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AIGC Content Production of Themes of Fine Traditional Chinese Culture in the Spring Festival Gala

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Abstract: Focusing on AIGC-empowered dissemination of fine traditional Chinese culture, this study further explores the new logic of AI-Generated Content (AIGC) in the digital inheritance of traditional culture by sorting out the application scenarios and actual effects of AI-generated content in the CCTV Spring Festival Gala and Henan Spring Festival Gala in recent years. The paper summarizes the specific characteristics of AIGC-generated content themed on fine traditional Chinese culture in specific Spring Festival Gala programs, such as scenario construction, symbol transfer, image shaping, and visual extension. The study proposes that to achieve the dynamic balance between technical rationality and humanistic value, and provide optimized paths for the creative transformation and innovative development of fine traditional Chinese culture, measures should be taken through paths including constructing a cross-media narrative space, improving the cultural governance policy system, and bridging the digital-intelligent technology divide.

Keywords: Chinese excellent traditional culture; AIGC; Cultural production; Cultural transmission

Introduction:

Artificial Intelligence Generated Content (AIGC) is accelerating the digital and modern transformation of Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture (ETCC), while facilitating the flow of cultural elements through emerging digital technologies. In this process, traditional culture itself gains enhanced capacity for cultural production and creativity. These two dimensions reinforce each other, driving the cultural industry toward greater digitization, intelligence, and interactivity. As a mediated product of the Spring Festival- an important intangible cultural heritage (ICH)-the Spring Festival Gala (SFG) serves as a key vehicle for conveying ETCC symbols and expressing the national sentiments of Chinese people worldwide. It also reflects, to some extent, China's developmental progress. The content and form of its communication must not only keep pace with social changes but also lead them, playing an essential role in evoking cultural confidence among audiences. Therefore, AIGC-generated content with ETCC themes in the SFG represents not only an innovative format for displaying the appeal of traditional culture but also a marker of the advanced maturity of China's intelligent and technology-driven industries—all within the framework of promoting core socialist values. The application of AIGC in ETCC-themed works during the SFG demonstrates to audiences the potential for creative transformation and innovative development of traditional culture. On one hand, AIGC's integration with ETCC entails a comprehensive renewal in both content and form, revitalizing traditional culture and enabling it to adapt to contemporary progress, thereby enriching the spiritual lives of the people. Its practical use in the SFG underscores AIGC's capacity to integrate traditional Chinese culture into public spiritual life and strengthen national cultural confidence and awareness. On the other hand, AIGC-produced ETCC-themed content offers a practical innovation for revitalizing traditional cultural symbols. Generative AI has brought transformative advances in several aspects: intelligent creation at the cultural subject level, efficiency gains and cost reduction at the production level, and human-like perception at the emotional level[1]. From a communication perspective, AIGC enables virtual and realistic platforms to transcend traditional media boundaries. Information is no longer simply displayed but delivered through immersive virtual technologies that allow direct interaction[2]. Empowered by AIGC, traditional cultural communication can construct entirely new scenarios and deeply immersive experiences. This not only produces novel narrative works based on ETCC themes but also achieves cultural communication that is more profound, engaging, and emotionally resonant.

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II. The Choice of Traditional Cultural Programs in the Spring Festival Gala

CCTV SFG has developed into a cultural ritual imbued with distinctive historical significance and contemporary value, shaped by the interplay between China's media reforms and broader social transformation[3]. Similarly, the Henan Spring Festival Gala (Henan SFG) has gained recognition for its distinctive role in preserving traditional culture and leveraging technology to enhance cultural expression, enabling numerous intangible cultural heritage (ICH) items and folk arts to regain vitality through modern technological support. Given these considerations, the selection of research subjects in this study is guided by a balance among three key dimensions: cultural authenticity versus technological innovation, the universality versus regional specificity of cultural symbols, and emotional resonance versus value communication. Based on these criteria, this study identifies 12 AIGC-assisted traditional cultural performances from recent CCTV SFG and Henan SFG programs as case studies. By examining these successful productions, this paper aims to uncover the cultural representations embedded within them and elucidate the new operational logic of AIGC-generated content in the context of traditional cultural transmission.

