

On the Interpretive Path and Value of Artworks in Ideology

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Abstract. In recent years, there have been controversies over the aesthetics of "uglification" of Chinese people, whose artworks, manipulated by Western ideology, present Asian faces with "squinty eyes", a feature of Oriental features imagined by the West. The cultural genes carried by this symbol have been accepted by the people for a long time, and the role of its subtle influence in the ideological field cannot be underestimated. Based on the report of the 20th Party Congress, which pointed out that "ideological work is the work of establishing the heart of the country and the soul of the nation," the construction of a socialist ideology with strong cohesive force and leading power is taken as a strategic task. Taking art works at home and abroad as the research object, and analyzing the theory of "Orientalism" of Said and the theory of "Neo-Orientalism" of Lukeng, it is of great significance to explore the important layout of China's art works in the path of enhancing the right of ideological discourse. It is of great significance.

Keywords: Ideology; Artwork; Orientalism; Neo-Orientalism; Stereotypes.

1. Introduction

Engels talked about the development of culture driving the development of society in his Anti-Dühring Theses [1]. If there is only economic and political support without cultural support, the country cannot survive in the fierce international competition and cannot be called a strong country. With the development of the era of integrated media, from the perspective of superstructure, the influence of art works on ideology is the greatest value in the new era. Because social life is not a simple materialized mechanical process, but a complex process of creating, disseminating, interpreting and influencing a large number of meaning symbols while the material system is running. From this point of view, the cross-border, cross-cultural and cross-ideological functions of art works cannot be ignored.

2. Prejudice and the Awakening of New Orientalism

2.1. Orientalist Theory

The widely known concept of "Orientalism" was proposed by Edward Said [3] in his book "Orientalism" in the 1980s. The formation of the concept of "Orientalism" originated from the Western crusaders invaded the East, and recorded some of their travels, and went back to the Western artists according to their insights to make a depiction, and this depiction with a certain stereotype and bias color. Because the Orient in the eyes of Western artists is not the real Orient, but the imagined, exaggerated and distorted Orient, which is the stereotypical impression of Westerners on the Orient, and is used to distinguish between the self and the other. The spread and penetration of this so-called Orientalist culture has kept the West and even the Eastern world in a long period of time in a misunderstanding of Eastern aesthetics.

2.1.1. Presentation of Artworks under Orientalism

The "Dolce & Gabbana Incident" is a profound case of a Western luxury brand's wrong interpretation of Eastern culture due to longstanding cultural prejudices and erroneous biases. The advertisement model was first boycotted for using chopsticks incorrectly. As we all know, the symbol of "chopsticks" represents traditional Chinese culture, and to vilify the image of China in this way is tantamount to spontaneously arousing public opinion. As the story unfolded, attention was drawn to the "squinty eyes" of the Asian models in Dolce & Gabbana's ads. Not only did the brand choose the



models based on their stereotypical image of the Orient, but they also used makeup to amplify these qualities on top of the models' own long, thin eyebrows and eyes. The model's slender eyebrows and eyes were amplified by makeup. As we all know, the "squint" has a long history of being given special significance as a discriminatory image and a vehicle to support the power of aesthetic control, and the direct source of its makeup portrayal is "Fu Manchu", who is portrayed as a representative of the Oriental in Western film and television, deliberately ugly. In Western films and television, he is portrayed as a representative of the Oriental people, and he is deliberately scandalized to promote the theory of the "Yellow Peril". With the penetration of consciousness, the audience gradually realized that "squinty eyes" also belonged to the processed Oriental qualities, and perceived the malicious intent of the West to vilify the Oriental culture. By observing the Asian models in the whole incident, our audience feels deeply puzzled: has the image of Asian models been so solidified in the eyes of Westerners?

2.2. Neo-Orientalism Theory

"New Orientalism" is a new term proposed by Lu Clang after a long period of thinking and exploration in recent years. "New Orientalism" is a challenge to Orientalism and a confrontation to the infringement of Western cultural hegemony. Based on this kind of artistic thinking, we can base ourselves on traditional culture and utilize modern interpretations to create works with strong oriental connotations and unique oriental imagery.

Yip Kam-Tim was the first person in the world to implement the concept of Orientalist aesthetics. Yip Kam-Tim once mentioned in *The Stranger of God's Thoughts*, "My self-conscious study of traditional art began during a period of time after I graduated from university. At that time, Hong Kong's understanding of tradition was almost blank, and tradition was only synonymous with obsolescence and rigidity. In that period, foreign culture was the mainstream, and people were moving closer to advanced foreign cultures and away from their own." [4] Yip Kam-tin deeply realized that if one turns away from one's own culture, then the national identity will be gradually extinguished or even replaced; the reason why Western culture can have such a strong influence today is because of their excellence. At the same time, he advocates not to differentiate between superior and inferior cultures and artistic situations, especially not to emphasize that "our" culture is the best, so as to gain more discourse power in the context of global cultural harmony. On his way back to culture, Yip Kam-Tim has repeatedly thought about Orientalism and traditional Chinese culture, and thus "New Orientalism" came into being.

