

# Television, Museums, and Identity Construction in China

An Analysis of the TV program *National Treasure* (2017-2019)



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>List of abbreviations</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Research Question.....	3
Theoretical Framework and Methodology.....	4
Thesis chapter structure.....	5
<b>Chapter 1. Heritage, Museums, and Identity</b> .....	<b>6</b>
1.1 Heritage and shared memory.....	6
1.1.1 Defining heritage.....	6
1.1.2 The use of heritage.....	7
1.2 Heritage in the Chinese context.....	9
1.2.1 Cultural Relics ( <i>Wen Wu</i> 文物) as heritage.....	9
1.3 Museums in China: multiple roles.....	11
1.3.1 Museum history in China.....	11
1.3.2 Museums as institution and industry.....	12
<b>Chapter 2. Chinese Television: Entertainment and Identity</b> .....	<b>13</b>
2.1 Television in China: from propaganda to cultural exploration programs.....	13
2.1.1 Presenting heritage through media.....	13
2.1.2 From political programs to entertainment shows.....	14
2.1.3 The emergence of cultural exploration programs in China.....	15
2.2. Promoting museums through a TV program: the birth of <i>National Treasure</i> .....	18
2.2.1 Program production.....	18
2.2.2 The creative design: narrator, guardians, and storytellers.....	19
2.2.3 Audience engagement: the selection processes.....	20
<b>Chapter 3. Analysis of the <i>National Treasure</i> Program</b> .....	<b>21</b>
3.1 The reasoning behind the creative design: Is it all for entertainment?.....	21
3.1.1 Representation of themes: the choice of sponsors.....	21
3.1.2 Program setting: janitors, guardians, and storytellers.....	23
3.2 Case Studies: Why were the objects selected?.....	25
3.2.1 Identity construction: traditional ‘Chineseness’.....	26
3.2.2 Identity Construction: modern ‘Chineseness’.....	28
3.2.3 Chinese identity overseas: the spirits of ‘Family-Country’ ( <i>Jia Guo</i> 家国).....	30
3.3 Promoting national and provincial museums.....	32
3.3.1 Promoting the local: provincial museums matter.....	32
3.3.2 The achievements: how and why is the National Treasure Program successful?.....	33
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>38</b>
Primary Sources.....	38

Secondary Sources.....	38
Online Sources.....	40
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>42</b>
Appendix 1. Museums and Collections (Season 1&2).....	42
Appendix 2. the Selected Objects for Special Exhibitions (2018 and 2019).....	48
Appendix 3. Full text of Xi Jinping’s Speech at UNESCO headquarters.....	50
Appendix 4. Translation of the Comments on the ‘Nie Er’s Violin’ .....	62
Appendix 5. Statistic Chart from the National Bureau of Statistics.....	65
Appendix 6. Cultural creative products on Taobao.....	68
Appendix 7. Activities regarding Hanfu: the Xitang cultural Week / Xitang Hanfu festival.....	70
Appendix 8. Interviews of museum directors (original texts and translation).....	72

## **List of abbreviations**

ACGN	Anime, Comic, Game, Novel
CCTV	China Central Television
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CCCPC	Central Committee of the Communist Party of China
CITVC	China International Television Corporation
CMG	China Media Group
KMT	Kuomintang
PRC	People's Republic of China
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

## Introduction

Following the shining spotlight and rhythmic beats, the presenter strides with great gravitas to the center stage. The first season of the TV program *National Treasure* then begins as this presenter, Zhang Guoli's clear voice rings out: <sup>1</sup>

“Bring national treasures to life. This is the large-scale cultural exploration program *National Treasure*, and I am narrator No.001, Zhang, Guoli. The design of this magnificent entrance emphasizes that this is a young program with fresh content. And how young are we Chinese? 5000 years, give or take.” <sup>2</sup>



Figure 1. The opening line of every episode

During recent years, a new type of TV program has attracted the increasing attention from Chinese viewers of all ages. This new genre focuses on the various antiquities that are exhibited in different national museums in China. After the documentary film *Masters in the Forbidden City* (*Wo Zai Gugong Xiu Wenwu 我在故宫修文物*) became a hit in China in 2016, the TV program *National Treasure* (*Guo Jia Bao Zang 国家宝藏*) received tremendous positive feedback in 2017, especially among younger generations.<sup>3</sup> This TV program was produced by the China Media Group (CMG) and the China International Television Corporation (CITVC), and was broadcast on China Central Television (CCTV).<sup>4</sup> The program currently has two seasons with totally 20 episodes. *National Treasure* cooperates with 17 Chinese museums including one national museum, the Palace Museum

<sup>1</sup> *National Treasure Season 1*, episode 1, “National Treasure Season 1, 20171203,” directed by Lei Yu, aired December 3, 2017, on CCTV 3, 0:00-1:21.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkcJIHDzYhU&list=PLLnf\\_Wv13o4DpaH10NPIsGvI6CUO8ma4P&index=2&t=0s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkcJIHDzYhU&list=PLLnf_Wv13o4DpaH10NPIsGvI6CUO8ma4P&index=2&t=0s).

<sup>2</sup> This text is originally in Chinese, trans. Sijie Sun.

<sup>3</sup> Jinhong Yu 余金红, “Cultural Memory Construction and Inheritance of Cultural TV Programs —— Take CCTV’s National Treasure as an Example 文化类电视节目文化记忆建构与传承——以央视《国家宝藏》节目为例,” *Journal of Qiqihar University (Phi& Soc Sci)*, no.1 (January 2019): 144-147.

<sup>4</sup> For more details, see subchapter [2.2.1](#)

in Beijing and 16 provincial museums. Its main objective is to present the cultural and historical contexts embedded within museum collections. The program invites celebrities to be the ‘guardians’ of the national treasures, who perform stories (either based on fact or conjecture) about the treasures on stage.<sup>5</sup> Audiences can also select their favorite antiquities, and those voted highest are displayed as 3D reconstructions in the special exhibitions held in the Palace Museum in Beijing in February 2018 and 2019.

The program soon became a hit among Chinese audiences because of its creative engagement with cultural heritage, as well as its extensive knowledge on both academic disciplines such as Archaeology and Museology. The promotion of national and provincial museums and antiquities as national heritage attracted public attention and conveyed a sense of national pride and Chinese identity, strengthening the idea of the Chinese Dream (中国梦).

The Chinese Dream was promoted by president Xi Jinping in 2012, after his visit to *The Road of Rejuvenation* exhibition in the National Museum of China. The exhibition presented the period between the Opium war in 1840 and present-day China, demonstrating the Chinese spirit of rebellion and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)’s essential role in establishing a new China.<sup>6</sup> During the exhibition, Xi referred the Chinese Dream as the dream of ‘the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation’ (中华民族的伟大复兴). The national ethos was further expanded during Xi’s presidency included policies such as the One Belt One Road Initiative and the Core Socialist Values.<sup>7</sup> The *National Treasure* program, therefore, could be seen as an instrument to promote the Chinese Dream ethos to wider audiences.

The role of national museums in present-day China have been increasingly debated due to the country’s booming museum industry. Thus, exploring how national museums serve the political interests of the nation-state also becomes a fruitful topic. National heritage has always been considered essential for Chinese history, culture, and national identity. National museums are regarded as important institutions for preserving and promoting the antiquities considered as ‘cultural relics’, which are also portrayed as ‘national treasures’ (国宝 *Guo bao*) and ‘national heritage’ of the Chinese state.

## Research Question

This thesis aims to critically analyse the *National Treasure* program by questioning its self-positioning as an entertaining program or ‘cultural exploration TV program (文博探索节目)’ and analyzing the relationship between the TV program and identity construction. In addition, I intend to explore how Chinese identity is defined by the government and conveyed through television. The social role of national and provincial museums and the political agenda found in this

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<sup>5</sup> “Guojia Baozang 国家宝藏,” CCTV, accessed January 31, 2020. <http://tv.cctv.com/cctv3/special/guojiaobaozang/index.shtml>.

<sup>6</sup> “The Road of Rejuvenation,” The National Museum of China, accessed June 26, 2020, <http://www.chnmuseum.cn/portals/0/web/zt/fuxing/intro.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Zheng Wang, “The Chinese Dream: Concept and Context,” *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 19, no.1 (2014): 1-13.

TV program will be also discussed.

The main research question of this thesis is: **“How are Chinese museums branded through the promotion of national heritage in the TV program *National Treasure*?”**. Four main sub-questions are discussed and analyzed in the following chapters. The first sub-question is: “What are the functions of national museums in Chinese society?” (Chapter 1). Secondly, how has the promotion of cultural heritage emerged through television? (Chapter 2). Thirdly, how does the *National Treasure* program contribute to Chinese identity construction through its promotion of heritage? (Chapter 3.1 and 3.2). Finally, how does this program promote provincial museums through its emphasis on cultural diversity? (Chapter 3.3).

## **Theoretical Framework and Methodology**

As a study of Chinese museums and “national heritage” antiquities, this thesis relates to heritage studies. Therefore, my main focus is on the heritage-making process, the ‘Heritagization’ of Chinese museums and museum collections, as defined by Walsh.<sup>8</sup> Within this context I also assess Smith’s notion of the ‘Disneyfication’ of nation building<sup>9</sup>, Anderson’s idea of the construction of national identity.<sup>10</sup> Based on Bennet’s discussion on the function of museums,<sup>11</sup> I perceive Chinese museums as mediums for practicing governmental power, suggesting the promotion of museums and heritage as a means for Chinese identity construction and the enhancement of the Chinese Dream narrative. To understand the role of television in heritage practices, I assess Groote and Haartsen’s work on the function of mass media in heritage representation and reproduction.<sup>12</sup> I also examine identity construction through the *National Treasure* program in relation to Assmann’s notions of ‘collective memory’ and ‘collective culture’.<sup>13</sup> My research demonstrates the necessity of shaping Chinese identity through the promotion of museums and heritage.

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, I was unable to visit the relevant museums and carry out fieldwork. Thus, the research method is limited to desk research and my analysis relies on the program as a primary source. The episodes are mainly studied through audiovisual analysis, wherein the content analysis approach is used to examine the visual and contextual elements of the program, and thereby investigate how it constructs Chinese identity and promotes the Chinese Dream narrative. Objects selected for the special exhibitions are also analyzed, focusing on how the program inspires an emotional attachment in the audience, and through this develops storylines as mechanisms for the construction of Chinese identity. I select these objects based on certain components of Chinese

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<sup>8</sup> Kevin Walsh, *The Representation of the Past: Museums and Heritage in the Post-Modern World* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 135-140.

