

Research on the Strategies of Establishing Image Based on the External Dissemination of Ceramic Stories

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Abstract: China is a country of long history and abundant culture. Chinese culture has been exerting a deep and far-reaching influence on the world progress. As the birthplace of ceramics, China boasts the most exquisite porcelains and longest lasting ceramic history in the world. With the development of ceramic making, China has accumulated extensive and profound ceramic culture, and ceramic culture is the representative of Chinese cultures. During the ceramic making process, there have appeared many ceramic stories with unique Chinese characteristics, and these stories are the embodiment of Chinese traditional culture and Chinese ceramic culture. In order to establish a good image to the world, China should make full use of the ceramic stories, find out the characteristic cultural elements within the stories, and try to disseminate them worldwide, so as to let the world understand modern China and establish “people-oriented”, “culturally confident”, “peaceful and friendly”, “open and inclusive”, “mutually learning”, “multi-dimensional” images to the world.

1. Introduction

Culture is the spiritual essence and inherent characteristics of a country or a nation. It gathers the essence of a country and a nation’s history, politics, economy, customs, and other civilizations, so it is of most precious and important wealth [1]. Cultural confidence is the full affirmation and active practice of a country, a nation, and a political party towards their own cultural values [2]. Cultural confidence demonstrates a firm confidence in the vitality of their own culture. With the development of Chinese economy these years, China has ushered in a bright prospect of great rejuvenation, and the Chinese people are becoming more and more confident in their culture.

Since ancient times, Chinese civilization has been continuously developing through inheritance and innovation, constantly sublimating in response to changes, and accumulating the deepest spiritual pursuit of the Chinese nation. It is rich nourishment for the continuous growth and development of the China. China’s papermaking, gunpowder, printing, compass, astronomy and calendar, philosophical thinking, and people-oriented concept have had a profound impact on the world, which have effectively promoted the development of human civilization [3]. Therefore, in the new era of fast media, Chinese culture and civilization ought to be disseminated to the world more efficiently, and Chinese stories should be spread overseas.

2. The Dissemination of Chinese Stories and China's National Image

2.1 The Dissemination of Chinese Stories

To disseminate Chinese stories to the world, the disseminator should focus on creating new concepts and expressions that integrate China and foreign countries, so that the voice of China can be heard by all the people. Chinese stories are full of China's profound cultural heritage and rich cultural information. By telling Chinese stories to the world, people from all countries can fully understand China, help spread Chinese culture, enhance China's cultural soft power, and establish a good image of China.

Firstly, by disseminating Chinese stories, the world can gain an understanding of China's development achievements. China has become the world's second largest economy, and the exploration and practice of reform and opening up policy over 40 years have brought earth-shaking changes to China. Ms. Chenzheng Yili, Chairman of the Taihua Newspaper Public Welfare Foundation, has witnessed the development achievements of China since the reform and opening up. Compared to her first visit to China more than 40 years ago, the living standards of the Chinese people have undergone tremendous changes. The story of China's development is about people living and working in peace and prosperity, and it is about the country's economic takeoff.

Secondly, disseminating Chinese stories can enhance cultural confidence and promote mutual learning among world civilizations. China is one of the ancient civilizations in the world, and Chinese culture holds an important position in the history of world development. With five thousand years of cultural tradition, China has formed the humanistic spirit, moral standards, and values with its unique characteristics. Chinese culture is an important source of national cohesion and creativity, and an important manifestation of the country's comprehensive competitiveness [4]. Therefore, by disseminating Chinese stories, the world can better understand Chinese culture, and it improves exchanges and mutual understanding among world civilizations.

Thirdly, by disseminating Chinese stories, China's national image can be significantly enhanced. China has always attached great importance to the construction of the international dissemination of Chinese culture. The construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics has achieved remarkable achievements, and Chinese culture is receiving increasing attention from the world. This is a golden opportunity to tell the story of China to the world, to promote China's excellent traditions and culture, to enhance China's international competitiveness influence, and to show the world a multi-dimensional and comprehensive image of China [5].

2.2 The National Image in the Dissemination of Chinese Stories

The national image is a comprehensive entity, which is the overall evaluation and recognition given by the external and internal public to the country itself, its actions, and its achievements [6]. It is the expression and symbol of national strength and national spirit; it is the concentrated embodiment of comprehensive national strength; and it is the most important intangible asset of a country [7]. Scholar Liu Xiaoyan believes that a country's image is the projection of its actions, characteristics and spiritual outlook in public opinion. American political scientist Boulding, K. E. points out that the image of a country includes both its own perception of itself and the perception of other countries in the world towards that country. National image is the result of a combination of information input and output.

During the mid to the late 19th century, the backward feudal system caused China to lag behind Western countries in the wave of world industrialization, and China went from a glorious country in the past to a poor and backward country. In the eyes of Westerners, China is an authoritarian country lacking democracy; Chinese people have low quality and are uncivilized. Even in

contemporary times, these stereotypical and Western shaped images of China exist in many countries around the world. Western society consciously or unconsciously distorts the image of China, and this Western shaped image of China urgently needs to be transformed through China's self-shaping.