Table 1. AIGC Program Cases in the 2024-2025 CCTV and Henan Spring Festival Galas

| Program Name | Program Source | AIGC Technology Type | Traditional Cultural Elements | Innovation Points |
|--|----------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Pencraft Like and Dragons and Snakes | CCTV SFG | AI motion capture and rendering | Shaolin martial arts and calligraphy art | Synchronized generation of martial arts movements and calligraphy strokes. |
| Swallows Return to Their Nests | CCTV SFG | AI - generated historical figures | Huang Gongwang and Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains | Reviving the figures in ancient books and restoring the complete view of ancient paintings. |
| Forms of China | CCTV SFG | AI - generated animation | Ancient architectural art | Animated display of "square", "arc", "circle", and "corner" in Chinese architecture. |
| Spring Floral Tricks | CCTV SFG | AI - generated characters | Traditional flowers | Personification of flowers and integration of mythological elements. |
| Poetic Landscapes of Chang'an | CCTV SFG | AI - generated characters and scenes | Poetry, ancient musical instruments and Shehuo performances | Li Bai comes riding a crane, drinks and composes poems with the audience, and views today's Xi'an. |
| Annual Brocade | CCTV SFG | AI - generated animation and scenes | Patterns, auspicious clouds, koi fish | Animated display of traditional patterns. |
| Borrowing the East Wind | Henan SFG | AI - generated animation and scenes | <i>Borrowing Arrows with Straw Boats</i> | Traveling through time and integrating modern figures with ancient scenes. |
| Phoenix Dancing in the Nine Heavens | Henan SFG | AI - generated characters | Phoenix nirvana | A live performer dances a duet with AI. |
| Flowers in the Years | CCTV SFG | AI - generated animation | Flowers and festival culture | The stage is transformed into a static oil painting. |
| Good Fortune and Auspiciousness Far and Wide | Henan SFG | AI - generated animation | Folk music and auspicious flowers | Integration of folk music and auspicious flowers. |
| My Hometown Shines the Most 5.0 | CCTV SFG | AI - generated dance movements | Terracotta figurines | Modern dance performance of cultural relics. |
| Mozart Enters the Red Chamber | CCTV SFG | AI - generated scenes | <i>Dream of the Red Chamber</i> | Integration of Eastern artistic conception and Western musical aesthetics. |

III. Application and Characteristics of AIGC-Generated Content Themed on Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture in Spring Festival Gala Programs

2.1. Construction of Virtual–Real Integrated Scenarios

AIGC-themed content rooted in Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture utilizes large-scale models to construct a narrative-integrated cultural imaginary space. This approach liberates the Spring Festival Gala from the constraints of physical stage design and reconstructs a locus of national sentiment by bridging historical and contemporary elements. Through augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and AIGC, the Gala recreates historical settings, skillfully merging traditional and modern components to achieve the digital construction of a "traditional space."

For instance, *Poetic Landscapes of Chang'an* vividly recreates the scene of Li Bai reciting poetry and drinking freely in the ancient capital, alternating between the prosperous Tang dynasty city and the bustling streets of modern-day Xi'an. This stark contrast between tradition and modernity across time and space allows the audience to appreciate the enduring charm of classical Chinese culture. *Borrowing the East Wind* artistically restores episodes such as Liu Bei's three visits to the thatched cottage, the "borrowing of arrows with straw boats," and the Battle of Red Cliffs, presenting grand wartime scenes while highlighting Zhuge Liang's loyalty and sacrifice. Similarly, *Good Fortune and Auspiciousness Far and Wide* employs AIGC to generate a dynamic floral setting where performers, depicted as celestial beings, play traditional music and dance among exotic blossoms—constructing a highly imaginative dreamscape. By innovatively producing visual spectacles, AIGC facilitates the convergence of physical and digital realms, crafting an artistic conception unique to Eastern aesthetics—one that is implicit, restrained, and seamlessly blends the virtual with the real. As a result, audiences are guided through temporal transitions, evoking reflections on historical and contemporary evolution and fostering profound emotional resonance.