<sup>9</sup> Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2006), 32-33.

<sup>10</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 2006).

<sup>11</sup> Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 19-23.

<sup>12</sup> Peter Groote and Tialda Haartsen, “The Communication of Heritage: Creating Place Identities,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, ed. Brian Graham and Peter Howard (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 181-194.

<sup>13</sup> Jan Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance and Political Imagination* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 15-69.

identity as defined by the government, including a sense of national pride, patriotism, and the notion of family-country. However, due to the large number of objects introduced in this program, only a select few are analyzed in this thesis. Discourse analysis is also used to investigate audience reviews on platforms such as Youtube and Sina Weibo, in order to analyze the public's response to the promotion of national pride. Finally, I use data provided by the National Bureau of Statistics to show the increase of employees and visitors in the museum industry.

The analysis is based on literature about heritage studies which provides the theoretical framework to explain the role of Chinese museums as institutions and industry, and the advancement of the governmental political agenda through the promotion of heritage. Academic works on Chinese television are also consulted to investigate the evolution of heritage promotion through TV programs, positioning television as an essential medium for political propaganda and a tool for creating collective memories.

### **Thesis chapter structure**

This thesis investigates the influence of Chinese museums on identity construction through a cultural exploration TV program named *National Treasure*; it reveals the interrelation of television and heritage practices in pursuing the political agenda of the Chinese government. It also sheds light on the development of the Chinese cultural industry in terms of commercialization and tourism, as well as the heritagization of museum collections promoted by cultural exploration programs.

Chapter 1 addresses the current problems experienced by museums in China. It connects China's heritage policies to heritage management to give a comprehensive view of the current situation of Chinese museums. Chapter 2 introduces the development of television in China and the discussions on the relationship between Chinese TV programs and identity formation. Following an introduction to the cultural exploration TV program, this chapter dives into the design of *National Treasure*. Chapter 3 analyzes the program contents, including the scripts used to promote identity construction. It investigates the program's commercial achievements, and discusses museums' self-branding strategies. In the end, the thesis concludes that Chinese national and provincial museums are essential for Chinese identity construction through their promotion of heritage. Television is an efficient instrument for popularizing national and local heritage, while the flourishing commercialized museum industry also reveals further controversies on the heritagization of museum collections.



# Chapter 1. Heritage, Museums, and Identity

## 1.1 Heritage and shared memory

### 1.1.1 Defining heritage

The main sub-question of this chapter is: “What are the functions of national museums in Chinese society?” By analyzing China’s heritage practices, this chapter discusses how antiquities are connected to the concept of ‘heritage’. To answer the main sub-question, this chapter asks how Chinese museums treat heritage objects and sheds light on Chinese museums as both institutions and industries of heritage. This section will first discuss the definition of heritage.

There are several general ways of understanding the term ‘heritage’: tangible heritage such as heritage sites, antiquities, and intangible heritage such as oral culture. The general understanding of heritage is associated with things or practices from ‘the past’. The Cambridge Dictionary defines heritage as a concept referring to “features belonging to the culture of a particular society, such as traditions, languages, or buildings, that were created in the past and still have historical importance”.<sup>14</sup> To put it simply, heritage is often understood and explained as something/somewhere historical, and thus valuable to human civilization.

However, in academia, heritage is defined differently and the understanding of it seems to vary. The first point drawn by Harrison is that heritage is “not a ‘thing’ or a historical or political movement, but instead a set of attitudes to, and relationship with, the past.”<sup>15</sup> On the one hand, scholars such as Anderson connect heritage to other cultural or political practices such as religion and nation-building, portraying heritage as something invented to achieve certain goals.<sup>16</sup> Smith, on the other hand, argues that heritage is more than just artificial, it is a cultural process for meaning-making, thus a discourse where social meaning, language, power relations, and ideologies are reproduced. She suggests that heritage does not just concern the past, but also the present. According to Smith, heritage is related to the creation and recreation of identity, a process of how the past, the individual, and collective memories can be used in expressing identities in the present.<sup>17</sup> In this sense, heritage can be understood as a cultural process, a discourse, and a social practice with various functions or purposes.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> “heritage,” Cambridge Dictionary, Accessed May 2, 2020.

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/zhs/%E8%AF%8D%E5%85%B8/%E8%8B%B1%E8%AF%AD/heritage>.

<sup>15</sup> Rodney Harrison, *Heritage: Critical Approaches* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 14.

<sup>16</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 163-206.

<sup>17</sup> Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 4.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

### 1.1.2 The use of heritage

The definition of heritage remains broad, and its understanding differs from scholar to scholar. According to Smith, heritage as a discourse influences participants' idea of heritage. As the idea of heritage is often fluid, the practice of heritage also incorporates a wide range of actions.<sup>19</sup> Heritage is practiced through activities such as remembering, communication, meaning-making, and knowledge transfer, and often results in a certain interpretation of the past.

Heritage is associated not only with objects from the past but with the creation and recreation of memories and identities. Heritage can also create a sense of belonging, especially when engaging with objects and places during modern times. Heritage, in this case, can serve political and social needs.<sup>20</sup> This function of heritage is widely discussed in the perspectives of nation-building, community-building, and the political agendas within these processes. In investigating the relationship between heritage and nation-building, it is important to consider the connections between memory creation, nation-building, and identity construction.

One may question how shared memory relates to nation-building. According to Anderson, the nation-state is an imagined community with a fixed border, the members of which do not all know each other. Instead they are bonded by the sense of belonging produced by a shared culture, language, and memory.<sup>21</sup> The term 'shared culture', or 'shared memory' is referred to by Assmann as 'memory culture' or 'cultural memory', which uses the memory of the past to connect a community in the present.<sup>22</sup> Shared cultural memory can be constructed and transmitted through various means, including a shared language, a common text system, and shared values and norms. As cultural memory also emphasizes the importance of place, it contributes to a sense of belonging within a region, which is argued to be the foundation of cultural identity.<sup>23</sup>

The emergence of heritage practices in the present differs from the traditional performance of heritage. Smith's critique on disneyfication demonstrates a simplification of heritage aimed at entertainment. This critique was initially based on concerns over the spread of tourism but has expanded to general heritage practices and interpretations of the past<sup>24</sup> The emerging phenomenon of heritagization has also become criticized for commercializing the heritage-making process for profit in the post-modern era. Walsh further identifies heritagization as the process in which selected images or places are preserved as heritage for commercial profits or identity, yet the actual history is downplayed.<sup>25</sup>

How, then, are heritage values shown? Smith draws heritage values in relation to objects and

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 83.

<sup>20</sup> Laurajane Smith, *All Heritage is Intangible: Critical Heritage Studies and Museums* (Text of the Reinwardt Memorial Lecture, May 26, 2011), 18-19.

<sup>21</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Community*, 1-7.

<sup>22</sup> Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization*, 15-69.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 111-143.

<sup>24</sup> Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 32-33.

<sup>25</sup> Walsh, *The Representation of the Past*, 135-140.

places, and suggests that the value of heritage could not exist without the objects, practices, and places associated with a particular (group of) people in particular a time or place.<sup>26</sup> Holtorf and Silberman discuss the value of heritage today. Holtorf points out that heritage value in popular culture is created through visitors' engagements with museums or heritage sites. These engagements provide visitors with a sense of connection to their personal experiences and to the past.<sup>27</sup> Silberman's work on heritage value and technology further supports this point of view. It argues that the value of heritage is gradually changing from commemorative to entertainment through technology such as mass media. Silberman decries that visitors' experiences are increasingly designed for economic profit, which transforms heritage institutions and sites into sightseeing destinations where historical contexts are often ignored.<sup>28</sup>

Therefore, to understand the practice of heritage, it is important to consider that heritage contributes to meaning making, the target audiences/visitors within particular cultural and regional contexts could also play an important role. Though *National Treasure* positions itself as promoting heritage, the context of said heritage should be considered. Based on the program's engagement with heritage, I would further argue that it should be understood as not simply as entertainment, but as a heritagization practice in the form of a TV program.

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<sup>26</sup> Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 197-236.

<sup>27</sup> Cornelius Holtorf, "Heritage Values in Contemporary Popular Culture," in *Heritage Values in Contemporary Society*, ed. George S. Smith et al. (California: Left Coast Press, 2010), 43-54.

<sup>28</sup> Neil Asher Silberman, "Technology, Heritage Values, and Interpretation," in *Heritage Values in Contemporary Society*, 63-73.

## 1.2 Heritage in the Chinese context

The definition of heritage remains vague in the context of China, where the notion is relatively new and under dispute. The concept was only introduced the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Qing government was threatened by external colonial powers. Subjected to military, the government decided to ‘learn from the west’ and apply this knowledge to China. The term ‘cultural heritage’ was translated into ‘Wen Hua Yi Chan 文化遗产’, something that was inherited and can be passed on.<sup>29</sup>

Hence, in 1909, the Qing government ordered the preservation of ancient objects places within the empire. This preservation was later continued by the Republic of China (1912-1949), and enhanced the notion of heritage in Chinese academia and authority. Combined with the discourse of creating a democratic nation-state, ‘national heritage’ was the center of heritage preservation during the republic period, which was rooted firmly in the heritage practices in China in the later period.<sup>30</sup> China’s heritage practices started with the discussion regarding the preservation of antiquities and architectural monuments and centered on the contestation between state ownership and imperial ownership (individual ownership). Antiquities have been an essential aspect of heritage since its emergence in China.

### 1.2.1 Cultural Relics (*Wen Wu* 文物) as heritage

Though the ‘heritage’ concept was introduced recently, it was by no means the first instance of collection and preservation. The preservation of historical religious places such as temples and pagodas has historically been the responsibility of the imperial authorities. However, it was not until the republic period of China that objects were connected to the meaning of ‘heritage’. Therefore, before the 1930 heritage preservation law there was neither a fixed term for heritage objects nor a clear definition of what was cultural heritage. ‘Ancient objects (*Gu Wu* 古物)’ became the first term to carry the meaning of ‘heritage’ in the republic period, which was replaced by ‘cultural relics (*Wen Wu* 文物)’ after Communist China was established in 1949. The term cultural relics is used in Chinese to distinguish from ‘antiquities (*Gu Dong* 古董), in order to emphasize the priceless and non-trading nature of national heritage.<sup>31</sup>

Historically, cultural relics have been the basis for China’s definition of ‘heritage’, and have been promoted by various means. Collecting antiquities was originally an aesthetic hobby for individuals, but has shifted to the current heritage value of representing historical Chinese civilization.<sup>32</sup> As mentioned in subchapter [1.1.2](#), the value of heritage is embedded in objects or places at a particular time and place for a particular group of people.<sup>33</sup> The value of cultural relics for China lies with the history they represent, and more importantly, how to interpret the past to

<sup>29</sup> Guolong Lai, “The emergence of ‘cultural heritage’ in modern China: a historical and legal perspective,” in *Reconsidering Cultural Heritage in East Asia*, ed. by Akira Matsuda and Luisa E. Mengoni (London: Ubiquity Press, 2016), 47–85.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Yi Liu 刘毅, “The Shifting Concept of the Term Wenwu 文物的变迁.” *Dong nan Wenhua* 东南文化, no.1 (July 2015): 6-14.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 197-236.

benefit the present.

