

The Role of Overseas Dissemination of Excellent Chinese Films in Cultivating Cultural Confidence in Middle School Students

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Abstract: This paper explores the approaches to cultivating cultural confidence in middle school students, drawing inspiration for the cultivation of middle school students' cultural confidence by analyzing the successful phenomena and causes of excellent Chinese films' overseas dissemination. Firstly, it elaborates on the relevant contents of Chinese films' overseas dissemination, including the introduction of five films, their reasons for success, and the significance of their overseas dissemination. Secondly, it discusses the definition of cultural confidence, its important role, and the problems encountered in cultivating cultural confidence in middle school students. Finally, it puts forward effective methods for cultivating cultural confidence in middle school students.

Keywords: Middle school students; Cultivation of cultural confidence; Overseas dissemination of Chinese films; Cultivation approaches



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1 An Analysis of the Overseas Dissemination of Chinese Films

In terms of content, China aims to deepen exchanges with the world and increase the world's understanding of China. Therefore, the content of the movie revolves around telling Chinese stories. In terms of content, most movies have a distinct national characteristic. This ethnic identity is reflected in many different aspects. Firstly, national identity is reflected in the dissemination of excellent traditional Chinese culture. The accumulation of 5000 years of Chinese culture has countless stories to tell. For example, the 2023 film *Chang'an* (《长安三万里》), set in the Tang Dynasty of China, showcased the prosperous scene of the Tang Dynasty to the world, while also showcasing the profound culture of poetry. In addition, some of the values conveyed by the film also reflect our national character. For example, the great idea "The Belt and Road" and the important proposal "a community with a shared future of mankind" reflect the "harmony" element in Chinese culture. Chinese culture emphasizes peaceful coexistence and common development. What we truly hope for is that all countries can achieve development simultaneously. Furthermore, through movies, the great spirit of the Chinese nation can be felt, which is another concrete manifestation of national identity. The Chinese people are diligent and hardworking, relying on courage and belief to overcome all difficulties. With their own wisdom

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and efforts, the Chinese people have created tremendous achievements in the economic and technological fields, and have won the admiration of people around the world. These are the national characteristics conveyed in the movie.

In terms of international recognition, in China's latest film development plan, Chinese cinema aims to release around 50 domestically produced films annually and achieve the status of a film powerhouse by 2035. And China has been striving to achieve this goal. In the coming period, the world has seen how the Chinese film industry overcomes the impact of the epidemic, on the one hand, consolidating the market created by and for Chinese audiences, and on the other hand, doubling efforts in occupying an important position in the world film industry. In recent years, with the increasing popularity and influence of Chinese films internationally, more and more overseas audiences have begun to pay attention to and understand Chinese films, and their recognition of Chinese films is also constantly increasing. For example, the domestically produced film "Wandering Earth 2" has been released in hundreds of cinemas in overseas markets such as North America, the UK, and Australia, achieving impressive box office results and gaining the preference of a large number of overseas audiences. It can be observed that the popularity of Chinese films overseas is constantly increasing. The creators of these movies have made significant adjustments in terms of content, enabling foreign audiences to resonate with the content of the movie, and winning the recognition of overseas audiences for the story content and values. Therefore, in recent years, the creators of the main theme films have consciously adopted the artistic means of empathy, accurately refining and processing the broad emotions existing in social groups, triggering spiritual resonance among audiences at home and abroad, and enhancing the artistic appeal of their works.

Next, five popular films are introduced in this section. These five films cover five different fields: economy, politics, technology, culture, and diplomacy, and comprehensively showcase China's development and changes to the world.

1.1 The First Film: *Chang'an*

A film set in the prosperous Tang Dynasty, telling the story of Chang'an, a bustling capital, falling into chaos due to the war after the An Lushan Rebellion. The story revolves around the character Gao Shi, who is in this chaotic world and reminisces about his past experiences with Li Bai. The entire film showcases how Gao Shi maintains his original intention and pursues a beautiful life in a turbulent environment, conveying a yearning and pursuit of persistence and beauty.