2.2 Symbolic Translation of Traditional Culture

Spring Festival Gala performances leverage digital technologies—including AR, VR, mixed reality (MR), and extended reality (XR)—to create immersive cultural experiences, breaking away from the linear narrative conventions of traditional performance. These innovations not only modernize the presentation of traditional culture within intelligent and digital contexts but also render its dissemination more vivid and accessible. AIGC further reshapes conventional modes of cultural interpretation: by deconstructing and decoding the layered meanings embedded within cultural symbols, it bridges divides between high and popular art, antiquity and modernity, and Eastern and Western cultures, thereby reinstating a concept of cultural integration and symbiosis in the public consciousness.

Forms of China, for example, translates elements of ancient Chinese architectural wisdom—such as "square," "arc," "circle," and "corner"—into choreographed movements, which are then reinterpreted as audiovisual symbols of modern architecture through AIGC animation. This process accomplishes a contemporary translation of traditional symbols, staging an interplay between heritage and modernity that underscores the continuing relevance of traditional wisdom in today's society. Likewise, *Mozart Enters the Red Chamber* uses AIGC-driven scene transitions to facilitate a cross-temporal dialogue between Mozart and characters from *Dream of the Red Chamber*. By adopting an external perspective to interpret Chinese cultural heritage, the piece integrates diverse narrative and discursive systems, achieving a form of cross-cultural translation of traditional elements. In summary, AIGC enables a symbolic translation of traditional culture that aligns with contemporary aesthetic preferences and spiritual demands, offering new pathways for the communication of China's cultural heritage.

2.3 Image Shaping through Human–Machine Interaction

In human–machine collaborative performances during the Spring Festival Gala, AIGC is not treated merely as a technical tool. Instead, AI-driven creative capabilities are deeply integrated into the artistic process, even giving rise to virtual figures endowed with diverse forms and meanings. These digital personas are imbued with human-like behaviors, personalities, and aesthetic values, allowing them to serve as contemporary and relatable ambassadors of traditional culture while engaging in realistic interactions with live performers.

In Swallows Return to Their Nests, AIGC reconstructs the image of the ancient painter Huang Gongwang and recreates the scene of his restoration of classical artworks. *My Hometown Shines the Most 5.0* brings terracotta figures from across China into the studio via AI to dance alongside human performers, revitalizing ancient sculptural art through digital means. *Spring Floral Tricks* creates striking visual and emotional contrast by intertwining an AI-generated "Flower Goddess" with a live performer, exploring new aesthetic dimensions of traditional themes. Similarly, *Phoenix Dancing in the Nine Heavens* stages a duet between an AI-generated phoenix and a real dancer, illustrating an interactive artistic dialogue between humanity and cultural tradition. Through AI vision systems deployed on stage, performers' movements are tracked in real time, and dynamic effects generated via AIGC help construct digital virtual images. These become new vehicles for disseminating Chinese civilization, embodying the traditional ideal of harmony among humans, nature, and technology, and advancing artistic creation from a human-centered model toward a symbiotic human–machine paradigm.

2.4 Visual Extension through Reshaped Temporality

AIGC expands the visual boundaries of cultural programs through technological innovation, presenting intangible cultural heritage with enhanced dynamism and richness, and rendering visual imagery more detailed and immersive. Annual *Brocade* suspends patterns from dynastic costumes at the center of the stage, accentuating the textures and hues

of classical attire. This enables audiences to appreciate the refinement of traditional craftsmanship and the distinctive charm, temperament, and philosophical depth of Eastern culture, offering an immersive aesthetic experience.