Meanwhile, China's practices in heritage management are also attracting increasing attention from researchers. China's practice of heritage is criticized as being used for political goals. For instance, based on Smith's theory of Authorized Heritage Discourse,<sup>34</sup> Maags and Svensson emphasize that China's heritage management reveals a contestation between top-down and bottom-up processes of identity construction.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 29-34.

<sup>35</sup> Christina Maags and Marina Svensson, ed., *Chinese Heritage in the Making: Experiences, Negotiations and Contestations* (Amsterdam University Press, 2018).

## 1.3 Museums in China: multiple roles

### 1.3.1 Museum history in China

Similar to heritage, the notion of the museum was also imported from abroad. The conceptualization of the museum in China was influenced by Britain, France, the US, and Japan during the republic period. The term ‘Bo Wu Guan 博物馆’ in Chinese was borrowed from the Japanese term ‘Hakubutsukan’, which was directly translated from the English word ‘Museum’. The term ‘Bo Wu 博物’ can mean to learn from worldly perspectives, and is used to indicate a wide-range of objects. ‘Guan 馆’ could refer to a large hall.<sup>36</sup> The original function of museums in China could then be understood as a hall where objects are exhibited.

Chinese museums adopted their structure from the west and their museological practices from Japan. Traditionally, scholars considered museums to be institutions, institutions where antiquities were collected and displayed and where history was exhibited. Museums emerged in the early modern age, and are therefore also described by Walsh as institutions where progress, rationality, and modernity are embedded and shown.<sup>37</sup> Thus, the museum is part of heritage-making; as Smith points out, museum collections have been portrayed as heritage, and enable heritage stories to be constructed, interpreted, and represented.<sup>38</sup> Bennett further points out that the emergence of public museums in particular, reveals a strong connection with governmental power. The role of museums, therefore, lies in governments’ practices of power, such as the regulation of social order, the construction of national identity, and the production of a better economy of cultural power.<sup>39</sup> For this reason, nationalism and nationalistic ideas have also become important components of museums. Furthermore, as museums aim to inform the public about history and culture, they have educational effects on public visitors.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Shuli Wang, “3. Exhibiting the Nation: Cultural Flows, Transnational Exchanges, and the Development of Museums in Japan and China, 1900-1950.” in *Eurasian Encounters: Museums, Missions, Modernities. Asian Heritages Vol.2*, ed. Carolien Stolte and Yoshiyuki Kikuchi (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017), 47-71.

<sup>37</sup> Walsh, *The Representation of the Past*, 7-38.

<sup>38</sup> Smith, *All Heritage is Intangible*, 25.

<sup>39</sup> Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, 19-23.

<sup>40</sup> Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 197-202.

### 1.3.2 Museums as institution and industry

In present-day China, museums are seldom exclusively connected to the practice of political or cultural power. Apart from the historical and cultural, the museum collections in China are also appreciated for their inherent social value. Museum collections denote not only a connection with the past but also the inheritance of virtues from Chinese ancestors.<sup>41</sup> The objects are used to link the modern Chinese identity with the idea of traditional ‘Chineseness’.

Another important role of museums lies with commercialization. Firstly, museum exhibitions contribute to tourism. Museums that display heritage objects are often seen in conjunction with heritage sites, however in the post-modern period, museums are being increasingly branded in terms of entertainment and tourism. Critics describes this as a process of turning museums into ‘theme parks’.<sup>42</sup> According to the study of ‘Museum economy’, the museum itself can be understood as an individual economic unit. In this sense, museums are firms that provide certain services, and can be influenced by factors such as demand and supply, labor, and pricing. It can also affect markets by providing jobs, boosting tourism, etc.<sup>43</sup> Museums in China in particular, position themselves also as part of the service industry. This can be seen in various interviews with museum directors: visitor rates and reviews depend largely on their experiences and the self-branding of museum exhibitions, referred to as the ‘services’ of the museums.<sup>44</sup>

*Cai Qin (蔡琴), vice director of Zhejiang Provincial museum:*

*“The main product of museums are the services for the visitor. Bringing cultural relics to life is to engage with the public, share (the knowledge) with the public. The function of museum is to use the benefit of sharing (among the public) to serve the society and contribute to the harmonious development of the society.”<sup>45</sup>*

According to the directors, museums want visitors to engage with the historical and cultural contexts, instead of merely glancing at the collections. Xi Jinping’s 2014 speech at the UNESCO headquarters emphasized the importance of ‘bringing all collections in our museums, all heritage structures across our lands and all records in our classics to life’<sup>46</sup> in order to achieve the ‘Chinese Dream’ and cultural exchange worldwide.<sup>47</sup> In response to Xi’s guidelines, museums used mass and social media to be more accessible to the public and to attract younger generations.

<sup>41</sup> Wang, “Exhibiting the Nation,” 52-53.

<sup>42</sup> Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 199-200.

<sup>43</sup> Bruno S. Frey and Stephan Meier, “Chapter 29. The Economics of Museums,” in *Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture Volume 1*, ed. Victor A. Ginsburgh and David Throsby (Elsevier, 2016), 1019-1024.

<sup>44</sup> Juan Hou 侯隽, Jiangchao Yang 杨蒋超, and Jiefei Hu 胡洁菲, “<Guo Jia Bao Zang> Beihou de Jingjixue: Bowuguan gai Ruhe Huo Qilai 《国家宝藏》背后的经济学：博物馆该如何火起来,” *Zhongguo Jingji Zhoukan 中国经济周刊. Xinhua Net 新华网*. January 31, 2018. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/book/2018-01/31/c\\_129801547.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/book/2018-01/31/c_129801547.htm).

<sup>45</sup> Translated by Sijie Sun. For more interview contents of the museum directors, see [Appendix 8](#).

<sup>46</sup> For the full text of Xi’s speech, see [Appendix 3](#).

<sup>47</sup> “习近平在联合国教科文组织总部的演讲（全文） Full text: Xi Jinping's speech at UNESCO headquarters,” *China.org.cn*, last modified April 1, 2014, [http://www.china.org.cn/chinese/2014-04/01/content\\_31964496.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/chinese/2014-04/01/content_31964496.htm).

## Chapter 2. Chinese Television: Entertainment and Identity

### 2.1 Television in China: from propaganda to cultural exploration programs

#### 2.1.1 Presenting heritage through media

Along with museums, the media has also become a major method for promoting heritage to the public. In the era of mass communication and popular culture, the notion of heritage is seen through many perspectives. Heritage is now considered part of the market, wherein the media—and its audience—plays an essential role.<sup>48</sup> This chapter deal with the following sub-question: “How has the promotion of cultural heritage emerged through television?”. To approach this question, this chapter also follows the development of the cultural exploration programs in China. The section starts by discussing the portrayal of heritage in mass media.

According to Adorno and Horkheimer, the expansion of mass entertainment made media an active player in the culture industry, wherein it serves the demand of the mass audience.<sup>49</sup> Within these conditions, heritage began to be integrated into popular culture through the mass media.<sup>50</sup> Described as a product of the market by Howard, heritage is shaped by major factors including media, visitors, governments, academics, and owners. Media and visitors have a particular power over the meaning of heritage on a mass scale, which in turn also affects the public discourse over heritage.<sup>51</sup>

Heritage in the mass media also related to identity construction. Groote and Haartsen identify the increasing representation and reproduction of heritage in modern film and television.<sup>52</sup> Mass media also affects the identity construction processes. As pointed out by Anderson, museums and media play an essential role in creating collective memory and national identity, which are essential to the creation of an ‘imagined community’.<sup>53</sup> In this sense, heritage contributes to the construction of identities through its portrayal in mass media.

As one of the remaining major functions of television, broadcasting serves not only to transmit political messages to the audiences but also to construct identity, especially national identity. According to Anderson, the nation-state is described as an ‘imagined community’ where members are connected by shared identity or common memory.<sup>54</sup> In Anderson’s ‘imagined community’, mass media that can reach the border of the territory would be essential for sending nationalistic ideas and

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<sup>48</sup> Peter Howard, *Heritage: Management, Interpretation, Identity* (London and New York: Continuum International Publishing, 2003), 102-146.

<sup>49</sup> Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Continuum, 1993), 1-24.

<sup>50</sup> Mike D, Robinson, “Meaning in Chaos? Experiencing Cultural Heritage and the Challenge of the Popular,” in *The Heritage Theatre: Globalisation and Cultural Heritage*, ed. Alex van Stipriaan, Patricia van Ulzen and Marlite Halbertsma (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2011), 215-239.

<sup>51</sup> Howard, *Heritage*, 143-185.

<sup>52</sup> Groote and Haartsen, “The Communication of Heritage: Creating Place Identities,” 181-194.

<sup>53</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 163-185.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 1-7.



consolidating national identity. Research by Dayan and Katz suggests that publicly broadcast political ceremonies serve as a major presentation of national identity. These types of TV programs are also used to retell history, through which common memory is created to be memorized by the public. Apart from creating a common memory, television also functions as a medium through which to interpret the past, for example memories of the war.<sup>55</sup> Thus, television affects identity construction outside of heritage practices.

