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On the Inheritance and Communication of Chinese Dragon Boat Culture in the Context of Integrated Media

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Abstract: Dragon Boat Culture, with its profound historical significance and broad grassroots base, is closely linked to the development of the cultural industry and contemporary integrated media. Integrated media provides new channels for the dissemination of Dragon Boat Culture. Through online platforms, the diverse ritual content and rich cultural connotations of Dragon Boat Culture can be rapidly transmitted globally, attracting greater public attention. The dissemination and influence of digital media not only facilitate the better inheritance and promotion of China's Dragon Boat Culture but also enable it to integrate with high technology, creating new cultural and social values.

Keywords: Integrated Media; Dragon Boat Culture; Cultural Dissemination; Cultural Innovation

Dragon Boat Culture, with its long and storied history, is a treasure of traditional Chinese culture. In today's era of globalization and digitalization, the preservation and development of Dragon Boat Culture amidst the wave of integrated media has become a focal point for cultural scholars and communication practitioners.

1. Historical Heritage: Infusing the National Soul into Dragon Boat Culture

As a vital component of traditional Chinese festival culture, Dragon Boat Culture not only embodies profound historical significance but also symbolizes the spirit of the Chinese nation. The origins of Dragon Boat Culture are closely tied to ancient dragon worship and sacrificial activities, reflecting a deep reverence for nature and a prayer for the continuation of life. In ancient agrarian societies, dragons, as deities controlling water, were highly revered by people. Thus, dragon boat racing initially was a sacrificial activity to pray for a bountiful harvest and safety. The legend of Qu Yuan adds rich cultural and emotional dimensions to Dragon Boat Culture. Qu Yuan's patriotic spirit and tragic fate transformed dragon boat racing from mere athletic competition into a means of expressing remembrance and admiration for loyal and virtuous individuals.

1.1 Historical Tradition of Dragon Boat Culture

Dragon Boat Culture boasts a long historical tradition, primarily manifested through the rituals of the Dragon Boat ceremony and the Dragon Boat Feast. First is the comprehensive Dragon Boat ritual. Over time, Dragon Boat Culture gradually evolved from religious ceremonies into folk celebrations, forming diverse expressions across different dynasties and regions. In modern society, Dragon Boat Culture has not only been effectively preserved and passed down but has also integrated into contemporary life through various forms, demonstrating new vitality. As the Dragon Boat Festival is a national public holiday, dragon boat racing once again becomes the focus of celebrations, allowing people to experience the charm of traditional culture by participating in dragon boat activities.

Taking Guangzhou as an example, the annual dragon boat racing activities follow a complete process:

Raising the Dragon (8th day of the 4th lunar month): A blessing ceremony is held to raise the dragon boat buried in the river or pond. The boat is cleaned, the dragon tendon is tightened, oiled, decorated, and the dragon body, head, and tail are repainted. Umbrella flags are also arranged.

Picking Greens (around the 28th day of the 4th lunar month): Rice seedlings, longan leaves, cypress branches, and other plant branches are picked and tied with red cloth on the dragon head, tail, and items like umbrellas and shrines. A worship ceremony is also conducted.

Inviting the Scene (1st to 18th day of the 5th lunar month): The village elders send out "Dragon Boat Invitations" to brother and allied villages, agreeing on a date to visit by rowing the dragon boat, known as "inviting the scene."

Welcoming the Scene (1st to 18th day of the 5th lunar month): Dragon boats from brother and allied villages gather from all directions to foster relationships, displaying skills without competing for ranks, and enjoy dragon boat tea, cakes, and a dragon boat feast.

Dragon Boat Racing: The winner is awarded a whole roasted pig, rice wine, and other prizes.

Storing the Dragon Boat (after the Dragon Boat Festival, latest by the 18th day of the 5th lunar month): An auspicious date is cho-

sen to disassemble the dragon boat's head, tail, and body for storage. The body is usually kept in the water (under the river mud), while the head and tail are enshrined in the ancestral hall. Villagers then gather for the year's final "dragon boat feast," awaiting the next Dragon Boat Festival.