Since the mid-20th century, China has embarked on the path of independent and autonomous development as a major country, beginning the process of shaping China's national image by itself. From the beginning of the 21st century, China has produced a series of documentaries to demonstrate its new image, as is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Documentaries to establish a new image of China

Time	Title	Contents
2008	New Beijing, New Olympics	showcase China's national image in the new century through the Olympic Games
2011	"People", "Perspectives"	broadcast on the big screens of Times Square in New York and Gallery Square in Washington, enhancing American public's understanding of China
2015	Beautiful China	broadcast at Piccadilly Square in London, showcasing the scenery, culture, and economic development of China to the British people

Now that China has become the second largest economy in the world and China is playing a more and more significant part in the world stage, China needs to "shape" its good image to the outside world, showcase its excellent culture and traditions, and let the world fully understand China.

The construction and dissemination of China's national image needs to achieve a transformation from "shaping by others" to "self-shaping". In recent years, the "Going Global" strategy of Chinese culture has played an increasingly significant role in shaping China's national image. Thus, China must firmly consolidate its cultural confidence, tell the story and voice of China to the world well, let the world know the true China, and build a good national image.

3. The Shaping of National Image by the Dissemination of Chinese Ceramic Stories

Chinese traditional culture has profound connotations. The shaping of China's national image should start from the traditional, representative, well-known cultures. Chinese ceramic culture is an outstanding representative of traditional Chinese culture [8]. Ceramics originated in China, and Chinese ceramic culture has a long history of more than 5,000 years. Chinese ceramic culture has a far-reaching impact on Eastern and Western civilizations [9], and the Maritime Silk Road has an important role in promoting the world economy and social development. Guided by the "Going Global" of Chinese culture, China is expected to expand its overseas exposition of Chinese ceramic stories, further promote the dissemination of Chinese cultural confidence and traditional Chinese culture, and use ceramics and ceramic stories as media to shape the image of China.

3.1 Establishing a "People-Oriented" Image through Ceramic Stories

"People First" is the core of the Scientific Outlook on Development, which embodies the fundamental purpose of the Chinese government to serve the people wholeheartedly. Telling the story of Chinese ceramics should be centered around people and aim to showcase Chinese people's spirit. The story of Chinese ceramics is not only about the porcelain industry, but also about the porcelain makers. Therefore, the selection of ceramic stories should highlight the people-oriented

principle, be full of humanistic care, and objectively record the true feelings of porcelain workers. It should highlight the important role of human fate, spirit, and personality in the development of the porcelain industry, fully reflecting the relationship between people and nature, and establishing a “people-oriented” national image.

3.2 Establishing a “Culturally Confident” Image through Ceramic Stories

China is the birthplace of ceramics, and Chinese ceramics were renowned worldwide in ancient times. Western countries once took pride in owning Chinese porcelains. However, in the late 18th century, China closed its doors to the world and restricted the export of porcelains, coupled with the rise of the European porcelain industry which weakened the international influence of Chinese ceramics. With the strengthening of China’s comprehensive national strength in the new era, China must vigorously promote Chinese ceramic culture and tell the world the story of Chinese ceramics. In contemporary times, the key to telling the story of Chinese ceramics is to transform the discourse system and build a ceramic discourse system with Chinese characteristics. Ceramic stories should have Chinese characteristics and Chinese style. The discourse power plays an extremely important role in today’s world. To build the discourse power of Chinese ceramics, the storytelling of ceramic stories requires the representation of new concepts and expressions of Chinese ceramics that represent China’s discourse power. Only by showcasing the aesthetic concepts, tastes, values, and technological innovations of Chinese ceramics, can Chinese ceramic stories occupy an important position in the development of world ceramics, and highlight China’s national image of “cultural confidence”.

3.3 Establishing an Image of “Excellence, Integrity and Responsibility” by Media on Ceramics

Film, television, Internet, and streaming media have a wide audience and great promotion power, and now they have occupied most of the media. If ceramic images are publicized through these media, they will certainly achieve good dissemination effects.

In 2009, CCTV launched the TV series *The Great Porcelain Merchant*, which tells the growth history of Jingdezhen’s porcelain industry in the early 20th century. In 2012, the documentary *China’s Porcelain* talks about the important role played by Chinese porcelain in the development of world culture, as well as how Western countries integrated Chinese porcelain into their society, politics, religion, economy, art, and life. In 2014, CCTV Documentary Channel produced a six-episode ceramic documentary called *The Porcelain Road*, which tells the story of the dissemination of Chinese ceramics around the world and is a very typical story about Chinese ceramics. The BBC documentary *Chinese Ceramics* showcases the history and production techniques of Chinese ceramics to the world from a Western perspective. These ceramic stories are outstanding representatives of Chinese ceramic culture and can effectively introduce to the world the great craftsmanship spirit of Chinese porcelain workers who strive for excellence, integrity, and responsibility.