### 2.1.2 From political programs to entertainment shows

Compared to television in Europe and the US, television in China started late and initially developed slowly. It was also originally a means for the CCP to achieve political ends: competition with the the Nationalist Party (KMT) in Taiwan. The CCP was determined to launch their television stations before the US-supported KMT in order to consolidate its control over the newly established Communist regime since 1949.<sup>56</sup> During this time, television in China was transparent in its role as a political tool. More importantly, it was considered an efficient way to connect the Chinese population and create a common Chinese identity.<sup>57</sup>

It is well known that Chinese media is under strict state control. However, this situation has changed since the economic reform in 1979, albeit to a minor extent. The economic reform enabled the import of foreign TV programs and the absorption of entertainment genres, especially among provincial and local television stations. As a result, Chinese television in the 21<sup>st</sup> century boasts various types of entertainment programs including music entertainment shows, reality shows, etc.<sup>58</sup> The state, however, maintains complete ownership, which suggests that television in China remains undemocratic despite its developments in the entertainment industry.<sup>59</sup>

Given its control over television, the Chinese government holds a particular view of entertainment programs. From the perspective of the CCP, television, particularly popular culture, should serve the interest of the nation and the party. The role of entertainment programs is to promote Chinese culture and identity. Therefore, the Chinese government initiates a domestically-oriented entertainment industry with two purposes: to compete with foreign entertainment shows, and to build an image of a progressive China.<sup>60</sup> Scholars such as Gorfinkel,<sup>61</sup> Sun<sup>62</sup>, and Wang<sup>63</sup> also shed light on the state control over entertainment contents. Their research

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<sup>55</sup> Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz, "7. Political Ceremony and Instant History," in *Television: An International History*, ed. Anthony Smith and Richard Paterson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 97-106.

<sup>56</sup> Wanning Sun and Lauren Gorfinkel, "Television, scale and place-identity in the PRC Provincial, national and global influences from 1958 to 2013." in *Television Histories in Asia: Issues and Contexts*, ed. Jinna Tay, and Graeme Turner (New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis, 2015), 19-37.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 27.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 30-33

<sup>59</sup> Daniela Stockman, *Media commercialization and authoritarian rule in China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1-22.

<sup>60</sup> Lauren Gorfinkel, *Chinese Television and National Identity Construction: The Cultural Politics of Music-Entertainment Programmes* (London & New York: Routledge, 2018), 1-25.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 1-25.

<sup>62</sup> Sun and Gorfinkel, "Television, scale and place Identity," 19-37.

<sup>63</sup> Xiao Wang, "Entertainment, Education, or Propaganda? A Longitudinal Analysis of China Central Television's Spring Festival Galas," *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 54, no.3 (August 2010): 391-406.

identifies how channels—both provincial and national—increasingly incorporate processes of national identity building into their entertainment programs. Provincial channels portray their ‘Chineseness’ through the themes in their entertainment programs.<sup>64</sup> While on the other side, CCTV presents new forms of entertainment programs that promote ‘Chineseness’ by introducing traditional cultures, interpreting traditional virtues, and by sending political messages such as ethnic solidarity, reunification with Taiwan, and a connection with overseas Chinese people.<sup>65</sup> These cultural programs often connect themselves to heritage and the idea of ‘national treasure’ (*Guo Bao* 国宝) and ‘cultural relics’ (*Wen Wu* 文物).

### 2.1.3 The emergence of cultural exploration programs in China

Categorized as the entertainment show, the ‘cultural program’ remains a broad concept to be discussed. One can argue that the cultural program is not a contemporary phenomenon since programs on Chinese culture can be traced back to the first decades of television in China.<sup>66</sup> This section, however, focuses on a specific type of TV program, the ‘cultural exploration program’, which concerns cultural relics.

In addition to the political, television also holds vast commercial potential. 2003 saw the birth of programs about antiquities. As reported by Yuan, programs about individual collections emerged the next year of the revision of terms regarding antiquities in the <Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People’s Republic of China> (*Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Wenwu Baohu Fa* 中华人民共和国文物保护法) in 2002. The massive broadcasting of individual collection programs soon led to a collection fever among the public.<sup>67</sup> Xu also points out the antiquity collection program’s original motive of fulfilling increasing consumer demands. China’s economic development also enabled its audiences to explore international entertainment. To attract more audiences, especially those with high income and educational backgrounds, CCTV launched programs about collection and the appreciation of art and antiquity.<sup>68</sup>

Programs in this era focused on the trading value of antiquities, ignoring the notion of heritage and protection. Eventually producers realized the audience’s interest in the history and culture of antiquities, and shifted the focus from antiquity collection to cultural exploration. Like Xu, Yu considers how programs accommodate consumer demand, arguing audiences seek programs that provide knowledge of culture and history. Rather than meaningless mass entertainment, Chinese audiences seek deeper meanings and aesthetic values.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Sun and Gorfinkel, “Television, scale and place Identity,” 19-37.

<sup>65</sup> Zhongdang Pan and Joseph Chan, “Building a market-based Party organ: Television and national integration in China,” in *Television in contemporary Asia*, ed. D. French & M. Richards (New Delhi: Sage, 2000), 233–263.

<sup>66</sup> Gorfinkel, *Chinese Television and National Identity Construction*, 8.

<sup>67</sup> Xiuyue Yuan 袁秀月, “Wen Bo lei Jiemu Rechao hou de Lengsikao: Dailai Naxie Xinbianhua? 文博类节目热潮后的冷思考 带来哪些新变化?” *Renmin Net* 人民网, April 2, 2018, <http://media.people.com.cn/n1/2018/0402/c40606-29901339.html>.

<sup>68</sup> Janice Hua Xu, “8. Building a Chinese “Middle Class”: Consumer Education and Identity Construction in Television Land,” in *TV China*, ed. Ying Zhu and Chris Berry (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 150-167.

<sup>69</sup> Yu, “Cultural Memory Construction,” 144-147.

Hence, the cultural exploration program emerged as a brand-new type of TV program, combining the characteristics of the documentary, entertainment show, and reality show, and adding



Figure 2. *Masters in Forbidden City*, screen photo

an element of education. Intending to promote Chinese culture and identity, and responding to the increasing demand of the Chinese audiences, programs about cultural relics became a big hit in the 2010s. In 2016, a three-episode documentary *Masters in Forbidden City*, directed by Xiao Han and Ye Jun, was broadcast through CCTV 9, the channel for documentaries, and brought the cultural program to the

attention of the public.<sup>71</sup> Although it was a low-budget documentary, the program's focus on the workman spirits of carefulness and patience in the restorations of cultural relics in the Palace Museum attracted a large young demographic, especially after it was uploaded on Bilibili, an online video platform known for young user base.<sup>72</sup>

Following the success of *Masters in the Forbidden City*, the cultural exploration program *National Treasure* further attracted audiences of all ages, both within and outside of China. Similar programs, such as the documentary *Every Treasure Tells a Story* (如果国宝会说话), and the reality show *There Is Something New in the Palace Museum* (上新了故宫), have shown different perspectives on the field of heritage practices in China. The documentary *Every Treasure Tells a Story* was produced by CCTV primarily broadcast through CCTV 9 in 2018 (Figure 3). It focused on cultural relics from provincial museums, spending 5 minutes on each artefact in a friendly and relaxed style.

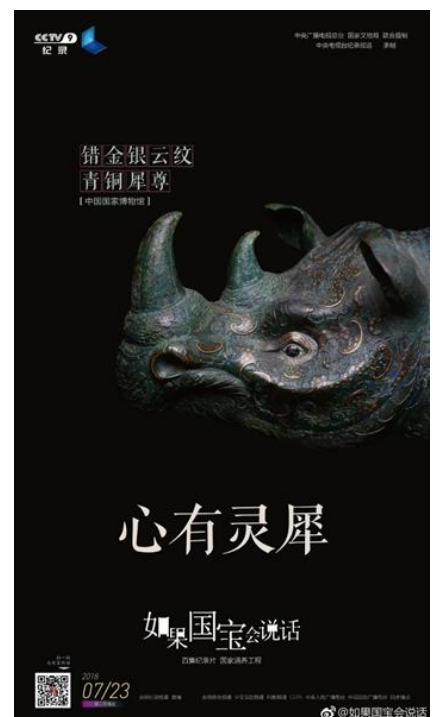


Figure 3. *Every Treasure Tells a Story*, poster

<sup>71</sup> Jun Zeng 曾俊, "Gaofen Wenhua Jiemu rang Wenwu huo Qilai 高分文化节目让文物活起来," *Guangzhou Daily 广州日报*, *Xinhua Net 新华网*, November 16, 2018. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/ent/2018-11/16/c\\_1123721749.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/ent/2018-11/16/c_1123721749.htm).

<sup>72</sup> Minghui Xu 徐明徽 and Li, Jiao 李娇. "<Master in Forbidden City> Daoyan: Gugong Shifu men de man Shenghuo Dadong le Nianqing ren 《我在故宫修文物》导演: 故宫师傅们的慢生活打动了年轻人," *The Paper 澎湃*, February 28, 2017. [http://m.thepaper.cn/newsDetail\\_forward\\_1628138](http://m.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_1628138).

Meanwhile the reality show *There is Something New in the Palace Museum* was produced and presented by a local TV station, the Beijing Television, and the Palace Museum, and a local TV station in 2018, and focused on the development of cultural creative products in the Palace Museum (Figure 4).<sup>75</sup> Cultural creative product refers to products from daily use to decorations that share the characteristics with certain cultural relics.<sup>76</sup> The program also presented the current commercialization of Chinese museums as a main selling point, aiming to attract consumers as well as their interests on the collections per se.<sup>77</sup>

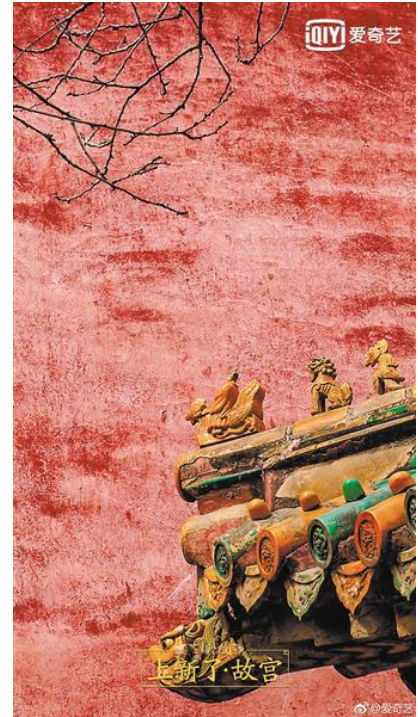


Figure 4. *There is Something New in the Palace Museum*, poster

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<sup>75</sup> Zeng, “Gaofen Wenhua Jiemu.”

<sup>76</sup> For examples of cultural creative products, see [Appendix 6](#).

<sup>77</sup> Zeng, “Gaofen Wenhua Jiemu.”