The movie revolves around the magnificent life experiences of two great poets—Li Bai and Gao Shi. Their mutual friendship is the main clue to the plot. In this era of war and chaos, Gao Shi recalled the bits and pieces of his acquaintance with Li Bai. They drank and had fun together, discussed art, recited poetry, and together pursued beauty and the freedom of spirit. At the same time, many famous poets, artists, and patriotic generals who were well-known in history also appeared in this film, together creating a picture full of Tang Dynasty portraits. From the brightly lit streets and wine alleys to the vast fields, the brilliant scene of the prosperous era of the Tang Dynasty's Kaiyuan era comes into the audience's view. And it explores the value and significance of historical and cultural significance through the stories of Tang Dynasty poets. During the viewing process, the audience will have a deeper understanding and reflection on the history, literature, and art of the Tang Dynasty. This film will stimulate the audience's interest in history and culture, prompting them to further exploration and learning (Du, 2023).

1.2 The Second Film: *The Story of China's Reform and Opening Up*

The Story of China's Reform and Opening Up is a work of British historian Michael Wood. In this documentary,

Wood narrates the achievements and changes of China's 40 years of reform and opening up through on-site visits, interviews with witnesses, and other means. In February 2019, *The Story of China's Reform and Opening Up* was broadcast on the BBC platform. This documentary includes the development brought about by reforms, rapid technological progress, China's independent production and manufacturing, and green development. Firstly, the documentary tells the story of Xiaogang Village. In 1978, the curtain of China's reform and opening up was lifted, and the villagers of Xiaogang Village privately contracted land and decided to grow their own food and economic crops. In the end, they not only achieved a significant increase in agricultural production but also sparked a wave of rural reform nationwide. Secondly, the documentary introduces the rapid progress of Chinese technology. China has made rapid progress in various aspects of technology, including assembling large mainframes, computers, and complex rocket technology. In just ten years, we have gone from technology introduction to independent research and development, and then to completely independent development and design of this high-speed train. Meanwhile, all key systems of our Fuxing high-speed train, including the traction system, braking system, and network system, are completely independently produced and manufactured by our country. Besides, in the episode *Green China Dream*, the documentary pays special attention to China's ecological civilization construction and the increasing public awareness of environmental protection.

1.3 The Third Movie: *China: Time of Xi*

This three-episode documentary presents President Xi Jinping's vision of governance, uses vivid stories to explain practices and achievements of China under Xi's leadership and provides deep insights about China's development path. The documentary series is co-hosted by renowned American TV host and designer Danny Foster, Australian pharmaceutical engineer Jordan Ruan, and British anthropologist Marian Ohta. They have different professional backgrounds and different focuses to learn about, and such a rich perspective makes the entire documentary more vivid, friendly, and engaging. They will explore China's achievements in various aspects and prospects for the future from their respective professional fields at this critical moment of human development. In this fast-paced three-episode documentary, some of the world's top "Chinese observers" use their wonderful sharing to focus the audience on beautifully filmed, character-oriented cases and exclusive archival materials from multiple continents, all of which reveal what made China and its leaders do so at a critical moment in the fate of this country. The first episode, *People's Republic*, tells the story of targeted poverty alleviation, healthcare reform, education, high-speed rail construction and other areas of people's livelihood, focusing on the governance concept of putting people at the center and satisfying people's needs for a better life. The second episode, *Running China now*, focuses on areas such as supply-side reform, technological innovation, and environmental governance, with a focus on explaining China's new development concepts and successful practices. It provides advanced Chinese wisdom and concepts for world governance. The third episode, *All Abroad*, tells the story of the "The Belt and Road" initiative, Kenya, Mombasa, Nairobi Railway, China-Europe Train and other stories, interprets the concept of "a community with a shared future for mankind" proposed by China, and demonstrates the opportunities brought to the world by China's peaceful development (Huang, 2020).

