

Full Length Research Paper

An exploration into the revival path of Peking Opera in the perspective of "Cooperative Communication": Discussion on the dispute between Leehom Wang and Peiyu Wang in a Chinese Talk Show

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November 4th, 2018, in the first episode of the third season of the Tucao Conference, a most popular talk show in China, pop singer Leehom Wang and Peking Opera actor Peiyu Wang debated whether pop songs should be incorporated with elements of Peking Opera. Peiyu Wang believes that young people should give themselves the opportunity to listen to Peking Opera. Pop songs should not encroach on Peking Opera. She thinks it is a kind of awkwardness to Peking Opera. Leehom Wang thinks that "if you don't sing, I don't sing, the Beijing Opera stage will be empty." "Beijing Opera" is China's "national drama", which is a flexible "brand" symbol on the international stage to convey the Chinese image. The paper is divided into three parts. Firstly, for evaluating the Beijing Opera as a Chinese art brand based on the relevant theoretical framework of brand strategy, the necessity of Beijing Opera improvement is pointed out. Secondly, the feasibility of improving Peking Opera is explained from the history of Peking Opera. Thirdly, the solution is proposed, that is, the improvement of Peking Opera needs to draw on the concept of "cooperative communication" and put up with the improvement plan of cooperation with whom and from which aspects. "Cooperative communication" model creates "new Pecking Opera" from the four aspects, which are "content", "subject", "objective" and "channel", so that Beijing Opera can keep youth, popular and go to the world.

Key words: Cooperative communication, Peking Opera, popular culture, brand building.

INTRODUCTION

In the past, some Beijing Opera studies put forward the idea that Beijing Opera should be innovative (Wang, 2018). However, there is no specific innovation plan for how to innovate and not exceed the form and regulation

of Beijing Opera art itself (Meng, 2018). This article is inspired by the recent debates on the development of Peking Opera in the mainland China's hot talk show. It combines the theoretical framework of cooperation and

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communication, and proposes a more specific plan for the direction of Beijing Opera's innovation, and surpasses its own artistic content. The category is placed in the process of transmit to.

"Tucao Conference", a famous talk show in China, is a slogan of "Tucao (Roast in English) is an art, to be laughed at needs courage", invites stars to participate, and teases and laughs at each other in a comedy talk show. At present, the total click-through rate after the first two seasons of the program is as high as 1.59 billion times, becoming a "phenomenon-level" network program (Yue, 2018). November 4, 2018 "Tucao Conference" third quarter in the first issue, pop singer Leehom Wang and Peking Opera actor Peiyu Wang debated whether pop songs should be added to Peking Opera elements. Peiyu Wang believes that young people should give themselves the opportunity to listen to Peking Opera. Pop songs should not encroach on Peking Opera. She believes that pop music utilizing the elements of Peking Opera is a kind of embarrassment for the classic art. Leehom Wang claims that "if you don't sing, I don't sing, the Beijing Opera stage will be empty." The singer David Zee Tao who participated in the program at the same time believed that the most important problem in Peking Opera spreading was that the insider could not make it more in line with the tastes of modern people, so that the layman was "involved".

It is true that Peiyu Wang is worthy of recognition for the promotion of Peking Opera. As the winner of the Chinese Drama Plum Blossom Award, she started to play the album "Beijing Opera is very fun" in the Himalayan FM in 2016, recording 100 programs in one year; she is also hot in early 2018 the CCTV popular variety show "Classic never stop", she is "radical" on-the-spot teaching, let the virtual singer Luo Tianyi "learn" a section of "empty city plan." However, the "effect" of the effort was questioned, and eventually fell into the embarrassing situation that the intention of Peiyu Wang is "promoting Peking Opera or promoting herself."

METHODOLOGY

In addition to the case analysis, this paper mainly utilizes a framework analysis in this qualitative research. First, the political economics framework is used to explain the necessity and historical logic of Peking Opera's cooperative communication. Second, the cooperative communication theory framework is used to provide specific solutions for Peking Opera innovation. Finally, this article also shows a number of related Peking Opera repertoires as a case to explain the cooperation communication program.