## 2.2. Promoting museums through a TV program: the birth of *National Treasure*

### 2.2.1 Program production

On December 3, 2017, the first episode of *National Treasure* Season one was broadcast on CCTV 3, the channel for variety programs. Both seasons of this program were produced by the state-owned media companies: CMG and CITVC, and sponsored by two wine companies: Shui Jing Fang (水井坊) and Yanghe Meng zhi Lan (洋河梦之蓝). Aside from CCTV, the program also actively cooperated with large online video platforms, including Bilibili, iQiyi, Tencent Video, and Youku all of which support mobile app. It is also available on Youtube for overseas audiences.

Producer-director Yu Lei points out that *National Treasure* had been planned as early as 2015. After the approval by CCTV, Yu and her team won the opportunity to travel to the UK to study European museums and their relationship with society. Yu notes that unlike the Palace Museum, which is considered a tourist destination, museums in the UK are closely connected to people's daily life and allow them to learn about cultural relics and their history. Not an expert in heritage, Yu points out that the value of cultural relics and the role of museums are not widely known by the Chinese public, not to mention the function of museums.<sup>78</sup>

Positioning itself as a cultural exploration program, *National Treasure* was produced in cooperation with national and provincial museums in China, aiming to promote cultural relics and Chinese history to a wider audience. The program also became a medium for museums to brand themselves and attract more visitors. Each season of the program consists of 10 episodes, including a closing ceremony. The episodes cover 9 national or provincial museums in total, with each episode introducing 3 cultural relics from each museum.<sup>79</sup> The first season introduced the Palace Museum and 8 provincial museums.<sup>80</sup> The second season was broadcast after December 9, 2018, with other 8 provincial museums than season 1, apart from the Palace Museum.<sup>81</sup> The second season moved beyond the traditional identity of the 'middle kingdom' in China, to include more ideas about modern China.

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<sup>78</sup> Hou, Yang, and Hu, "<Guo Jia Bao Zang> Beihou de Jingjixue."

<sup>79</sup> For the full list of the member museums and selected objects, see [Appendix 1](#).

<sup>80</sup> CCTV, "Guojia Baozang 国家宝藏."

<sup>81</sup> "Guo Jia Bao Zang Di Er Ji 国家宝藏第二季," CCTV, accessed April 18, 2020. <http://tv.cctv.com/cctv3/special/gjbz2/index.shtml>.

## 2.2.2 The creative design: narrator, guardians, and storytellers

In addition to the creative genre, producers also worked on the creative design of this program. The cultural exploration programs *Masters in the Forbidden City* and *Every Treasure Tells a Story* (*Ruguo Guobao hui Shuohua* 如果国宝会说话) were focused on the object itself and the history behind it, respectively; *National Treasure* makes no distinction. While the former two focused solely on the objects, *National Treasure* enabled further engagement between people and cultural heritage. As previously mentioned, the program not only changed the role of the presenter into that of a narrator but also invited celebrities to be the guardians, storytellers of objects and their ‘previous life’.<sup>82</sup>

As the second stage of storytelling, other storytellers would then recount the object’s ‘present life’, and its relationship with current society. These ‘present life’ guardians, however, were not limited to cultural elites and experts.<sup>83</sup> The final stage of storytelling involved the issue of a ‘guardian seal’ and the taking of a ‘guardian oath’ by both guardians and storytellers. The oath consisted of a four-character slogan describing the object and its characteristics (Figure 5).<sup>84</sup>



Figure 5. The oath by guardians and storytellers

<sup>82</sup> Yu, “Cultural Memory Construction,” 144-147.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> “National Treasure Season 1, 20171203,” 00:34:59.

### 2.2.3 Audience engagement: the selection processes

The program also gives space for audience engagement via its two-stage selection process. The first stage was carried out by museum directors. Each museum was required to select 3 objects from their collections and submit them to the program board before each episode. Object stories were introduced, and directors then gathered to discuss their meanings and value. The head director of the episode in question gave a brief speech regarding the reason for his/her selection.

The second stage of selection thus took place among the audience. A link was placed on large social media platforms such as Sina Weibo where the audience could vote for their favorite object from each episode. The object wins out of the three would be displayed in the two special *National Treasure* exhibitions on Jianting Square of the Palace Museum, Beijing. The closing ceremony in the 10<sup>th</sup> episode announced the objects with the highest vote. The two special exhibitions were held in February 2018,<sup>85</sup> and 2019,<sup>86</sup> during Chinese Lunar New Year.<sup>87</sup> To understand the rationale behind audiences' selections, it is important to look at how the program design and contents could influence audience choices.

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<sup>85</sup> Ning Chang 常宁, "Guo Jia Bao Zang Tezhan zai Gugong Jiemu 《国家宝藏》特展在故宫揭幕," *Xinhua Net 新华网*, February 13, 2018, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/culture/2018-02/13/c\\_1122411755\\_2.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/culture/2018-02/13/c_1122411755_2.htm).

<sup>86</sup> "Jiu jian Guobao Ruzhu <Guo Jia Bao Zang 2> Tezhan 九件国宝入驻《国家宝藏2》特展," Sina Collection 新浪收藏, Sina 新浪, Last modified February 11, 2019. <http://collection.sina.com.cn/2019-02-11/doc-ihqfskcp4294458.shtml>.

<sup>87</sup> For the list of the selected objects and corresponding museums, please see [Appendix 2](#).

## Chapter 3. Analysis of the *National Treasure* Program

### 3.1 The reasoning behind the creative design: Is it all for entertainment?

#### 3.1.1 Representation of themes: the choice of sponsors

Shan Jixiang, the director of the Palace Museum, describes *National Treasure* as ‘having an appearance of the entertainment show, but with a core of culture and the quality of documentary’.<sup>88</sup> The program itself uses the slogan ‘bringing cultural relics to life’, which can be seen as a response to Xi’s 2014 UNESCO speech about bringing the cultural relics to life to encourage cultural communications between China and the world.<sup>89</sup>

This chapter addresses the sub-questions “how does the National Treasure program contribute to Chinese identity construction through the promotion of heritage?” and “how does this program promote provincial museums through the emphasis on cultural diversity?” To do so, this chapter analyzes how program contents convey political messages. This section first investigates the rationale behind the program design, including the ‘guardian’ system and the choice of sponsors, in order to understand how Chinese nationalism is connected to the ‘Chinese Dream’ discourse.



Figure 6. Advertisement of Shui Jing Fang in *National Treasure*

A question is brought up by a certain joke made in Season 1, episode 3 regarding *Bronze Jin with Cloud Design* (*Yun wen tong Jin* 云纹铜禁). A Jin is an ancient type of table for holding wine vessels, and is designed to remind the user of the negative consequences of intoxication. As the sponsor was a wine company, a joke was made that they might

be displeased by this cultural relic.<sup>90</sup> Yet, it raises the question of why a wine company would have exclusive sponsorship of a cultural exploration program? How could this company relate to cultural heritage?

The first season of *National Treasure* was sponsored by the wine company *Shui Jing Fang* (水井坊) which was introduced as having a 600 year history of wine production and being ‘the first winery’

<sup>88</sup> Chenchen Jin 金晨晨, “‘Guojia Baozang’: Chuantong Wenhua yu Xiandai Zongyi de Pengzhuang 《国家宝藏》: 传统文化与现代综艺的碰撞,” *Xiju Zhijia* 戏剧之家, no.20 (2018): 104-105.

<sup>89</sup> Full text: Xi Jinping's speech at UNESCO headquarters.

<sup>90</sup> *National Treasure Season 1*, episode 3, “National Treasure Season 1, 20171217,” directed by Lei Yu, aired December 17, 2017, on CCTV 3, 01:08:11.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdaMN3Mt1ec&list=PLLnF\\_Wv13o4DpaH10NPIsGvI6CUO8ma4P&index=4&t=335s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdaMN3Mt1ec&list=PLLnF_Wv13o4DpaH10NPIsGvI6CUO8ma4P&index=4&t=335s).



in China. The advertisement described the wine as ‘living lineage’ (Figure 6).<sup>91</sup>

The wineries of this company had, in fact, been built more than 600 years ago, and the wine production processes since then have been preserved. There was even a museum built in Chengdu, Sichuan to preserve the relics of these old wineries. The preservation of this traditional wine production was commended by the State Council of China, and the relics were further listed as a key national heritage conservation unit and included in China’s World Cultural Heritage Tentative List. This traditional production method is considered part of China’s intangible heritage, one which was well-recorded provides archaeological evidence of wine production and culture in China.<sup>92</sup> Thus, the company’s sponsorship represents the long history of wine culture as an intangible ‘national heritage’ in China. It also reflects Season 1’s theme of China’s long and glorious history and culture.

The sponsor of Season 2, however, was another wine company, *Yanghe Meng zhi Lan* (洋河梦之蓝) (Figure 7). Perhaps this change was due to finance or perhaps the representative value of the sponsors. Both sponsors are state-owned enterprises, meaning that their financial situations depend upon the State. It is therefore unlikely that *Shui Jing Fang* lost the financial ability to sponsor the program. Thus, it was more likely related to the representative value of the wine companies.

*Yanghe Meng zhi Lan* (洋河梦之蓝) is a subsidiary of *Jiangsu Yanghe Brewery Joint-Stock Co., Ltd* (江苏洋河酒厂股份有限公司). Similar to *Shui Jing Fang*, the *Yanghe* brewery is also self-branded as having a long history of wine production, and has invested in museums and tourist attractions in the Jiangsu province.<sup>93</sup> The enterprise culture of *Yanghe Brewery* strongly promotes the Chinese Dream, both domestically and abroad.<sup>94</sup> The company sponsored TV programs such as *National Treasure*, and connected the Chinese Dream with local economic goals.<sup>95</sup>

The change in sponsors reflects the different themes of the two seasons. The theme in Season 1 asks the questions ‘Who are we?’, which can also be seen in the choice of cultural relics. Season 2, then, asks ‘What makes us the way we are?’. The questions were asked at the beginning of every episode and suggested that the answer could be found in museums and the study of cultural relics



Figure 7. Logo of Meng Zhi Lan and National Treasure 2

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, episode 10, “National Treasure Season 1, 20180211.”

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QkuLnCo73cw&list=PLLnF\\_Wv13o4DpaH10NPIsGvI6CUO8ma4P&index=10](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QkuLnCo73cw&list=PLLnF_Wv13o4DpaH10NPIsGvI6CUO8ma4P&index=10).