1.4 The Fourth Movie: *Future Fantastic: China's Science Revolution*

This documentary is produced by the Interpretation China Studio of the China Foreign Languages Bureau and directed by Christopher Riley, a well-known British science book writer and documentary director. The entire

documentary has a distinct international narrative style. In July 2021, it was broadcast on domestic and foreign media such as the Discovery Channel in the United States, North American Television Network, UAE Telecom Network, and Youku, and received likes from netizens both domestically and internationally. This documentary covers China's tremendous achievements in cutting-edge fields such as aerospace, deep space and deep-sea exploration, artificial intelligence, biomedicine, and food energy. The film invited 15 leading figures from different fields to appear on screen, showcasing their world-leading research achievements and outstanding contributions to the world. Set a theme for each episode corresponding to different fields, with three scientists sharing their scientific stories. The documentary showcases the unwavering spirit of scientists, who always maintain a firm belief and persevere in the face of difficulties in the research process. This is not only a documentary introducing Chinese science and technology, but also a collective biography of contemporary Chinese scientists, a vivid portrayal of the spirit of Chinese scientists. Their pursuit and dreams of benefiting humanity transcend national borders and elevate them to the pinnacle of world science (Wu, 2021).

1.5 The Fifth Film: *The Call of the Silk Road*

This documentary adheres to the creative concept of “starting from local people and telling a global story”, aiming the camera at ordinary people and discovering extraordinary stories. It tells the world about the “The Belt and Road” initiative, covering audiences in Europe, America, the Middle East, Asia-Pacific and Africa. The short video captured five wonderful chapters in the series of documentaries, including Indonesian coffee entrepreneurs, Senegalese wrestlers, Egyptian photographers, Greek world champions and their daughters, and the inheritors of Cambodian lion fighting boxing, and skillfully conveyed the spirit of “The Belt and Road”, inclusive and win-win with character stories. *The Call of the Silk Road* takes the global audience across the mountains and seas, through four continents, to explore the ten years of jointly building the “The Belt and Road”. Hundreds of millions of individuals and all countries are jointly building a concert of fate of the concert, with a lens full of humanistic care, recorded the fate of people in 14 countries changed by the “The Belt and Road” initiative. This practice of adhering to the perspective of building the country's people has achieved remarkable dissemination effects on multiple platforms at home and abroad, and has received praise from numerous overseas audiences.

In the following section, the significance of overseas dissemination of excellent Chinese films will be presented.

To begin with, they can enhance the international status and influence of China. China today presents a completely different image from the past. China has transitioned from poverty to becoming the world's second-largest economy. China demonstrates increased confidence in global discourse. Therefore, China's excellent films serve as a bridge of communication between China and foreign countries, showcasing a genuine and trustworthy China to the world. Through movies, we showcase to the world China's vast and profound traditional culture, poetry, temples, and customs, all of which present the most authentic China. At the same time, we have also comprehensively demonstrated China's development and progress to the world. Through the diligent research and continuous experimentation of scientists, China has overcome many difficulties, mastered many core technologies, and overcome the situation of technological backwardness. Nowadays, we have the ability to independently develop and are no longer constrained by other countries. In addition, while seeking our own development, we strive to balance the interests of other countries, promote collaborative development worldwide, improve the living conditions of people in some countries, and bring benefits to other countries. In recent years, the barriers between China and foreign countries have gradually disappeared, and the world's understanding of China has become more comprehensive and profound. Therefore, China's international status

and influence are constantly improving (Quan & Yang, 2018).

Besides, they can strengthen the cultural identity of Chinese people. These five films enjoy great popularity in many foreign countries and have resonated strongly with overseas audiences. Foreign audiences are deeply attracted by the vast and profound excellent Chinese traditional culture, amazed by China's unexpectedly rapid progress in recent decades, impressed by the distinctive wisdom of Chinese civilization, and also moved by the Chinese concept of global prosperity and collaborative development. To be honest, the widespread popularity of these films abroad may reveal that excellent Chinese culture is increasingly recognized and welcomed by more foreign people. At the same time, the phenomenon of Chinese films becoming popular overseas has also inspired Chinese people to pay more attention to our own culture, giving us a better and deeper understanding of the excellent culture of our own nation. Even foreigners speak highly of excellent Chinese culture, as Chinese, why not love our own culture? The recognition and praise of foreign audiences directly demonstrate the unique value of excellent Chinese culture. As Chinese people, we had better strengthen the understanding of our own culture, which is a unique identity symbol of Chinese people. Chinese citizens are encouraged to deepen their understanding, and simultaneously enhance their confidence in their own culture and truly identify with it, providing us with spiritual support through excellent traditional culture.