Secondly, there is the Dragon Boat Feast, a cultural symbol. The Dragon Boat Feast is a vibrant spectacle during the Dragon Boat Festival in Guangzhou and a hallmark of Lingnan culture. The feast is rich with auspicious meanings. In "New Words of Guangdong," it is described: "During the fifth and sixth months of the year, dragon boats race," and when the dragon boat "returns victorious, a grand banquet is held to invite relatives and friends."

For instance, the Dragon Boat Feast in Beiting Village, Panyu District, Guangzhou, is famous for its diverse dishes, including traditional green onion oil white-cut chicken, symbolizing good fortune, and savory steamed big dragon grouper. These dishes are not only delicious but also imbued with cultural significance, highlighting the central role of the Dragon Boat Feast in community celebrations.

In the Pearl River Delta, this grand banquet is known as "Dragon Boat Feast." Villages often set up hundreds of tables for the feast, making the festivities as lively as the New Year celebrations. The Dragon Boat Feast is more than just a meal; it carries profound cultural meanings and auspicious connotations. The description in "New Words of Guangdong" reflects the close connection between this tradition and victory and celebration. Whenever a dragon boat team wins a race, villagers invite friends and family to share in the joy.

The Dragon Boat Feast features a variety of dishes, each embodying wishes for health, prosperity, and happiness. For example, green onion oil white-cut chicken symbolizes purity and good fortune, while dishes like Dragon Boat Grouper, with its dampness-expelling properties, provide health benefits to the team members who have just returned from the river. Hosting the Dragon Boat Feast is not only a reward for the hard work of the dragon boat team but also a celebration of community unity and harmony.

1.2 National Spiritual Connotations of Dragon Boat Culture

Dragon Boat Culture embodies diverse national spiritual connotations. As an intangible cultural heritage project, the Dragon Boat Festival carries profound cultural significance and national meaning in contemporary times.

Firstly, the Dragon Boat Festival, an essential carrier of Dragon Boat Culture, transcends familial and village boundaries, becoming a festival shared by the entire nation. Dragon boat racing, commonly known as "rowing the dragon boat," is not just a way to celebrate traditional festivals but also a profound social ritual. It symbolizes clan unity, neighborhood harmony, and prayers for a bountiful harvest. Dragon boat races are not only contests of strength and skill but also expressions of emotional exchange and cultural identity among community members. Through joint participation in this activity, villagers strengthen their bonds and demonstrate their respect for and preservation of traditional culture to the outside world. The Dragon Boat Festival's races have become a bridge connecting the past with the present, individuals with the collective, and the local with the global.

Secondly, dragon boat racing is the most thrilling moment of the festival, representing not only a contest of will and perseverance but also a grand competition of unity and collaboration. As a collective sport, dragon boat racing requires team members to work closely together, paddling in unison to achieve victory. This spirit of teamwork and cooperation is an essential value in traditional Chinese culture. In today's society, the spirit of unity and collaboration remains crucial, whether in family, work, or social life, requiring mutual support and assistance to move forward together.

Thirdly, the Dragon Boat Festival nurtures a sense of patriotism and cultural confidence. The Chinese nation has always been one with a profound soul. During the Dragon Boat Festival, people commemorate the sages, worship noble souls, and engage in various traditional customs to relive and appreciate the powerful charm of traditional Chinese culture. This fosters a sense of national pride and mission to promote outstanding traditional culture. Dragon Boat Culture, as a significant part of Chinese traditional culture, represents the wisdom and creativity of the Chinese people, as well as their cultural confidence and national pride.

Fourthly, Dragon Boat Culture emphasizes harmonious coexistence with nature, reflecting the traditional Chinese philosophy of revering and adapting to nature. Dragon boat races usually take place in natural water bodies like rivers and lakes, demonstrating respect for and utilization of water resources. The Dragon Boat Festival occurs on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month, coinciding with summer, an important time in agrarian societies. Dragon boat activities align with seasonal changes and natural rhythms. Before the races, blessing ceremonies are often held to pray for favorable weather and abundant harvests, expressing gratitude and anticipation for nature's gifts.