RESULTS

The three dimensions of Peking Opera brand building: "Uniqueness, creativity, and contribution"

"Beijing Opera" is China's "national drama" (Chi, 2018),

which is a flexible "brand" symbol on the international stage to convey the Chinese image (Gao, 2018). According to the research related to national brands, whether a "brand" symbol can successfully represent the "national image" must be judged from three dimensions, namely "uniqueness, creativity and contribution" (Liu, 2018). Among them, "uniqueness" refers to a country to display its uniqueness often based on its own geographical environment and humanistic historical conditions, so it is more expressed as a "past orientation"; "creativity" refers to transforming and upgrading the unique elements of the past based on the actual communication needs, in order to adapt to the current national strategic needs and the new international communication environment, which is "present-oriented"; "contribution" refers to explaining the contribution to the culture of others during its own development, usually regard as a "future orientation". Obviously, Peking Opera has paid too much attention to the display of history in the current spreading process, showing a strong "uniqueness", but there is still a long way to go in the "creativity" of the cultural needs of the current audience and youth groups, as well as the "contribution" of the transformation and absorption of heterogeneous cultural factors. As a form of music, Peking Opera is inseparable from the characteristics of the times. Each era has its own cultural characteristics. As a kind of history and a cultural carrier, it should record the emotions and sorrows of people of different eras. This is not to say that Peking Opera wants to lose its own way of expression and succumb to the European centralism of music, losing its own cultural genes; on the contrary, Peking Opera should use its own form of expression to meet the aesthetic and emotional needs of a new generation in content, and insist its own characteristics to re-construct "popular" music, even Western music, to achieve the effect of "including each other with pop music." This requires that Beijing Opera cannot forget the history logic of its own development (Peng, 2018), if it would only stick to the stereotyped rules and music conservatism. Culture will lose vitality without integration. Looking back on the development of Peking Opera, its peak period is the time to learn from other musical genres. If later generations forget history, and only seek to remain unchanged, this is not a respect for traditional culture, but rather a shackle of the spirit of traditional culture. Table 1 runs a comparative analysis of Peking Opera Brand Building in these three dimensions.

THE HISTORICAL LOGIC OF THE PEKING OPERA DEVELOPMENT

"Popular to the classic" means "from the mass to the minority"

The movement of popular to classics, like the concept of

Table 1. Comparative analysis of Peking Opera brand building in three dimensions.

Dimension	Explanation	Orientation	Whether is it the strength or weakness of Peking Opera?
Uniqueness	Based on its own geographical environment and humanistic historical conditions	Past orientation	Strength
Creativity	Transforming and upgrading the unique elements of the past based on the actual communication needs, in order to adapt to the current needs and the new international communication environment	Present-oriented	Weakness
Contribution	Explaining the contribution to the culture of others during its own development	Future orientation	Weakness

"fashion", is always spiraling up and down after a period of time. The "popular" culture is often the form that most people like to see, that is, the "mass" culture; while the "classic" is often associated with "elegance", although the quality is high, it has become a "niche market". The "popular culture" of an era tends to become the "classic culture" of the next era through intergenerational changes and "big waves". The same is true of Peking Opera that its most glorious time is exactly a kind of "popular culture" (Qi, 2018), which appeared in various festivals of the people (Pollard and Mackerras, 2009). The age, class and education level of the audience are widely distributed, and its development process is full of learning and innovation, until the middle and late Qing Dynasty, gradually formed a mature and unique music art form. Once people begin to claim that Peking Opera has become the art of "classic", "elegant" and "traditional", its vitality has begun to shrink. As stated in the Tao Te Ching, "the sun will fall as it is highest, the moon will be deficient when it is full". What is the reason for this? First of all, popular or classic, closely related to the number of people who can appreciate it. What a few people can appreciate or understand is "elegant" or "classic". If everyone can understand

and consume, then it should be called "popular"; the second reason is the analysis of relations between political and economic. Each generation has an artistic and cultural product. Music is no exception, and as people grow older, their acceptability and interest to new things will also be reduced, older people tend to be conservative. Therefore, when people who appreciate Beijing Opera gradually gain control over various resources of society, their cultural tastes will often become a "high-order" cultural interest. Third, "learning" can be understood as "classic", "entertainment" is accepted as "popular". If the younger generation wants to take more social resources from them, they need to "understand" the aesthetic taste of previous generation. They need to "learn" to understand the previous people's "entertainment", which is so complicated and difficult to them, it makes young people to respect the last generation very much. In fact, if the previous generation is to understand the "entertainment" of the next generation, it also needs to "learn". But after all, whoever has the "money" and "power", they will have the right to define "elegance" and "popularity." Therefore, the Beijing Opera, which was originally "popular", turned into an "classic" in our current era.

