food. Although all emotions come from each individual, the collection of individuals is restored to such an entity of "home". [2] Through such audiovisual symbols, we can express the fundamental of harmonious coexistence between people, that is, the transmission of traditional Chinese virtues and the concrete expression of national culture.

B. The Unconscious Expression of Cross-cultural Communication

Art has no boundaries, and film and television art has no boundaries. The concrete expression of audiovisual symbols can be spread across language, race and different cultures. Furthermore, storytelling is also the development direction of documentaries to change the old preaching mode. Documentary film has the dual characteristics of authenticity and artistry. It has not only the symbols of formal beauty, but also the deep cultural connotation. In cross-cultural communication, the integration of real beauty and formal beauty of documentary film can cause resonance and emotional recognition, so as to achieve the communication effect in subtle influence. The unique outlook on life, nature and values of Chinese culture break through the barrier through the audiovisual symbols of documentaries. And then, these values are accepted by overseas audiences. [3] The overseas audiences recognize and identify the Chinese culture. Starting from the common topic of human beings — delicacy, this series of documentaries comprehensively introduces the food culture, beautiful mountains and rivers, and humanistic feelings in the north and south of China. Modern film and television shooting equipment and creative ideas make "A Bite of China" more ornamental, and it is easier to break the national boundaries and cultural barriers. In addition, "A Bite of China" breaks the traditional concept of food film creation, changes the narrative mode, and tells each delicious food and the origin of each utensil in the form of storytelling. The seventh episode of the second season of "A Bite of China" tells about the origin of Chinese breakfast, which originated from the habit of Chinese people as early as more than 2,000 years ago. For the breakfast, it shapes different life feelings and rhythms. With the short beginning, and the symbols of breakfast pictures in different places begin, the story starts. The rich explanations start from the origin of history telling about breakfast and leave suspense. A breakfast has different styles in different regions. With breakfast as the main line and cross-cutting, it links up Chongqing, Suzhou, Wuhan, Guangzhou and other northern and southern regions. China has a vast territory with remarkable regional and cultural characteristics. Chinese culture is extensive and profound. In the subtle influence of the story, overseas audiences have unconsciously felt and

accepted Chinese culture. The spread of "A Bite of China" abroad has become the mouthpiece and symbolic representation of the Chinese nation's culture. It has also become a bridge connecting the nation with the world, bringing the national culture to the world and making the Chinese nation more confident.

V. CONCLUSION

The documentary series "A Bite of China" integrates the Chinese culture into the film and television art based on audiovisual symbols. In the process of Chinese culture dissemination, Chinese culture is also disseminated with images. From this point of view, the documentary series "A Bite of China" finds the "eating" point among different cultures, which not only adheres to cultural self-confidence, but also keeps pace with the times. Moreover, it can subtly and unconsciously infiltrate the gourmet culture implicit in the national culture in the cross-cultural communication. In today's increasingly globalized world, cultural self-confidence is the root of cross-cultural communication. Cultural self-confidence is also the source of national self-confidence. Only by achieving cultural self-confidence can a nation prosper forever. Whether it is food culture or other, the key to cross-cultural communication is to continuously dig into the national culture and integrate it into the modern and humanized mode of communication.

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