<sup>92</sup> “Shui Jing Fang Museum 水井坊博物馆,” *Shui Jing Fang* 水井坊, accessed May 24, 2020,

[http://www.swellfun.com/info-re.php?sort=101\\_304](http://www.swellfun.com/info-re.php?sort=101_304).

<sup>93</sup> “Jituan Jianjie 集团简介,” *Yanghe* 洋河股份, accessed May 31, 2020, <https://www.chinayanghe.com/article/type/24-1.html>.

<sup>94</sup> Rogier Creemers, “The Chinese Dream Infuses Socialism with Chinese Characteristics with New Energy,” China Copyright and Media-The law and policy of media in China, last modified May 6, 2013.

<https://chinacopyrightandmedia.wordpress.com/2013/05/06/the-chinese-dream-infuses-socialism-with-chinese-characteristics-with-new-energy/>.

<sup>95</sup> Yanghe, “Jituan Jianjie.”

and their histories.<sup>99</sup> The core of this program, however, revolves around the idea of what Chinese identity should be. The connection between sponsor and the idea of Chinese identity suggests that the program is designed to serve further political agendas related to the Chinese Dream, wherein national identity construction plays a critical role.

### 3.1.2 Program setting: janitors, guardians, and storytellers

Figure 8 shows a statement made by the museum directors throughout the two seasons: “I am the janitor of (museum name), I will be in (museum name), wait for your exploration of history.”<sup>100</sup> It is



Figure 8. Lines for museum directors

interesting to see the term ‘janitor’ used by directors, instead of the official term ‘directors’. Compared to ‘director’, the term ‘janitor’ brings a less formal connotation to museums and those that work in them. It also distances the directors from the museum collections, indicating that cultural relics belong not to an individual, but to the entire

Chinese population, where museum directors are simply guardians. This is combined with an introduction to the unique characteristics of museums, which portrays them as more accessible and attractive to ‘explorers’ of history and culture.

Similarly, the program also introduces a system of ‘guardians’. As introduced in 2.2.2, a wide range of celebrities were invited to be the guardians of cultural relics, including singers and actors, crosstalk comedians, etc. My research shows that the choice of a guardian is not based solely on popularity but also on how the celebrity can represent the ideas embedded within the object. The celebrities retell the ‘previous lives’ of the cultural relics through an on-stage performance, which reflects the show’s goal of accessibility and relatability. More importantly, the stage performance constructed collective memories and group identity.<sup>101</sup> Television as mass media enhances this process and creates a sense of belonging.

<sup>99</sup> National Treasure Season 2.

<sup>100</sup> *National Treasure Season 2*, episode 1, “National Treasure Season 2, 20181209,” directed by Lei Yu, aired December 9, 2018, on CCTV 3, 00:01:45.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKo-tdmhJNs&list=PL1i7JgZSJcO7ZsqDZCtu9XUEfSdaCHt6T&index=2&t=105s>.

<sup>101</sup> Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization*, 111-143.



Figure 9. Guardian Liu Tao 刘涛 and storytellers

and discusses the artefacts in relation to present times issues. The storytellers of this object point out the lack of young people in the field of Archaeology in modern China.<sup>103</sup> While it is not the social issue per se that has been addressed in the program, other episodes and objects are used to convey cultural, and political ideas through the interpretation of the past. I therefore argue that the terms ‘entertainment’ and ‘cultural exploration’ are a disguise for identity construction and political agenda transmission, which are carried out through stage performances. This idea will be discussed in the case studies.

For instance, Liu Tao, an actress who plays a female military general, was invited to portray Lady Fu Hao of the Shang dynasty (1600-1046 BCE), the previous owner of one of the objects (Figure 9).<sup>102</sup> The popularity of such celebrities also attracted viewers.

The storytelling of the ‘present life’, then, balances the sense of entertainment from the performances,

<sup>102</sup> “National Treasure, Season 1, 20171203,” 00:37:40.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

### 3.2 Case Studies: Why were the objects selected?

An eye-catching design feature of this program is the audience involvement in the selection of ‘my favorite national treasure’. Viewers could vote using the hashtag ‘#CCTV National Treasure # my favorite national treasure’ (#CCTV 国家宝藏#我最喜爱的国宝) on Sina Weibo, a well-known Chinese microblog platform (Figure 10).<sup>104</sup>

The result of the selection was announced in episode 10, and every season saw 9 objects win a place in the exhibition.<sup>105</sup> However, it should be noted that there was another selection process done by the respective museum directors before each episode. Each participating museum had to recommend three cultural relics, with no specific themes required.<sup>106</sup> This thesis places equal weight on both rounds of selection, as the directors’ decisions could shape audience preferences. Hence, the case studies investigate the rationale behind which objects were selected, as they play crucial roles in identity construction and political agenda transmission.



Figure 10. Sina Weibo hashtag ‘My favorite national treasure’

<sup>104</sup> Figure 10. Screenshot, Sina Weibo, accessed March 30, 2020.

<sup>105</sup> See [Appendix 2](#).

<sup>106</sup> National Treasure Season 1.

### 3.2.1 Identity construction: traditional ‘Chineseness’

The objects throughout the two seasons demonstrate how symbolic meanings are imposed onto cultural relics for the sake of Chinese identity construction, especially for the 19 selected objects. This can be seen in various aspects of the show, including the speeches of museum directors, and the ways of portraying the ‘previous’ and ‘present’ lives of the objects.

The program defines the Chinese identity in a comprehensive way. Firstly, Chineseness is connected to the traditions of the long-lasting Chinese civilization. Guarded by Liang Jiahui, an actor from Hong Kong, the *Stone Drums of Qin* (石鼓) were selected from the Palace Museum (Figure 11). They were interpreted as written records of Chinese history, and the inscriptions were considered some of the earliest stone inscriptions. The oath ‘Protecting the Chinese textual tradition’ (*Shouhu Zhonghua Wenmai* 守护中华文脉) further emphasizes China’s claim on the ancient textual history, and how it is used to convey a sense of inheritance to future generations.<sup>107</sup>



Figure 11. The oath to the Stone Drums of Qin

Chineseness is also connected to the origin of civilization. As China claims its origin in ancient civilizations, the Chinese people are referred to as ‘the descendants of the Hua Xia ethnicity’. The *Jade Cong* (玉琮) of the Zhejiang Provincial Museum is considered evidence of the historical origin of the Chinese civilization, and supports the claim that Chinese civilization can be traced back 5000 years. According to the vice director, this object was also selected for its representation of the Chinese craftsman’s historical sense of delicacy and responsibility.<sup>108</sup> The oath “Protecting the spirit of Jade as the soul of the nation” (*Shouhu Yuhun Guopo* 守护玉魂国魄) further conveys the idea that jade represents the humbleness and unyielding virtue of Chinese identity (Figure 12).

The traditional Chinese identity constructed in *National Treasure* focuses particularly on the history of the Chinese civilization. By claiming an ancient history writing system, the CCP aims to evoke national pride (文化自信) among the Chinese population. Building national pride by claiming a glorious past is essential to achieving the ‘rejuvenation’ of the Chinese nation, because it provides a

<sup>107</sup> “National Treasure Season 1, 20171203,” 01:05:20 - 01:37:44.

<sup>108</sup> “National Treasure Season 1, 20180123,” 01:45:54 – 01:46:38.

blueprint for the future Chinese population.

Thus, it is also essential to understand the promotion of traditional Chinese culture in relation to the Chinese Dream, as the public's national pride contributes to the legitimacy of the CCP.<sup>109</sup> As mentioned in Xi's speeches:<sup>110</sup>

*"History tells us that the destiny of every Chinese is connected to the future of the nation. People will get better only when the nation is getting better."* (November 19, 2012)

*"We cannot give up on our great cultural traditions, as they are the roots and soul of us being Chinese."* (December 7-11, 2012)<sup>111</sup>



Figure 12. the Oath for Jade Cong

<sup>109</sup> Wang, "The Chinese Dream," 6-8.

<sup>110</sup> "Xi Jinping Guanyu Shixian Zhonghua Minzu Weida Fuxing de Zhongguo Meng Lunshu Huibian 习近平关于实现中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦论述汇编," Gongchan Dangyuan Wang 共产党员网, accessed July 2, 2020. <http://www.12371.cn/special/xjpzy/zgmls/1/>.

<sup>111</sup> Trans. Sijie Sun

### 3.2.2 Identity Construction: modern ‘Chineseness’



Figure 13. Nie Er’s Violin

In season 2, an “old and ordinary” German-made violin was selected (Figure 13).<sup>112</sup> Understanding why it won requires an understanding of the ‘modern Chinese identity’.

This violin belongs to Nie Er, who used it to compose the PRC national anthem song *March of the Volunteers* (*Yi Yong jun jinxing Qu* 义勇军进行曲). In my view, the selection of this violin reveals a clear process of identity construction and the value of this object lies with its symbolic meaning. The political

messages transit through the interpretation of its stories. The ‘previous life’ performance retold how the *March of the Volunteers* was composed. It showed the disastrous situation of the Sino-Japanese War, when China needed a sense of national resilience. As can be seen on Figure 14, the performance was based on the lyrics, particularly the ideas of ‘nation’, ‘Chinese people’, ‘resistance’.



Figure 14. ‘Previous life’ performance of Nie Er’s Violin

The ‘present life’ performance then presented the idea of the ‘national anthem’ leading the way. The storyteller was a member of the National People’s Congress Standing Committee, and the conductor of the national anthem at national events. The ‘present life’ performance depicted his efforts over the past 10 years to promote the <National Anthem Law of the People’s Republic of China>. In the final stage of the storytelling, the live audience was asked to stand and sing the national anthem (Figure 15).<sup>114</sup> Patriotism was

evoked not only in this studio audience, but also in those watching the Youtube video of the show.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>112</sup> “National Treasure Season 2, 20190106,” 01:01:11 - 01:33:00.

<sup>114</sup> “National Treasure Season 2, 20190106,” 01:01:11 - 01:33:00.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid. For the full English translation, please see [Appendix 4](#).