Peking Opera spreading cannot escape the "market choice"

The Hui Opera is the predecessor of Peking Opera (Qiang, 2003). The success of business has triggered the rise of cultural consumption desires of Huizhou merchants. The Huizhou business group, which has been prosperous in the Ming and Qing dynasties for more than 500 years, which is famous for its salt merchants. With the development of social economy and the rise of Kunshan tune, the elites and wealthy businessmen along the Changjiang River had been keeping family troupes (Zheng, 2018). Huizhou merchants who have already emerged in the other places have followed the wind enthusiastically. The Opera group that was used by a certain Huizhou businessman for a long time was called "Hui Ban" (Wang, 2018). The ancient Huizhou local opera also began to prosper at the same time (Wu, 2018). Because of the difference in language, they did not "harmonize Wu tune", so they sang Kun, especially the Stone Plate tune is the most famous, which was born in Huaining County, Anqing City, Anhui Province. Huizhou artists traveled Yangzhou under their own accent, with Huizhou merchants' patrons and heavy money

support. They are either in the streets and quays, or for the wealthy merchants of Huizhou. The skills have been developed, and the local accent has gradually gained the upper hand (Zhan, 2017).

It can be seen that the initial development of Peking Opera is the same as the development of today's popular music. The stars are the wealth. The Huizhou merchants' investment and packaging for the "pop singer" of their era made these Hui Opera actors being stars, which is no different with the current era, the media culture company invested by capitalists cultivates some "signature artists" to satisfy their desire to show their wealth and strength through "artists". But the Huizhou merchants are more straight, they directly claimed to "stock the art team". The market's choice of cultural products makes the "invisible hand" clearly visible, so there is no art that will be popular away from the market, or regardless of the audience amount. If the art is separated from the "mass," the capital will also disappear.

"Political endorsement" makes Peking Opera to the peak

Of course, the Huizhou merchants at the time were just like the wealthy people nowadays. They were not just "signing artists" for their own hobbies. They could also obtain more practical benefits through their own "troopers", even "political speculation". For example, some powerful Huishang merchants have been cultivating their own troopers in order to consolidate their vested interests, and they have been working hard to collect the beautiful and skillful actress for the Emperor Qianlong touring the south of the Yangtze River. They spared no expense in packaging the Huizhou Opera stars to amuse the royal family to carry out political speculation.

In the fifty-five years of the Emperor Qianlong reign (1790) in the Qing Dynasty, Sanqing, Sixi, Chuntai, and Hechun, which were originally performed in the South, entered the Beijing in succession (Li, 2018). They cooperated with the Han artists from Hubei and accepted some of the repertoires, the tunes, performance methods, and the folk tunes of Kunqu and Qinqiang. Through continuous exchanges and integration, the Peking Opera was finally formed. After the formation of Peking Opera, it began to develop rapidly in the court of the Qing Dynasty and received unprecedented prosperity until the Republic of China (Sui et al., 2012). Why "politics" also needs Peking Opera, as Benedict said in his "Imagined Community", the drama conveys the content of their values in the feudal villages for the landlords, so that the peasants can unwittingly accept the values of ruling class (Anderson, 2011). Peking Opera as such an ideology tool has a flexible infiltration function, Chairman Mao said: If we do not occupy the propaganda battlefield of the proletarian revolution, the enemy will occupy (Mao, 1977). In the current situation of western consumerism

and hedonism, if Peking Opera artists cannot make it to spread a national excellent value, then there will be a situation in which singer Tao Shu said that "the insider does not work hard and the layman takes advantage of it", and this kind of phenomenon is more destructive.

Four reasons for the decline of Peking Opera

However, after the Republic of China, Peking Opera gradually declined.

First, because of the invasion of modern Western powers bring social unrest, Peking Opera no longer had the development environment like the past.

The second was due to the entire old China under the violence of the West, it lost its self-confidence to the culture of their own nation. It made us absorb the western civilization in its entirety and completely negate the oriental civilization. So far, we cannot take it away from this "hundred years of inferiority".

Third, "cultural imperialism" relies on education, science and technology, and the mass media to spread widely, which has made the Chinese people even the whole Asian area eagerly worship the western culture. The Western central theory of music is still the mainstream of music education in China.

The fourth reason is that Beijing Opera artists in the contemporary era has forgotten the development process of Peking Opera and forget its historical logic of "Hui and Han Convergence" and "Hui and Qin Convergence", they over-declared the Beijing Opera mysteriously, too much to keep the old form, and it is difficult to meet the aesthetic needs of the current audience. Of course, in recent years, some musicians have gradually realized this problem and tried to make certain changes, such as Li Yugang and Tan Weiwei. In their works, they have incorporated a large number of traditional art forms such as Peking Opera and Qinqiang, which make the audience refreshed and make traditional operas sprout again. The vitality of the classics has once again turned the trend to the popular, completing the "popular-classic" unity of opposites, but this practice worth encouraging is still controversial in the music industry.