Lastly, Dragon Boat Culture showcases diverse regional characteristics, reflecting China's rich cultural tapestry. Different regions exhibit unique forms of dragon boat culture, shaped by their natural environments and geographical features. For instance, the dragon boats of Jiangnan's water towns differ in form and style from those of northern rivers. In terms of folk customs, various regions have distinct procedures and rituals for dragon boat culture, incorporating local beliefs and mythologies into the races, which highlight people's reverence for natural and supernatural forces.

2. Communication the Tradition: The Foundation and Contemporary Challenges of Sustaining Dragon Boat Culture

As an integral part of traditional Chinese culture, Dragon Boat Culture not only has deep historical roots in China but is also gaining attention globally. Traditional media, including television, radio, newspapers, and magazines, play a crucial role in the transmission and development of Dragon Boat Culture by covering dragon boat races and introducing the history and significance of this tradition. As a primary channel for cultural communication, traditional media hold an irreplaceable position in the dissemination of Dragon Boat Culture.

2.1 Historical Influence of Traditional Media

Firstly, traditional media have historically played a significant role in promoting Dragon Boat Culture through various channels such as television, radio, newspapers, and magazines. Television and radio, as audiovisual media, can vividly showcase the intensity and grandeur of dragon boat races, allowing viewers, even from afar, to experience the event's lively atmosphere. Television broadcasts enable dragon boat races to reach a broader audience, enhancing public awareness and interest in Dragon Boat Culture. Radio, with its portability and immediacy, offers a swift means of disseminating information about dragon boat events.

Newspapers and magazines contribute through in-depth reporting, series, and special features, providing readers with comprehensive information about Dragon Boat Culture. These reports not only cover real-time event updates but also delve into the origins, development, rituals, and symbolic meanings of Dragon Boat Culture. Such detailed coverage helps the public gain a deeper understanding, facilitating cultural transmission and exchange.

2.2 Challenges in the Communication of Dragon Boat Culture in the New Media Era

While Dragon Boat Culture remains an essential part of China's intangible cultural heritage, its traditional methods of communication face significant challenges in the modern era. Both from a societal and cultural communication perspective, these challenges hinder the continuation of traditional methods in contemporary society.

Firstly, the traditional communication of Dragon Boat Culture heavily relies on local festivals and events, limiting its influence and reach to specific regions. To overcome this limitation, modern communication technologies and platforms such as social media and live streaming can be utilized. These tools can broaden the communication channels for Dragon Boat Culture, enhancing its social influence and reach across different regions.

Secondly, cultural fragmentation and generational gaps pose a significant threat. As the number of older artisans who pass down the craft decreases, and the younger generation shows little interest in learning and inheriting the tradition, the risk of cultural discontinuity increases. To address this, it is crucial to enhance education and social awareness. Schools and community programs should emphasize the importance of Dragon Boat Culture, fostering interest and awareness among the younger generation to cultivate a sense of cultural inheritance.

Thirdly, the influence of commercialization poses a substantial challenge. Under the pressure of market economy, the traditional communication of Dragon Boat Culture faces the risk of commercialization, with some activities deviating from their original cultural purposes, thereby diluting the cultural purity. Moving forward, it is essential to protect the traditional essence of Dragon Boat Culture, avoiding excessive commercialization that could erode its core cultural values.

3. Integrated Media Communication: Empowering Dragon Boat Culture with High-Tech Wings

With the development of science and technology, traditional media are also constantly integrating modern technology, such as live broadcasting through network platforms and interaction through social media. This integration not only broadens the communication channels of traditional media, but also makes the transmission of dragon boat culture more diversified and three-dimensional.

3.1 Broader Avenues for Dragon Boat Culture Communication in the Context of Integrated Media

Firstly, Under the broad context of integrated media, new media such as social media, blogs, video platforms, and mobile applications, with their rapid dissemination speed, wide coverage, and strong interactivity, provide robust support for the global spread of Dragon Boat Culture. The characteristics of these platforms not only facilitate the swift dissemination of Dragon Boat Culture among people of different ages and cultural backgrounds but also offer ample space for cross-cultural exchange and discussion.