The martial arts performance *Pencraft Like Dragons and Snakes* employs multi-angle cloud-based filming to provide an innovative perspective characterized by "aerial circling and frozen time," elongating temporal perception to accentuate dynamic motion. In *Flowers in the Years*, AIGC transforms the stage into an oil painting and creates momentary freeze-frames, producing a visual contrast that underscores a nostalgia for time and a longing for a better life. AI imaging technology not only revitalizes traditional symbols with vivid energy but also enhances visual signs with greater delicacy, clarity, and three-dimensionality. By integrating immersive natural, real, and virtual environments, it gradually cultivates audience interest and understanding of traditional culture's evolution. This encourages active interpretation of cultural symbols, making their meanings intuitive, vivid, and poetic—ultimately realizing an integrated vision of cultural heritage and technological innovation.

IV. Rethinking Traditional Culture Dissemination: A New Coupling of Technology and Culture

3.1 Symbiosis and Alienation in Cultural Production and Consumption

AIGC technology is increasingly assuming a pivotal role as a cultural medium at the intersection of production and consumption, even displacing certain functions traditionally performed by designers. On one hand, AIGC grants machines a degree of agency in content creation. Cultural products born from human-machine collaboration have emerged as new objects of cultural consumption, characterized by high visibility, broad reach, and potent dissemination capabilities, thereby becoming an indispensable cultural vehicle. Nevertheless, concerns remain regarding data-driven cultural production: generated content is inevitably shaped by data selection and algorithmic preferences, which may discipline and standardize the expression of traditional culture. The traffic-driven logic of digital platforms can also lead to homogenized cultural landscapes, potentially undermining cultural diversity. On the other hand, in the AIGC era, the relationship between cultural production and consumption has evolved beyond a simple supply-demand correspondence. Through the deep interweaving of technology, platforms, and user behavior, a symbiotic dynamic of "production as consumption" has emerged. Generative AI enables a wider range of users to deconstruct and reconstruct traditional cultural symbols, transforming ordinary individuals into technologically empowered cultural producers and consumers. However, many AIGC cultural works remain constrained by the black-box algorithms of commercial and technical logics, which are often disconnected from genuinely empowered artistic creation. As a result, they may fail to satisfy the audience's deeper spiritual expectations for technology-enhanced cultural consumption. It is therefore crucial to maintain a critical stance toward the underlying instrumental rationality, acknowledge the limited creativity of AIGC-generated traditional culture content, and contextualize these new human-machine cultural forms within a broader historical perspective.

3.2 Identity Reconstruction: From Emotional Resonance to Homogenization Crisis

The emotional and value-layered connotations of intangible cultural heritage are often deeply embedded within symbolic forms. AIGC's capabilities in cross-cultural semantic understanding, emotion computing, and social network analysis offer new possibilities for awakening public emotional resonance with cultural heritage, reconstructing its contemporary relevance, and enhancing the appeal of traditional Chinese culture. On one hand, AIGC programs gradually reshape audience perceptions and aesthetic judgments of traditional culture through technical means and the reinforcement of universal visual symbols. Yet this very process risks eroding the uniqueness of cultural identity. AI-generated content often appears more exquisite than actual cultural relics, and the rituals it depicts more spectacular. When confronted with such technically enhanced illusions, audiences may become immersed in sensory stimulation rather than engaging in meaningful cultural practice. On the other hand, data monopolies and algorithmic biases contribute to cultural homogenization. AIGC relies on large-scale training data, which is often controlled by technological capital. This can lead to the aesthetic values of AI-created cultural works converging toward standards defined by big data and algorithms. As an art form closely linked to China's social development, the Spring Festival Gala's communicative value lies not only in its expressive methods and program types but also in its reflection of national values and spirit. Therefore, in creating cultural symbols, AIGC should prioritize constructing a distinctive Chinese cultural atmosphere and shaping the national spirit. In human-machine collaborative creation, emphasis should be placed on capturing the non-quantifiable sense of historical ritual and cultural depth, thereby providing a rooted foundation for cultural identity.