Last but not least, they will boost the integration and development of world cultures. Since the beginning of the 21st century, the process of global integration has been accelerating, and cultural exchanges among countries have become increasingly close. Cultural exchange is the mutual exchange between different cultures, which is a way to spread different cultures, traditions, and concepts. The characteristics of cultural exchange include cultural diversity, mutual influence, and mutual benefit. The world is the common world of humanity, and culture is a symbol of the common spirit of humanity. Each civilization has its unique advantages, so promote mutual learning and supplementation of world cultures should be promoted, maintain the diversity of world cultures, look for wisdom and nutrition from different civilizations, and seek help from other civilizations when we solve various problems faced by humanity. The cultural exchange between various ethnic groups in the world is the driving force for the progress of human civilization, and it is also an inherent requirement for promoting the prosperity and development of world culture. In addition, culture exchange is also beneficial for mutual understanding and exchange among different countries and regions around the world. Some Chinese values, ways of thinking, and cultural traditions are disseminated overseas through the media of films, and during this process, foreigners can gain a completely new perspective (Wu et al., 2018).

2 The Importance of Cultivating Cultural Confidence in Students

Culture, as a spiritual force, is transformed into material power in the process of people's understanding and transformation of the world, which has a profound impact on the development of individuals and facilitates the healthy growth of middle school students. The influence of culture on people has such characteristics: subtle, profound and long-lasting. Excellent culture can enrich a person's spiritual world, enhance their spiritual strength, and promote their comprehensive development. It will be unconsciously manifested from a person's speech, behavior, knowledge, wisdom, and temperament, and this influence is intangible and may accompany a person throughout their whole life (Boer & Boer, 2021). The requirements for talents in the new era are extremely comprehensive. Talents in the new era must have extremely high comprehensive qualities. Cultivating cultural confidence in middle school students will not only increase their cultural knowledge but also enable them to gain wisdom in learning, form correct values, and achieve a

leap from quantitative to qualitative change through gradual accumulation. With the development of cultural confidence, students can cultivate higher cultural literacy, further enhance cultural heritage, make their minds more mature, have more confidence in their own future and the future of the country and nation, and face difficulties and setbacks in the life with a more positive attitude, form a good psychological state, and promote physical and mental health development.

First, they can push forward the innovation of traditional Chinese culture. Cultivating students' cultural confidence can have a positive impact on the improvement of their cultural inheritance and innovation abilities. Famous Chinese scholar Liang Qichao once proposed that a strong youth leads to a strong country. Middle school students are the hope for the future of the Chinese nation, representing the direction of cultural development in the future. They are not only able to effectively inherit traditional excellent culture, revolutionary culture, and socialist advanced culture, but also continuously innovate while retaining the positive factors in traditional culture, injecting modern factors into traditional culture, and making traditional culture adapt to the development and changes of modern society (Zhang, 2023). This has an important impact on the development of culture and can continuously stimulate the endogenous driving force of excellent traditional Chinese culture, keeping it vibrant and dynamic in the long run. The cultivation of cultural confidence among middle school students can not only guide and construct their values correctly, but also continuously improve their cultural inheritance and innovation abilities. Besides, it is conducive to enhancing China's cultural soft power as well as the status of Chinese culture in the world, promoting national development, enhancing China's comprehensive national strength, and occupying an advantageous position in international competition (Lin et al., 2022).

Besides, these films will also provide spiritual support for the development of contemporary China. For the time being, China is in the best period of development since modern times, and the world is in a major change that has not been seen in a century. The two are intertwined and mutually stirring. Peace and development have become prominent themes in the contemporary world, and the relatively peaceful and stable international environment has provided favorable conditions for China's development. We are currently in a critical period of rapid development. We are more capable than ever before to realize the great Chinese dream of national rejuvenation. So it is necessary to make good use of the current favorable international environment for development and continuously move towards our goals. Culture, as an intangible force, is able to provide spiritual support for the development of contemporary China. Cultural confidence is an important component of a country's soft power and has profound significance for national development. It can not only inspire national pride and enhance national cohesion, but also enable people to continuously strive for common goals. At the same time, it is also an important driving force for promoting national innovation and development. Only by strengthening cultural confidence can we maintain cultural independence in the wave of globalization, and promote national prosperity and development (Moon, 2023).