2.2.1. Presentation of Artworks under Neo-Orientalism

As a window and stage for the display of Chinese culture and the spirit of the times, the Spring Festival Gala is a cultural spotlight eagerly awaited by Chinese lovers around the world. In recent years, there have been a number of art works that have "broken the circle", and the consumption of traditional culture and entertainment has become a trend. In the late Northern Song Dynasty, the famous painter Wang Ximeng's silk painting "Thousands of Miles of Rivers and Mountains" was presented in a new form at the 2022 Spring Festival Gala after more than 900 years, and the dance piece "Only This Green" was praised by hundreds of millions of viewers for its art form of dancing and painting this masterpiece of the ancient times, which ignited a wave of Internet searches and retweets. In the national tour, the 16 cities visited were hard to find tickets, and it won the 17th Wenhua Grand Prize.

The whole dance uses the narrative structure of ancient and modern dialogues and intertwined space and time to tell the story of a contemporary researcher of the National Palace Museum who, through studying "A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains", enters into the heart of Wang Ximeng and witnesses the creative process of pursuing the "green and green" imagery with all his heart and soul. Meng Qingyang, the lead dancer of Only This Green, exclaimed, "I think that as a literary artist, being able to stand on stage and pass on Chinese culture is in itself a tribute to traditional Chinese culture. It can be said that it is the deep-rooted cultural confidence that has created this program." [5]

Only This Green and Green is a program that follows the trend of the times and holds fast to the precious values of the fine traditional Chinese culture in terms of ideals and values, and has the effect of being a powerful leading force in bringing all the people together in terms of ideals and beliefs.

3. The Construction Path of All-Media Ideological Discourse Generation

3.1. Grasp the Powerful Leadership of All-Media Ideological Discourse

Ideology is the result of the symbols of the social establishment, which implies a discourse of power, as Lenin said "either a bourgeois system of thought or a socialist system of thought. There is nothing in between here"[6] and there is no ideology that does not have ideas of power and hierarchy. It forms a kind of penetration, norms and constraints on people in it, and gradually internalizes them into the consciousness of the subject. According to Stuart Hall, a British cultural studies scholar, "The medium that succeeds in turning its representation of the world into an accepted definition of reality, the medium succeeds in controlling the reader and listener and acquires a powerful social power." According to Hall, the role of visible discourse is subtle. The media industry has an irreplaceable role in the propaganda of ideology, the rendering of cultural environment and the cultivation of consumers' consumption concepts as well as the nurturing of the consumer market for the cultural industry. In the era of globalization, countries inevitably interact with other countries, and the mastery of the right to speak is a necessary means to shape the national image.

Disney's animated movie "MuLan" is an adaptation and creation based on the story of a classic folk song "The Story of Mulan" in ancient China. With the wide dissemination of this work of art, it has played a positive leading role in the inheritance and dissemination of traditional Chinese culture. With the wide dissemination of this work of art, it has played a positive role in the transmission and dissemination of traditional Chinese culture. It allows more people to have a general understanding of Chinese culture, and at the same time, provides a new interpretation path for the dissemination of contemporary art works to the outside world.

3.2. Grasp the Dissemination Power of All-Media Ideological Discourse

Comprehensively integrating media resources to achieve full coverage of mainstream ideological discourse and broaden the space for mainstream ideological discourse. For example, the dance piece "Only this Green" of the 2022 Spring Festival Gala has been widely disseminated through fragmented communication penetration and news broadcasting. For the "Dolce & Gabbana Incident" and the "Xinjiang Cotton Incident", official analyses were conducted on the clothing brands involved, stirring up the public's emotional resonance, basically realizing the sharing of discourse resources between the official public opinion field and the private public opinion field. Official international cultural exchange activities lead to individual international exchange activities, individual and private groups of cultural exchange activities, the three-dimensional shaping of China's national image, the propaganda of China's culture will also have an irreplaceable role.

3.3. Grasp the Assessment Power of All-Media Ideological Discourse

We should adhere to the objective reality, firmly grasp the Party's right to speak in ideological work, build a Chinese ideology, and improve the acceptance of the discourse. At the same time, we should always pay attention to the acceptance of the discourse content by the international audience, assess the degree of its maintenance of the right to discourse on the mainstream ideology, and create better art works to change the stereotypical impression of China in the West.

4. Conclusion

In this era of globalization and localization, understanding Said's theory of "Orientalism" and Lukengng's theory of "Neo-Orientalism" is helpful for us to expand our research horizons, compare East and West, and is important for us to explore how art works can break through the confinement

of Western stereotypes. It is also of great significance for us to explore how Asian models can break through the confinement of Western stereotypes. As one of the most direct carriers of the dissemination of cultural values, works of art are irreplaceable in the chain of ideological dissemination in order to integrate as quickly as possible into the world trend, not only as followers, but also as leaders and providers of content.

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