In summary, "popular-classic" is a spiral cycle among generations. Classical things can only re-populate with the breath of the times; popular things, will become classic with the social class changing of fans and their own precipitation. Only this kind of popular and classic cycle can make Beijing Opera elegant and full of vitality, keeping up with the times without losing its cultural heritage.

USING "COOPERATIVE COMMUNICATION" MODEL TO EXPLORE THE NEW PATH OF PEKING OPERA DEVELOPMENT

"Cooperative Communication" is a new idea and new

Table 2. The cooperation partners of Peking Opera.

Category	Specific explanation
In the vertical direction	With local history, culture and its own expression techniques
Horizontally	With contemporary excellent popular culture
From a geographical perspective	With "domestic" cultural products, but also with "international" cultural products
From the perspective of intelligence (Yu, 2018) in composing and performing	strengthen the link with popular cultural artists

model of cross-cultural communication generated under the "One Belt, One Road" initiative. It generally refers to an important mode that helps China improve its international communication capabilities and effects through Chinese and foreign media. Scholars Meng Bin, Yao Wei, Zhong Xin, etc., proposed that "cooperative communication" should be constructed from four aspects: narrative "contents", "perspectives", "subjects" and "methods". This paper introduces the "cooperative communication" model into the strategy of Peking Opera promotion, and re-adjusts the four aspects of "cooperative communication" according to the framework of the "transmitter, audience, channel, content" of the communication process, which are "content", "subject", "objects" and "channel".

The cooperation partners of Peking Opera in the context of "cooperative communication" should have the following aspects: in the vertical direction, it is still necessary to play a "cooperation" with local history, culture and its own expression techniques; horizontally, it must collaborate with contemporary excellent popular culture; from a geographical perspective, it is necessary to be good at cooperating with "domestic" cultural products, but also with "international" cultural products, through cooperation, to produce "resonance" and "understanding" with younger audiences, domestic audiences and even international audiences. From the perspective of intelligence in composing and performing, it

should strengthen the link with popular cultural artists, breaking the "scorn chain" between popular music and classic music. We can see the all partner categories and specific explanation in Table 2.

The "content" of Peking Opera's "cooperative communication" should be explored from real life in order to enhance the sense of bringing in the audience and get the psychological feeling of "presence". For example, during the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression in China, there were a number of outstanding Peking Opera creations, such as "Song Lin Hate", have strong timeliness and pertinence; in the southwest, the anti-Japanese Peking Opera "Jiangnan Fisherman's Song", "The Death of Nie Zheng", "Pinggui's Farewell", "Liang Hongyu", and according to the real story of anti-Japanese general Li Zongren, Zhang Zizhong, who commanded to defend Linyi, the new Beijing Opera "War in Linyi" was composed, which was very good at the time and warmly welcomed. In the anti-Japanese bases and guerrilla zones led by the Communist Party, there also were a large number of small theater groups. Whether the works of art can be loved by the audience is mainly depended on whether their content can reflect the voice of the audience. In the contemporary era, Beijing Opera should let the audience truly realize "zero distance" with the audience and create the content drawing from the people's life to win the audience's resonance.

The "subject" of Peking Opera in "cooperative communication" means that Peking Opera artists should be good at "cross-border cooperation" and learn to "speak by other's mouth." The Beijing Opera industry can take the initiative to invite pop singers and songwriters to help Beijing Opera to be grafted to pop music (Li, 2018), eliminating the self-amusement of Peking Opera. For example, Leehom Wang and Tan Weiwei used the elements of Peking Opera in many works, which made the audience refreshed. The expansion of the communication scope, reflected the concept of cooperation communication, and also broke the barrier of the art world, and modestly learn from heterogeneous musical expressions.

The "objects" of Peking Opera "cooperative communication" should shift from "transporter standard" to "recipient standard". Peking opera performances and creative artists should have a deep understanding of the masses, especially the thinking of the younger generation, as well as their musical tastes. The largest consumer group of cultural products is young people. If Peking Opera can grasp the psychology of this group of audiences, then it will create a new era of Peking Opera. For example, Leehom Wang's "the Bridge of Fate" is the ending song of the epic magical movie "Great Wall", which was directed by Zhang Yimou and assembled with Chinese and foreign superstars such as Matt Damon, William Dafoe, Andy Lau, and Zhang Hanyu. The representative work of the Tang Dynasty poet Wang Changling

Table 3. The framework of "Cooperative Communication" Model to Explore the New Path of Peking Opera Development.