Social media platforms like Weibo, Facebook, and Instagram allow users to instantly share images, videos, and personal experiences of dragon boat races. This instant sharing significantly enhances the visibility of Dragon Boat Culture, enabling global audiences to experience the lively atmosphere of dragon boat events in real time.

Blogs and forums provide professional platforms for in-depth discussions on Dragon Boat Culture. Experts, scholars, enthusiasts, and ordinary viewers can share their understanding, insights, and experiences of Dragon Boat Culture by writing articles, posting comments, and participating in discussions. This deep exchange helps deepen the public's understanding and appreciation of Dragon Boat Culture.

Video sharing platforms like YouTube and Bilibili vividly showcase the fierce competition of dragon boat races and the unique charm of

traditional culture through high-quality video content. The richness and visual appeal of video content allow viewers to deeply immerse themselves in the atmosphere of Dragon Boat Culture, sparking their interest and curiosity about this cultural tradition.

Secondly, innovative applications of digital technology. Through digital recording and preservation, an increasing number of intangible cultural heritage projects are being simultaneously backed up in the digital virtual world, which facilitates the widespread adoption of online cultural displays. Technological advancements enhance the fidelity, immersion, and interactivity of online presentations of heritage^[1]. Digital technologies, such as Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR), offer innovative ways to present Dragon Boat Culture. These technologies not only provide immersive experiences that make Dragon Boat Culture more vivid and easier to disseminate but also attract more attention and participation from younger generations. The data analysis capabilities of new media also support cultural dissemination strategies by helping communicators precisely target audiences and optimize dissemination effects.

Combining the Dragon Boat Festival with video games extends the target audience of Dragon Boat Culture to younger generations. Video games, characterized by their virtual, social, and entertaining aspects, are widely popular. The large audience of video games makes them a powerful channel for disseminating intangible cultural heritage. Integrating heritage culture into games is a beneficial attempt at contemporary inheritance and promotion of intangible cultural heritage. Regarding the Dragon Boat Festival, the well-known historical figure Qu Yuan and his story, along with the rich activities and uniquely shaped, beautifully decorated dragon boats and lively character images, fit well with the development needs of video games^[2].

Thirdly, combining new media with education. New media is also widely used in the educational field, imparting knowledge of Dragon Boat Culture to younger generations through online courses, virtual experiences, and interactive games. This educational approach not only increases the fun of learning but also makes the transmission of traditional culture more vivid and effective. With the educational methods provided by new media, the dissemination of Dragon Boat Culture is no longer confined to specific times and places but becomes more flexible and widespread.

3.2 Integrated Media: Leading Edge and Developmental Advantages in Dragon Boat Culture Dissemination

With the rapid development of information technology, new media has become a crucial channel for cultural dissemination. The immediacy, broad reach, interactivity, and personalization of new media play a unique and critical role in the spread of Dragon Boat Culture.

The strong immediacy of integrated media allows information to be disseminated at an exceptionally fast pace, quickly reaching a wide audience. For traditional activities like dragon boat racing, which have local characteristics and deep cultural significance, integrated media can swiftly spread information nationwide and even globally, allowing more people to learn about and appreciate these traditional events. Simultaneously, real-time updates on dragon boat races through integrated media can attract and maintain audience interest.

The broad coverage of integrated media platforms enables Dragon Boat Culture to reach a diverse audience. By integrating various communication channels such as television, radio, newspapers, and the internet, integrated media platforms cover different demographic groups. People from urban and rural areas, of various ages, genders, and professions, can access Dragon Boat Culture. This extensive reach helps break the geographic and demographic limitations, drawing more attention and interest to Dragon Boat Culture.

Interactivity is another crucial feature of integrated media platforms, significantly enhancing user engagement in cultural activities. The interactive nature of these platforms allows audiences to participate in discussions, creation, and dissemination of Dragon Boat Culture, thereby increasing cultural engagement. Key roles of interactivity in the dissemination of Dragon Boat Culture through integrated media include instant feedback, community interaction, content co-creation, online events, personalized experiences, and emotional connections. These interactive methods not only increase participation but also promote cultural exchange, innovation, and preservation, making Dragon Boat Culture more dynamic and diverse.