3.3 Reconstruction of Cultural Communication Rules in a Global Context

Generative AI, leveraging multimodal technologies, continues to enhance the accuracy of cross-modal information understanding and analysis, improves content quality, and enables intelligent, full-media production of Chinese cultural resources. This helps break down communication barriers, present traditional cultural symbols multidimensionally, and empower the intelligent transmission of Chinese culture[4]. After the Spring Festival Gala is broadcast on television and mobile platforms, excerpts of less than a minute are often extracted and shared on Douyin. This sparks user regeneration and topic discussion on social platforms, achieving a narrative extension through a "TV-short video-social platform" model and forming a more penetrating communication matrix. Audiences thereby participate in a closed loop of cultural reproduction and meaning multiplication within the traditional culture circulation system.

However, behavioral regulation of AIGC cultural works remains a pressing issue. For example, AI-reconstructed dynamic scenes of cultural relics used in the Gala involve multiple rights holders, including original artists, AI developers, and platform providers—yet current legal frameworks lack clear definitions in this regard. Such regulatory ambiguity can lead to cultural anomie: technological capital may freely appropriate traditional cultural symbols through data extraction, and governance gaps risk enabling digital colonization of cultural resources. Simultaneously, traditional Chinese cultural content may face conflicts between classical heritage and contemporary reproduction across stages such as appropriation, adaptation, and reinterpretation. Therefore, in disseminating excellent traditional Chinese culture, it is essential to maintain the consistency and stability of the cultural core, ensuring that audiences can comprehend and accept the culture accurately and holistically.

V. Recommendations for AIGC-Enabled Dissemination of Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture

4.1 Constructing Transmedia Narrative Spaces and Strengthening Value Guidance

With the support of AIGC technology, traditional cultural programs in the Spring Festival Gala (SFG) are transcending the physical confines of the stage to construct transmedia narrative spaces. Through immersive experiences, interactive communication, and value reconstruction, traditional culture is endowed with contemporary relevance, enhancing its role in guiding mainstream social values. By creating fully digital virtual scenes via digital twin technologies, AIGC integrates seamlessly into the SFG's artistic performances with spectacular visual expression, forming a virtual–real interactive narrative that achieves cross-media integration and injects new vitality into traditional Chinese culture.

Leveraging databases of traditional cultural resources, AIGC generates content that not only inherits classical symbols but also creates new narratives through deep learning and data recombination. This process produces artworks with contemporary significance, facilitating a cross-temporal dialogue between tradition and modernity. Audiences can participate in content creation and interaction through AI tools, breaking down the traditional creator–audience dichotomy and enabling the collective construction of a "story universe." AIGC inherently possesses transmedia characteristics, freeing traditional Chinese culture from reliance on singular symbols. It enriches content production and interaction through text, images, videos, and metaverse environments. Since 2021, CCTV SFG has begun experimenting with AI and transmedia storytelling, using multiplatform narratives to build rich story worlds and present a multidimensional SFG franchise[5]. AI art dismantles physical barriers in cultural dissemination, reshapes the spatial logic of cultural communication, and fundamentally transforms the reproduction of cultural resources. Technology thus moves beyond formal innovation to become a means of decoding cultural genes and transmitting spiritual values.