In addition, cultural confidence has a positive impact on social progress. It can promote social harmony, increase the sense of belonging of social members, and promote the improvement of social civilization. Cultural confidence can also stimulate social innovation vitality, promote technological progress and cultural industry development, and inject new impetus into social development. The cultural confidence education for middle school students in the new era is an inclusive education, fully respecting the subjectivity of middle school students in the new era, emphasizing individuality, and promoting individuality (Wu & Kuai, 2023). Effectively integrating cultural care can enhance the value recognition of middle school students towards the practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics, thus forming a cultural sentiment for the construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics, leading middle school students in the

new era to actively engage in the practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics, achieving the improvement of talent cultural nourishment, and enhancing the strong endogenous power and driving force for the development of middle school students in impoverished areas through cultural cultivation.

3 The Main Issues in Cultivating Cultural Confidence in Middle School Students

First, some students lack cultural awareness. In the middle school stage, on the one hand, students' academic workload is heavy, the pressure for further education is high, and the competition is fierce. Some middle school students rarely read relevant extracurricular books in their spare time, and have a limited understanding of excellent traditional Chinese culture, leading to recognition problems such as imbalanced development of knowledge and behavior, lack of ideal beliefs, etc. On the other hand, the group of middle school students is still young and has limited experience. Their cognitive state, emotional belonging, and behavioral patterns are not yet mature, especially among some lower-grade students. They have a lower understanding of the ideological concepts and value norms of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, and even have some misunderstandings, such as cultural discrimination, weak cultural discernment ability and shallow understanding of culture. In the era of cultural globalization, the competition between countries is, to some extent, a competition of cultural values. Teenagers need to enhance their cultural awareness, strengthen their understanding of excellent traditional Chinese culture, and consciously identify with the cultural spirit and values of their own nation. Only in this way can they form a strong cultural consensus and demonstrate strong cohesion throughout the entire nation.

Besides, students usually present a low level of identification with national culture. Most middle school students are fond of Chinese culture and have a relatively high level of understanding of it. They also realize the important role of culture in the development of the country and themselves. They look forward to the good development of Chinese culture. However, a large number of students have quite a limited understanding of Chinese culture, let alone identification with it, as understanding is an important prerequisite for identification. Most students exhibit a relatively passive attitude towards cultural identification. Regardless of whether the learning tasks are heavy or not, most students do not care about current affairs and politics, and their interest in culture is not strong. At the same time, many students are addicted to the Internet and rarely read extracurricular books about Chinese culture in their spare time. There are very few people who are truly interested in Chinese literature and history. The study of political theory courses is only for the purpose of preparing for exams, not out of genuine love. This situation has led to many Chinese students lacking cultural awareness and unable to form a clear and complete understanding of Chinese culture, and therefore unable to truly develop a sense of identification with our national culture.

In addition, some schools adopt inappropriate educational methods. When conducting cultural education in some middle schools, a single method, one-way knowledge imparting, and theoretical preaching are used instead of using diverse and integrated means to carry out cultural education. Some teachers do not have a deep understanding of excellent traditional Chinese culture, and most teachers have not received systematic education on socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, especially the lack of education on excellent traditional Chinese culture and the corresponding teaching methods. With their own limited understanding of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, it is difficult to explain and impart traditional classic cultural knowledge in a simple and easy manner. This one-way and unscientific

transmission cannot resonate with the middle school students, affecting the comprehensive improvement of cultural confidence education for middle school students in the new era, influencing their understanding of cultural confidence education, and constraining the cultivation of cultural confidence among middle school students in the new era (Zhou, 2019).