@ 璐璐

*I did not have any strong feelings when I saw the national flag raised and sang the national anthem at a young age. However, when I grew up and went abroad for education, I felt my emotions change when I hear the national anthem and see the national flag. It makes me feel that I do not regret being Chinese.*



Figure 15. Chorus of the national anthem

@赤轩赤

*As a student who is living in Japan for education, I teared when I heard 'Do you still remember why you came to Japan? Have you forgotten your dream when you came to Japan?'. I feel it is easy to get lost and sluggish when studying abroad. But I feel powerful again, when I almost give up and think back to my dream.*

*(I will) work hard on study for the rise of China!*

Today's China can be identified with 'the Core Socialist Values' and the 'Chinese Dream', especially with Xi Jinping. In 2013, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CCCPC) published the <Opinions on Cultivation and Practice of Socialist Core Values>,<sup>116</sup> which aimed to embed Socialist Core Values<sup>117</sup> in the Chinese education. The <Values>, essentially a summary of the Chinese Dream, outlines how Chinese society can rejuvenate the nation. The <Values> stipulates that the nation has prosperity, democracy, civility, and harmony; the society to have freedom, equality, justice, and rule of law; and that citizens have patriotism, dedication, integrity, and friendship. It is also considered the foundation of the national identity.<sup>118</sup> As such, 'patriotism' is integral to the modern Chinese identity.

The program's construction of both traditional and modern Chinese also suggests that the Chinese Dream is not only national, but also individual. The Chinese identity is important domestically for the consolidation of the population, especially among diverse ethnic groups. Patriotism thus provides a common sentiment, and connects culture with the rejuvenation of the state, enabled by the legitimacy of the CCP. Using cultural programs to promote the Chinese Dream is also a way for the Chinese government to publicly demonstrate its soft power, and simultaneously try to compete with other cultural powers in the world.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>116</sup> 'the <Opinions>' will be used for short in the following texts.

<sup>117</sup> 'the <Values>' will be used for short in the following texts.

<sup>118</sup> Sheng Qi 齐声, "Peiyu he Jianxing Shehui Zhuyi Hexin Jiazhiguan 培育和践行社会主义核心价值观," Ministry of Defense of The People's Republic of China 中华人民共和国国防部, last modified December 1, 2019. [http://www.mod.gov.cn/jmsd/2019-12/01/content\\_4856014.htm](http://www.mod.gov.cn/jmsd/2019-12/01/content_4856014.htm).

<sup>119</sup> Jan Servaes, "The Chinese Dream Shattered between Hard and Soft Power?" *Media, Culture & Society* 38, no. 3 (2016): 437-449.



### 3.2.3 Chinese identity overseas: the spirits of ‘Family-Country’ (*Jia Guo* 家國)

Anderson considers the nation-state an ‘imagined community’, where people of shared culture and norms within the boundary of a territory feel the sense of belonging.<sup>120</sup> Assmann’s view on ‘collective memory’ also requires the establishment of a shared symbol such as written or spoken languages. He further stresses that the collective culture itself could form a boundary for collective identity, which reconstructs through changes of cultural memories. Identity is created through cultural formation, which can be preserved through generations.<sup>121</sup> Similar to the interpretation of Nie Er’s violin, the history of the following object is also downplayed, emphasized instead is how it defines ‘Chinese identity’ from abroad.

Of the three objects selected from Guangdong Museum in Season 2, the Gold Lacquer Woodcarving Grand Shrine (*Jinqi Mudiao Da Shenkan* 金漆木雕大神龕) won a place in the 2019 special exhibition. It was finely decorated gilded family shrine. Family shrines are found in many Southern areas in China, especially in the Chao Shan culture of the Guangdong region. Since their original function was to preserve family history and worship ancestors, it was the virtue of filial piety that the program introduced as the central meaning of this object. However, this interpretation goes beyond the original meaning of the shrine. With the actual owner and history unknown, the ‘previous life’ was based on the context of its production in 1935, during the Sino-Japanese war.<sup>122</sup>

The performance not only emphasized the importance of family and clan but also evoked something else. The texts on Figure 16 show that more than 40,000 overseas Chinese returned to join the resistance against the Japanese invasion, which enhanced the notion of a ‘family-country’ (*Jia Guo* 家國) as an essential component of the Chinese identity, especially from the perspective of overseas Chinese.<sup>123</sup>

The ‘present life’ also spoke to the Chinese identity of overseas Chinese, and extended the sense of family beyond the individual to a national level.<sup>124</sup> The notions of homeland, blood, and inheritance form the value of this object. The shrine was circulated through this program to promote the notion of a ‘family-country’ to the public, stating that the loyalty to one’s homeland should always be the ‘Chinese identity’.

The notion of the ‘family country’ reveals that the goal of the Chinese Dream is to achieve the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. The emphasis on the Japanese invasion also suggests the crucial role of trauma in the promotion of the Chinese Dream. In order to evoke a public response on to Chinese Dream, it is important to promote not only the glorious history of the Chinese civilization, but also the ‘centuries of humiliation’. Wang points out that the present Chinese Dream proposed by

<sup>120</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 1-7.

<sup>121</sup> Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization*, 111-143.

<sup>122</sup> “Jinqi Mudiao Da Shenkan 金漆木雕大神龕,” Guangdong Museum, accessed May 25, 2020, [http://www.gdmuseum.com/gdmuseum/\\_300746/\\_300758/jmd50/515770/index.html](http://www.gdmuseum.com/gdmuseum/_300746/_300758/jmd50/515770/index.html).

<sup>123</sup> “National Treasure Season 2, 20181216,” 01:04:05 – 01:35:00.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

the CCP is largely built on the traumas of China, which also highlight the CCP's achievements in building a new Chinese nation.<sup>125</sup> The case study suggests that the Chinese Dream belongs not only to the state, but also to individuals beyond the borders of China. The case studies suggest a conscious construction of Chinese identity by the nation-state through the interpretation of the cultural relics. Alongside this identity construction, however, the program has also accomplished much in the museum industry.



Figure 16. 'Previous life' performance of the Gold Lacquer Woodcarving Grand Shrine

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<sup>125</sup> Wang, "The Chinese Dream," 3-4.

### 3.3 Promoting national and provincial museums

#### 3.3.1 Promoting the local: provincial museums matter



Figure 17. Short introduction to Zhejiang Provincial Museum, Season 1



Figure 18. Zhejiang Provincial Museum (interior)

Positioning itself as an entertaining cultural exploration program, the program in fact performs multiple functions that can be drawn from its specific contents. Apart from its role in identity construction, the program also has the function of promoting Chinese museums (both national and provincial). For every episode, the corresponding museum's (vice) director gives a short introduction to the museum, its landscape, the cultural contexts, and the collections. Each museum is presented with a short video.

Moreover, every museum has a motto that describes and summarizes their cultural context, and the historical context of their collections.<sup>126</sup> For example, the Zhejiang Provincial Museum introduced in Season 1 was showcased with a comprehensive tour of the museum building and

architecture. The text highlighted its cultural context: the ancient Yue area (越地), representing the traditional elegance and gentility of the Zhejiang province.<sup>127</sup> As such, the Zhejiang Provincial Museum is described as '(the place where) the Songs of Yue region have been eulogized for thousands of years' (传颂万年越地长歌).<sup>128</sup> By introducing all participating museums in the same manner, the program gave equal importance to national and provincial (local) museums and the promotion of their cultural relics as heritage.

As provincial museums also represent the local culture of various ethnic groups, promoting provincial museums also emphasizes cultural diversity. Provincial museums are presented as the symbol of local culture, also as part of 'Chinese culture'. By incorporating the cultures of other

<sup>126</sup> For the complete description for all museums, see [Appendix 1](#).

<sup>127</sup> *National Treasure Season 1*, episode 8, "National Treasure Season 1, 20180128."

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= SX3Lw2OL5L8&list= PLLnf\\_Wv13o4DpaH10NPIsGvI6CUO8ma4P&index=9&t=11s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= SX3Lw2OL5L8&list= PLLnf_Wv13o4DpaH10NPIsGvI6CUO8ma4P&index=9&t=11s).

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

ethnic groups, the provincial museums further consolidate the nation.

### 3.3.2 The achievements: how and why is the National Treasure Program successful?



Figure 19. Official account of *National Treasure*



Figure 20. Hashtag #CCTV National Treasure# on Sina Weibo

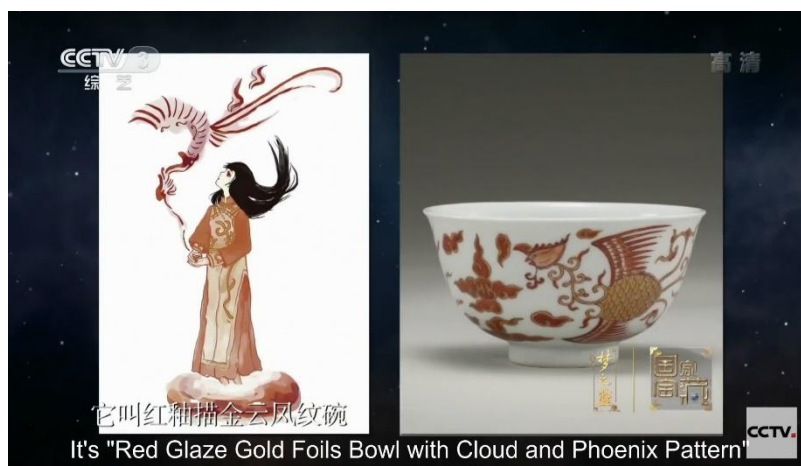


Figure 21. Sketching Works from activity in Shandong Museum

*National Treasure* became a hit in China, especially on social media platforms. The program's official account on Sina Weibo<sup>131</sup> had reached 2.38 million followers by May 10, 2020 (Figure 19),<sup>132</sup> and the topic #CCTV National Treasure# (#CCTV 国家宝藏#) had reached 5.675 million discussions and nearly 5.2 billion reads by May 9, 2020 (Figure 20).<sup>133</sup>

Based on the above statistics, it can be concluded that this program was also particularly successful in promoting provincial museums. As shown in chapter 2, previous programs focused specifically on either the Palace Museum or the cultural relics themselves, whereas *National Treasure* allowed provincial museums to brand themselves through the promotion of their cultural heritage collections. Provincial museums also launched public activities as a way of self-advertising. For instance, Shandong Museum invited visitors to post their sketches of the cultural relics online, and received a large number of participants.<sup>135</sup>

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, visitors to museums and

<sup>131</sup> Sina Weibo: one of the largest social media platforms in China.

<sup>132</sup> Sijie Sun. Screenshot, Sina Weibo, accessed May 10, 2020.

<sup>133</sup> Sijie Sun. Screenshot, Sina Weibo, accessed May 9, 2020.