3.4 Establishing an Image of “Mutual Learning” Through Ceramic Exhibitions

With the rapid development of the Chinese economy and the gradual advancement of globalization, cultural exchanges and cooperation between countries are becoming increasingly frequent. Civilization requires mutual learning. In recent years, many Chinese ceramic artists have gone abroad and held ceramic exhibitions overseas or at the headquarters of UNESCO. For example, in May 2009, Jingdezhen Ceramic University held the “China Jingdezhen Ceramic Art Exhibition”

at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, and the unique porcelain works with Chinese characteristics amazed visitors and vigorously promoted Chinese ceramic culture. In 2020, Australia held a New Year exhibition of classic works of Chinese ceramic art, where Chinese ceramic artists and collectors worked together with Australian ceramic enthusiasts to appreciate and exchange Chinese ceramic culture. Telling the story of Chinese ceramics in the form of ceramic exhibitions is an important way to spread Chinese ceramic culture and contributes to shaping the national image of “mutual learning”.

3.5 Establishing a “Peaceful and Friendly” Image through Ceramic Works

The enhancement of China’s national image requires increased international promotion, and the overseas dissemination of Chinese ceramic stories also needs to be strengthened. It is necessary to take advantage of important international occasions to enhance the output effect of Chinese ceramic stories and Chinese ceramic culture. In 2013, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II’s reign, as well as her 86th birthday and 66th anniversary of her diamond wedding, Jingdezhen Ceramic University presented a special porcelain called “Peace” to Queen Elizabeth II. Nowadays, this ceramic work is collected in the British Museum and exhibited to tourists around the world, allowing people from all over the world to learn about China’s ceramic stories and culture, and building a “peaceful and friendly” national image through ceramic works.

3.6 Establishing an “Open and Inclusive” Image through Ceramic Tourism

In recent years, international ceramic tourism has become increasingly popular among foreign tourists. The porcelain capital of Jingdezhen holds an international ceramic expo every October, attracting many foreign ceramic enthusiasts, scholars, and tourists. In Jingdezhen, there are many ceramic attractions favored by plenty of foreign tourists, as can be seen in Table 2. By witnessing the stories of Chinese ceramics, ceramic culture, and economic development achievements, these foreign tourists and scholars can become “ambassadors” for spreading Chinese culture overseas [10], making the world aware of the “open and inclusive” image of China.

Table 2: Famous ceramic tourist sites for foreigners in Jingdezhen

Name	Level
Jingdezhen Ancient Ceramics Exhibition Area	Five-Star
Yuyao National Archaeological Park	Four-Star
China Ceramic Museum	Four-Star
Yaoli Ancient Kiln Site	Four-Star

3.7 Establishing a “Multi-Dimensional” Image through Ceramic Translation

Translation plays an important and unique role in the progress of world civilization [11], and plays a crucial role in the implementation of China’s “Going Global” strategy of culture. In the process of spreading Chinese culture overseas, translators bear the important responsibility of constructing “Chinese discourse power, Chinese cultural dissemination power, and Chinese soft power”. Currently, there are inadequate talents specialized in ceramic translation, and relevant universities and research institutions need to establish a talent training system of ceramic translation to cultivate specialized talents for translating and disseminating Chinese ceramic stories. In terms of translating culture, local translators have unique advantages [12]. Chinese translators can perceive and understand China from multiple dimensions, and by translating Chinese ceramic stories, they

can showcase China’s “multi-dimensional” image to the world.

All in all, these strategies are effective in shaping the new images of China in the new era through the dissemination of ceramic stories, and the strategies can be summarized as follows in Table 3.

Table 3: Means to establish China’s images through ceramic stories

Strategies	Images
by objectively depicting the humanistic care and recording the true feelings of porcelain workers	a “people-oriented” image
by transforming the discourse system and building a ceramic discourse system with Chinese characteristics	a “culturally confident” image
by displaying TV serials and documentaries on mass media	an image of “excellence, integrity and responsibility”
by holding ceramic exhibitions worldwide	an image of “mutual learning”
by displaying ceramic works overseas	a “peaceful and friendly” image
by boosting international ceramic tourism	an “open and inclusive” image
by translating ceramic stories to the world	a “multi-dimensional” image

4. Conclusion

Cultural soft power is an important manifestation of a country’s comprehensive national strength. With more than five thousand years of development, the extensive and profound Chinese culture should move towards the world stage and occupy its rightful position in the global cultural landscape. Guided by the “Going Global” strategy of Chinese culture and the “Belt and Road” initiative, China should always adhere to cultural self-confidence and promote more and more Chinese culture to spread abroad. Chinese ceramic culture has a long history, and the dissemination of Chinese ceramic stories to the world can promote the ceramic culture, ideological concepts, core values, national characteristics, and other aspects of the Chinese nation, and contribute to enhancing cultural confidence, spreading Chinese culture, and enhancing cultural soft power. As a result, China’s national image can be significantly promoted.

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