The education of cultural confidence for middle school students in the new era is achieved through diverse and integrated means, which expands their subject knowledge and culture, promotes positive and optimistic learning, forms a positive attitude towards life, cultivates moral character and willpower, cultivates beliefs, and optimizes behavioral practices, thereby comprehensively improving the cultural literacy of middle school students in the new era. The cultural confidence education in the new era should enable middle school students to actively accept culture, deepen the internalization and absorption of cultural knowledge, and strive to practice excellent values in daily life.

4 The Enlightenment of Overseas Dissemination of Excellent Chinese Films on Cultivating Students' Cultural Confidence

From the above discussion, we can see that film as a new form has achieved great success in cultural dissemination. Similarly, in daily teaching, teachers can also use new technologies for education to enhance students' cultural confidence, such as utilizing multimedia resources to enable students to intuitively experience traditional culture and enhance their interest in learning. The form of education has a very important impact on the effectiveness of education. In the teaching process, teachers should adopt innovative ways to attract the attention of students and improve their learning effectiveness. The development and progress of information technology have made teaching methods more diverse and can digitize resources such as libraries and museums, transmit them to students through the network and multimedia devices, and enable students to have an intuitive experience. This greatly broadens the knowledge horizon of students. At the same time, the teaching mode of multimedia combination, computer-aided teaching, online teaching, and virtual reality teaching can fully stimulate students' initiative and enthusiasm, encourage students to learn independently and explore excellent traditional culture (Fan & Wang, 2023).

Besides, teachers can enrich teaching content related to traditional culture. The reason why many movies have achieved success overseas is that they have all promoted traditional Chinese culture. Another important way to cultivate students' cultural confidence is to strengthen the education of traditional culture in schools. Teaching is the main channel for middle school students to learn and cultivate their cultural confidence. Schools need to enhance their awareness of cultural education and strengthen the education of traditional culture in their teaching content, attach importance to the arrangement of excellent traditional culture courses and innovate the content of courses. They also need to design practical courses related to excellent traditional culture based on the existing educational resources of the school, presenting the knowledge and theoretical contents of Chinese excellent traditional culture in a participatory and experiential way, promoting students to actively participate in and learn practical activity courses centered on Chinese excellent traditional culture, and deeply understand Chinese excellent traditional culture. Middle school teachers should consciously promote and nurture Chinese culture in classroom teaching, and cultivate students' interest in classical culture through poetry, songs, prose, novels, and other means. Building students' confidence in traditional Chinese culture through its excellent achievements (Ministry of Education, 2014). At the same time, integrate excellent traditional Chinese culture into other courses such as English, art, and labor, and try to avoid overly theoretical and

boring course content. Schools should fully leverage the educational role of cultivating cultural confidence and integrate it into traditional Chinese cultural content, so that students can comprehensively develop both academically and culturally.

Cultural activities, as an important carrier of cultural content, play an important role in spreading culture. Conducting diverse cultural activities can enhance students' desire to actively understand excellent traditional Chinese culture and cultivate their cultural confidence unconsciously. Schools should strive to broaden social learning channels, carry out practical teaching, and help the teaching of excellent traditional Chinese culture step out of the classroom, enter society, and integrate into daily life. Schools can organize students to visit historical museums and red revolution education bases, helping them gain a deeper understanding of excellent traditional and revolutionary culture, delve deeper into the revolutionary stories and historical imprints behind them, stimulate national pride, and enhance cultural confidence. Meanwhile, schools can design diverse forms of activities (Chen & Huang, 2021). For example, cultural exhibitions, art performances, interactive games, workshops, etc. Through these activities, students can personally experience the charm of different cultures and improve their cultural literacy through practice. In addition, the school can also invite experts, scholars, artists, etc., to hold cultural lectures or workshops in schools. These activities not only provide students with deeper cultural knowledge but also help them broaden their horizons and stimulate their innovative spirit.

5 Conclusion

This study concludes that a clear understanding of the reasons for the success of five Chinese films overseas. They showcase the spirit of the Chinese nation and spread excellent traditional Chinese culture. At the same time, the important role of cultural confidence has also been concluded and how to use the correct methods to cultivate middle school students' cultural confidence. It is necessary to update the forms of cultural education, enrich teaching content related to traditional culture, conduct diverse cultural activities, practice Chinese outstanding values and enhance middle school students' identification of traditional Chinese culture.

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