4.2 Enriching Policy Support Systems and Enhancing Cultural Governance

The production logic of AIGC-based traditional cultural programs in the SFG hinges on the synergy between policy support systems and technological empowerment. While AI technology has significantly improved the efficiency of cultural production and dissemination, algorithmic overemphasis on traffic metrics may lead to the distortion of cultural symbols, and technological monopolies could exacerbate the centralization of cultural interpretation. In light of the risks posed by generative technologies—such as cultural responsibility gaps and ethical disorder—there is an urgent need to establish a systematic policy framework to achieve a dynamic balance between technological empowerment and cultural security through governance innovation. In producing AIGC programs, it is essential to balance algorithmic efficiency with cultural depth. Since AI-generated content is often influenced by traffic data preferences, programs may excessively cater to popular tastes at the expense of cultural authenticity. Therefore, the interpretation of traditional cultural values should involve professional groups—such as intangible cultural heritage inheritors, cultural historians, and AI engineers—to preserve the authoritative cultural narrative in SFG programs. Their collaboration ensures the appropriate application of technology and prevents deviation from original cultural meanings. Given that AI struggles to capture metaphors, emotions, and ethical nuances in traditional culture, it is crucial to guard against the erosion of cultural core by excessive entertainment. At the technical level, it is necessary to verify the legality of data sources and ensure that generated content complies with predefined cultural security standards. Generated content should be clearly labeled, and platforms should disclose key parameters influencing cultural representation. Clear guidelines for content review and copyright attribution must be established, with particular attention to models generating historical or relic-themed content to prevent the spread of inaccurate traditional symbols. Digital intelligence technology should be applied judiciously to strengthen online cultural governance, counteract the trend of "digital supremacy," and mitigate overreliance on intelligent tools, thereby improving the overall capacity for cultural governance.

4.3 Bridging the Digital Intelligence Divide and Promoting Inclusive Cultural Sharing

Digital intelligence technology is redefining the spatiotemporal dimensions of cultural sharing. It is essential to alleviate cultural access barriers through technical adaptation, sensory compensation, and participatory empowerment—addressing not only explicit physical obstacles but also deeper demands for cultural engagement. The introduction of barrier-free broadcasting (for visually and hearing-impaired audiences) in the 2025 SFG signifies a shift in digital intelligence technology from instrumental application to inclusive service. Using AI, AR, real-time captions, and virtual sign language imaging, the SFG has overcome the limitations of traditional audiovisual media, creating

perceivable cultural channels for persons with disabilities. Through AR virtual technology, sign language interpreters are embedded into the live broadcast to provide interpretation, while AI voice technology generates subtitles for hearing-impaired viewers. In the version for visually impaired audiences, professional narrators transform visual information—such as dance movements, stage designs, and costume details—into vivid auditory narratives. This technology-driven sensory compensation not only bridges information gaps but also enables marginalized groups to transition from passive observers to active participants, achieving truly equitable cultural sharing. Efforts should be made to improve the availability and accessibility of smart terminals, allowing broad public access to and participation in cultural content. Furthermore, it is crucial to enhance the public's ability to articulate cultural narratives and improve overall cultural literacy, truly realizing the vision of "technology for the people, culture for the people."

Conclusion

The practice of AIGC-generated content themed on Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture (ETCC) represents not only an opportunity for the "digital immortality" of traditional culture but also a challenge arising from the shifting authority of cultural interpretation. The success of cultural productions in both the CCTV Spring Festival Gala (CCTV SFG) and the Henan Spring Festival Gala (Henan SFG) illustrates how technology—through reconstructing virtual-real scenarios, translating traditional cultural symbols, and shaping digital personas—can inject new vitality into traditional culture, equipping it with robust relevance in a global context. In the digital-intelligence era, the dissemination of ETCC is gradually transitioning from tool-assisted "symbol reproduction" to innovation-driven "meaning regeneration." The creation of ETCC-themed AIGC content is thus not only a trend of the times but also a practical necessity. There is a critical need to integrate AIGC technology into the entire chain of international cultural communication, enabling a distinctive and innovative pathway for sharing Chinese civilization. Nevertheless, it is crucial to recognize that AIGC's empowerment of traditional culture dissemination remains fundamentally a negotiation between instrumental rationality and value rationality. Only by guiding technological application with a human-centered approach and fostering an ecosystem characterized by "meaningful production, empathetic communication, and well-calibrated governance" can Chinese civilization achieve genuine creative transformation and innovative development in the digital age-offering a Chinese model for equitable global cultural exchange.

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