What to reconstruct?	How to do?	Why to reconstruct?	Successful Examples
Content	Be explored from real stories of today's life	In order to enhance the sense of bringing in the audience and get the psychological feeling of "presence"	During the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression in China, there were a number of outstanding Peking Opera creations, such as "Song Lin Hate", have strong timeliness and pertinence
Subject	Be good at "cross-border cooperation" and learn to "speak by other's mouth."	Eliminate the self-amusement and lose the majority audience	Yugang Li and Tan Weiwei used the elements of Peking Opera in many works, which made the audience refreshed.
Channel	Be down to earth and move from "single channel" to "multiple channel"	Find where and how to find the audience.	A classic improvisation called "Battle of Wits" Implanted in the phenomenal TV series "The Name of the People"
Objects	Shift from "transporter standard" to "recipient standard", especially the thinking of the younger generation	The largest consumer group of cultural products is young people.	Leehom Wang's "the Bridge of Fate" as the ending song of the epic magical movie "Great Wall", which was directed by Zhang Yimou and assembled with Chinese and foreign superstars such as Matt Damon, William Dafoe

which is called "Out of the Frontier Fortress", is selected as a part of lyric. With the audience's favorite "IP", this song spread rapidly with Chinese characteristics throughout the country, even to the international.

The "channel" of Peking Opera's "cooperative communication" means that Peking Opera should be down to earth and move from "single channel" to "multiple channel". The term "channel" as used here refers not only to media technology (Ai, 2018). There is currently a view that putting Peking Opera on the internet (Liu, 2016), or using the new media technologies such as AR/VR, can solve all the problems, which is actually an illusion. An audience born in 80s, Chen Dong, talked about his feelings about watching the 3D panoramic Beijing Opera "Cao Cao and Yang Xiu", "for a super IP without piracy, it needs to know how to find its own audience." The audience in the cinema, generally has been at an old age, no matter how good new technology (Zhang,

2018). From the channel point of view, Peiyu Wang's attempt is worthwhile. Certainly, she at least allowed Peking Opera to enter the field of talk show like "Tucao Conference", but it would be unnatural if it was just hard implanted. Another successful case is that in the phenomenal TV series "The Name of the People", Lu Yi, acting as an anti-corruption director and the villain entrepreneur performing a improvisation called "Battle of Wits" in a banquet seems quite to match the plot, and at the same time, this drama makes the piece of modern Peking Opera familiar and loved by the audience, which is undoubtedly a successful channel cooperation and expansion. Table 3 summarizes the framework of all aspects mentioned earlier.

DISCUSSION

This paper mainly suggests that Beijing Opera

should be good at cooperating with other art forms, communication channels, and artists to transform itself. The historical origin, feasibility, and operation plan of this concept of cooperative communication are the three parts of the article. However, at present, quite a number of Peking Opera practitioners and scholars believe that Peking Opera belongs to elegant art and should stick to its own tradition (Wei, 2018; Xu, 2018); and should not be touched by popular culture. Although this view is hold by many Peking Opera artists like Peiyu Wang, it avoids the historical development process that Beijing Opera was popular with as a popular culture as a popular audience. It is difficult to adapt Beijing Opera to the development of the current era, but it has increasingly separated the Peking Opera art from the mass base. These two views will continue to be debated in the future. However, from the point of view of this article, if we want to cooperate with other art forms, communication channels, and

content production methods, we still need to further explore the elements of Peking Opera should be related to these factors. The deeper degree of integration can guarantee its uniqueness, so that it is not degraded into other art forms.

Conclusion

"Beijing Opera" is China's "national drama", which is a flexible "brand" symbol on the international stage to convey the Chinese image. However, it has an unbalanced concern in three dimensions of brand construction, which are "uniqueness, creativity and contribution". Although Peking Opera pays too much attention to the display of history and shows a strong "uniqueness". It is still far from enough in the "creativity" of attracting the current audience and the cultural needs of the youth group, as well as lack of the "contribution" to the absorption and transformation of other cultural factors; the development direction of Peking Opera should reflect the historical logic of its road to a "national opera", it means that Peking Opera needs to learn to draw on its experience of absorbing and integrating from "Hui and Han Convergence"; focusing on the changes in the social "political and economical" background, and using the "cooperative communication" model to create "new Peking Opera" from the four aspects, which are "content", "subject", "objective" and "channel", so that Beijing Opera can keep youth, popular and go to the world.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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