Personalization in integrated media is reflected in customized content and personalized recommendations. Users can select specific themes or areas of interest, and integrated media platforms will push related content based on their preferences. For example, users interested in Dragon Boat Culture can receive information about dragon boat races, boat making, and festival celebrations, thus obtaining a richer and more in-depth cultural experience.

New media forms, including social media, video platforms, blogs, forums, and educational applications, have significantly enhanced the visibility of Dragon Boat Culture, facilitated in-depth exchanges, promoted educational inheritance, and supported international dissemination. New media not only expands the influence of Dragon Boat Culture but also injects new vitality into the preservation and development of traditional culture. In the future, further exploration of the integration of new media and traditional Dragon Boat Culture is essential to achieve more effective cultural dissemination and enhance cultural confidence.

While integrated media offers new platforms and methods for the dissemination of Dragon Boat Culture, it also presents challenges such as information fragmentation and attention dispersion. It is crucial to address these challenges to harness the full potential of integrated media in cultural dissemination.

4. International Communication: Bridging Dragon Boat Culture to the World

Dragon Boat Culture, a traditional festival activity originating from ancient China, has now crossed borders, showcasing its unique charm on the international stage. With the development of globalization, Dragon Boat Culture has emerged not only as a competitive sport but also as a cultural symbol, conveying the spiritual essence of the Chinese nation to the world.

If integrated media represents the techniques and methods of disseminating Dragon Boat Culture, then international dissemination embodies the goals and directions of this cultural spread. Specifically, the international dissemination of Dragon Boat Culture can be approached through several key avenues.

4.1 Hold International Dragon Boat Races

Firstly, inviting international teams to participate in local dragon boat races by providing visa support and event guidelines is crucial. Concurrently, actively organizing local teams to participate in international dragon boat competitions serves as a cultural exchange ambassador. Hosting such events promotes mutual understanding and respect among people from diverse cultural backgrounds, contributing to the construction of a harmonious and diverse international society.

Producing documentaries and educational videos related to Dragon Boat Culture in multiple languages, including English, French, and Spanish, is essential. Additionally, creating multilingual e-books and manuals that introduce the history, traditions, and crafting methods of dragon boats can help overcome language and regional barriers, attracting a global audience. By making and promoting content in various languages, Dragon Boat Culture can reach and captivate international viewers more effectively.

Establishing Dragon Boat Culture-themed pages on platforms like Facebook and Instagram, with regular posts about dragon boat events, crafting techniques, and cultural stories, can significantly increase visibility. Utilizing Twitter and TikTok to publish short videos and dynamic content can also attract younger audiences, expanding the cultural reach.

Partnering with live streaming platforms such as YouTube Live or Twitch to broadcast significant dragon boat events can boost real-time engagement. Additionally, conducting online Q&A sessions and audience polls during these live streams can enhance viewer participation and interest.

Through these strategic initiatives, Dragon Boat Culture can effectively bridge cultural divides, presenting its rich heritage and vibrant traditions to the world while fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of Chinese culture globally.

4.2 Carry Out Cultural Creative Development of Dragon Boat Cultural Products

Firstly, strengthening cultural creative design and planning. Designing culturally distinctive dragon boat-themed products, such as model boats, clothing, decorations, and jewelry, and selling them globally through international e-commerce platforms like eBay, can enhance the reach of Dragon Boat Culture. These products not only serve as tangible representations of the culture but also create opportunities for global audiences to engage with and appreciate the tradition.

Secondly, creating cross-cultural content. Collaborating with internationally renowned artists to develop thematic projects that integrate dragon boat elements into music, dance, and theatrical performances is vital. Additionally, supporting the inclusion of dragon boat culture as a backdrop or plot element in films and television series can further familiarize global audiences with this rich tradition. Such cross-cultural content creation fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of Dragon Boat Culture worldwide.

Thirdly, enhancing digital exhibitions and virtual reality capabilities. Developing virtual reality applications that simulate the dragon boat racing experience allows users to engage with the culture from their homes using VR devices. Hosting online 3D digital exhibitions to showcase the intricate craftsmanship and historical evolution of dragon boats can also expand global exposure. Employing data analytics, such as analyzing social media and website traffic, can help identify audience interests and preferences in different regions. This information can be used to tailor content delivery strategies, enhancing the appeal and effectiveness of cultural dissemination.

Lastly, fostering international cooperation and exchange. Collaborating with overseas cultural centers and Confucius Institutes to organize dragon boat culture workshops and exhibitions can facilitate international cultural exchange. Partnering with international festival organizations to include dragon boat races in global cultural festival agendas will further promote the culture on an international scale. These efforts help establish Dragon Boat Culture as a significant and celebrated cultural phenomenon across borders.

4.3 Implementing the Dragon Boat Cultural Ambassador Program

First, individuals with international vision and communication skills are selected as cultural ambassadors, and training is provided to them, including knowledge of dragon boat culture, international etiquette and foreign language skills, so that they can participate in international cultural exchange activities.

Second, use influence marketing. Work with cultural ambassadors, international personalities or opinion leaders to promote dragon boat

culture through their social media platforms. Invite cultural ambassadors and international celebrities to participate in dragon boat races to enhance the international visibility of the races.

Third, establish an international communication platform. Establish a dedicated international communication website to provide the latest news, videos and interactive content of dragon boat races. The website provides a multilingual interface to facilitate visitors from different countries and regions.

Fourth, strengthen media cooperation and content sharing. Cooperate with international media such as CNN and BBC to share wonderful content and stories of dragon boat culture. Expand the spread of dragon boat culture through content sharing.

4.4 Policy Support and Capital Input

First, strengthen the promotion of dragon boat culture in international education. Promoting Dragon Boat Culture in international educational settings is a key aspect of its presence on the global stage. Schools in many countries are incorporating Dragon Boat Culture into their curricula. By engaging students in activities such as dragon boat crafting and racing, these educational initiatives provide hands-on experiences and learning opportunities, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Chinese culture among students.

Second, seek government cultural promotion funds. Securing government cultural promotion funds is a crucial strategy for advancing the international dissemination of Dragon Boat Culture. To effectively pursue such funding, it is essential to thoroughly understand relevant government policies, application criteria, and allowable uses of funds. Develop a comprehensive project proposal that includes objectives, implementation steps, expected outcomes, and budget arrangements, emphasizing the uniqueness of Dragon Boat Culture and its significance for international outreach. Assess potential risks in project execution and establish appropriate mitigation strategies. Additionally, create a project evaluation mechanism to measure cultural impact, audience feedback, and international influence.

Finally, collaborate with cultural institutions and enterprises to secure sponsorships. Collaborating with cultural institutions and enterprises is vital for securing sponsorships to support international Dragon Boat Culture activities and projects. This approach not only enhances global recognition of Chinese culture but also contributes positively to global cultural exchange and integration. By partnering with suitable collaborators such as cultural institutions, academic organizations, and overseas Chinese groups, we can collectively advance the international promotion of Dragon Boat Culture.

5. Conclusion

In summary, Traditional media plays a crucial role in the dissemination of Dragon Boat Culture. It not only provides a solid foundation for the preservation of Dragon Boat Culture but also serves as a bridge for its international promotion. As media technology continues to advance, the integration of traditional and emerging media will open up broader opportunities and possibilities for the spread of Dragon Boat Culture. Traditional media should continue to leverage its strengths and integrate modern technologies to make greater contributions to the promotion and development of Dragon Boat Culture.

According to the Opinions on Promoting the Implementation of the National Cultural Digitalization Strategy issued by the Central Office and the State Council, various regions are vigorously advancing cultural digitalization^[3], continuously enriching business formats and seizing the initiative in cultural digital development. Therefore, we should continue to enhance the international dissemination of Dragon Boat Culture, innovate our communication methods, and increase global awareness and appreciation of this uniquely Chinese cultural tradition. This will collectively contribute to the diversity and harmonious development of world culture.

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