<sup>135</sup> *National Treasure Season 2*, episode 10, 01:06:45 – 01:07:30.

other cultural institutions increased by approximately 300 million people from 2015 to 2018. Employment in the sector also increased by nearly 20,000.<sup>136</sup>

The success of *National Treasure* could be discussed through various crucial perspectives. Firstly, based on Xi's Chinese Dream discourse, as discussed in [Introduction](#) and 'Bringing cultural relics (in [1.2.1](#)) to life', a context of this program was set. Although the program was introduced as an entertainment program and broadcast through the CCTV 3 (channel for variety shows), the construction of the Chinese identity formed the core of this program. The program also collaborated with online video platforms such as Bilibili, which have over 100 million active users since 2016, over half of whom are younger than 25.<sup>137</sup> To target the younger generation, the program further uses background music and images from games and TV shows that follow the popular trend of 'the ancient Chinese style' (古风) in the field of ACGN (Figure 21).<sup>138</sup>

The program and museums also actively collaborated with social media platforms such as Sina Weibo. According to Feaster, social media is effective in not only spreading information but also in shaping public perceptions. Influential social media users, such as celebrities with many followers, could further shape the readers' opinions with their posts.<sup>139</sup> In this sense, collaborating with celebrities, *National Treasure* could expand its influence among Weibo users and continue its process of identity construction.

The promotion of provincial museums also has achievements in the cultural industry. The artefacts in the program have also boosted the development of the museums' cultural creative products through the online shops on Taobao and activities that promote the traditional Chinese costume of the Han ethnicity, *Hanfu* (汉服), such as the Xitang Cultural week / Hanfu festival.<sup>140</sup> The result has been a positive effect on the fashion industry, and the study of traditional Chinese costumes.

The success of *National Treasure* could be considered from both an economic and cultural perspective. The program addresses the importance of the Chinese identity abroad and encourages cultural diversity. On the one hand, the program promotes local museums and learning about history. On the other hand, encouraging cultural diversity is also important for expanding the Chinese Dream

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<sup>136</sup> National Data 国家数据, National Bureau of Statistics of China 中华人民共和国国家统计局, Accessed April 20, 2020. <http://data.stats.gov.cn/easyquery.htm?cn=C01&zb=A0Q070B&sj=2019>.

For the statistic charts, see [Appendix 5](#).

<sup>137</sup> @36 氩, "B Zhan Yonghu shi Shenme yang de ren? Chaoguo 25 sui de Bili henshao henshao B 站用户是什么样的人? 超过 25 岁的比例很少很少," Internet Archive, November 22, 2016, <https://web.archive.org/web/20171107022844/http://3g.163.com/tech/article/C1I5IC9J00097U7V.html>.

<sup>138</sup> Research Group of Cultural and Cultural Projects, Central University of Finance and Economics 中央财经大学文博项目课题组, "<Guojia Baozang>: Wenhua Zixin cong Nali lai ---- Jianlun Wenbo Tansuo lei Jiemu de Yingxiao Celue Fenxi 《国家宝藏》: 文化自信从哪里来 ——兼论文博探索类节目的营销策略分析," *Qianxian 前线*, no. 4 (2019): 69-71.

<sup>139</sup> Mark J. Jr. Feaster, "Blogging and the Political Case: The Practice and Ethics of Using Social Media to Shape Public Opinion in Anticipation of High-profile Litigation," *Georgetown Journal of Legal Ethics* 29, no. 4 (2016): 1013-1029.

<sup>140</sup> See [Appendix 6](#), [Appendix 7](#).

into a ‘Global Dream’ by connecting people with Chinese identities or shared cultural contexts.<sup>141</sup> Finally, another goal is to present an open and confident China on the global stage, and to support its ambition to create economic and cultural international relations.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Jiayu Wang, “Representing Chinese Nationalism/patriotism through President Xi Jinping’s ‘Chinese Dream’ Discourse,” *Journal of Language and Politics* 16, no. 6 (2017): 830-848.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

## Conclusion

In this thesis, I analyzed the TV program *National Treasure* by questioning its role as a ‘cultural exploration program’ and by investigating how it promotes museums through the interpretation of Chinese relics and history. I investigate the program’s role in the promotion of national and provincial museums, and how the Chinese identity is constructed in relation to the Chinese Dream discourse. Cultural exploration programs like *National Treasure* have been attracting increasing attention for their combination of heritage and entertainment. This thesis applies qualitative research methods of content analysis and discourse analysis on the program contents and audience comments. I also analyze data from the National Bureau of Statistics of China, which attests to an increase in museum visitors from 2015 to 2018.

Based on the western museum system, museums in China were originally established with the function of commemoration and representing national history and identity.<sup>143</sup> Yet, the museum practices in present-day China have shown signs of marketization and commercialization. With growing tourism and the boom in museum visiting, museums shifted into the public service industry and developed cultural creative products for the sake of commercial profits. In *National Treasure*, Chinese museums are promoted on television, allowing heritage practices to take part in identity construction.

This thesis concludes that the roles of museums and television in the cultural exploration program *National Treasure* go beyond mere entertainment. The program illustrates how national identity construction and commercialization can be enhanced by the promotion of cultural relics. The program brought public attention to provincial museums and highlighted the importance of cultural relics as national heritage. However, this thesis also argues that the main goal of this cultural exploration program, and heritage practices in general, was to serve political interests. Although the program was positioned as an entertainment show, it was rife with political agendas and the Chinese Dream was firmly integrated into its contents. By constructing Chinese identity in relation to the Chinese Dream, the CCP calls for national pride domestically, while at the same time connecting overseas Chinese. This is essential for the CCP, as a broad national pride legitimizes the CCP’s administration in China, and their increasing use of soft power on the global stage. Additionally, this thesis argues that *National Treasure* was used by the Chinese government to practice political power in identity construction. The process was supported by the program’s mention of national trauma, which manipulated the audience’s sentiments.

Another core achievement of this program lies in the promotion of provincial museums. Data provided in the appendix suggests an increase in the number of museum visitors and employees nation-wide. As part of the industry, museums also developed commercial activities both online and offline. Indeed, the exploration of cultural creative products brings attention and profits to museums,

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<sup>143</sup> Wang, “Exhibiting the Nation,” 52-53.

while the commercialization and promotion activities spark criticism over heritagization of cultural relics and disneyfication of museums. As such, the program perpetuates heritagization itself, as it was produced originally for entertainment, and ‘disneyfies’ provincial museums into tourist destinations.

Furthermore, the analysis of *National Treasure* sheds light on how the cultural exploration program accelerates the heritagization process, especially programs such as *There Is Something New in the Palace Museum*, which explores the cultural creative products of the Palace Museum. All in all, this thesis has addressed the ever-growing issue of heritage practices in cultural exploration TV programs in present-day China, both in terms of political agenda transmissions and heritagization/disneyfication. The emergence of the cultural exploration program could thus present new angles for future discussions on China’s domestic and global use of soft power through the media.



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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Museums and Collections (Season 1&2)

Season 1 (in broadcasting order)

Museum (9 museums)	Description lines	Collections (27 objects)
The Palace Museum Beijing 故宫博物院	The city of Ziwei Star, the museum that is coming to the 600 years of the Forbidden City. 紫微星之城, 即将迎来紫禁城600周年	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains 千里江山图</li> <li>2. Large Vase with Variegated Glazes 各种釉彩大瓶</li> <li>3. Stone Drums of Qin 乍原石鼓</li> </ol>
Hubei Provincial Museum 湖北省博物馆	The great achievement of <i>Jing</i> culture and <i>Chu</i> culture. 集荆楚文化大成	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Sword of Goujian 越王勾践剑</li> <li>2. Shuihudi Qin bamboo texts 云梦睡虎地秦简</li> <li>3. Bianzhong of Marquis Yi of Zeng 曾侯乙编钟</li> </ol>
Henan Museum 河南博物院	The origin of the ancient civilization. 上古文明开源之地	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the Owl-shaped bronze Zun of Fuhao 妇好鸮尊</li> <li>2. Bone flute at Jiahu 贾湖骨笛</li> <li>3. Bronze Jin with cloud design 云纹铜鉴</li> </ol>
Shenxi Historical Museum 陕西历史博物馆	The city that is well-known by the world for the culture of the four dynasties of Zhou, Qin, Han, Tang. 以周秦汉唐四朝文明定鼎天下	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bronze Tiger-shaped Tally of Du area 杜虎符</li> <li>2. Silver Censer with Openwork Design of Grapes and Flying birds 葡萄花鸟纹银香囊</li> <li>3. Mural painting of Imperial Gate</li> </ol>

		<p>Towers and Guard of Honor in Prince Yide's Tomb 懿德太子墓阙楼仪仗图</p>
<p>Liaoning Provincial Museum 辽宁省博物馆</p>	<p>The first museum in the People's Republic of China. 新中国第一座博物馆</p>	<p>1. Painting of Goddess Luo Rhapsody Aesthetic 宋人摹顾恺之《洛神赋图》 2. Unknown Copy of Calligraphy by Wan Xizhi 万岁通天贴 3. Gilt stirrups with wood core 铜鎏金木芯马镫</p>
<p>Hunan Provincial Museum 湖南省博物馆</p>	<p>The history and art museum that witnessed the multi-origin structure of Huaxia civilization. 见证华夏多源头格局的历史艺术博物馆</p>	<p>1. Min Fanglei 皿方罍 2. T-shaped painting on silk from Xin Zhui's tomb 辛追墓 T 形帛画 3. Brown colored porcelain ewer with poem design 长沙窑青釉褐彩诗文执壶</p>
<p>Shanghai Museum 上海博物馆</p>	<p>Comprises the multi-phases of art in ancient China. 包罗中国古代艺术万象</p>	<p>1. Silk Tapestry of Lotus Pond and Ducks 缂丝莲塘乳鸭图 2. Fangsheng (a vessel measuring volume) of Shang Yang 商鞅方升 3. Da Ke Ding (food vessel) 大克鼎</p>
<p>Zhejiang Provincial Museum 浙江省博物馆</p>	<p>(the place where) the Songs of Yue region have been eulogized for thousands of years. 传颂万年越地长歌</p>	<p>1. Afterglow-style 'Caifeng Mingqi' seven-stringed guqin “彩凤鸣岐”七弦琴 2. Jade Cong 良渚文化玉琮王 3. Wangong sedan chair made in Ningbo 民国万工轿</p>
<p>Nanjing Museum 南京博物院</p>	<p>The first large-scale museum invested by the nation-state.</p>	<p>1. Arched Door of Porcelain Tower of Nanjing</p>

	<p>第一座由国家投资兴建的大型博物馆</p>	<p>大报恩寺琉璃塔拱门</p> <p>2. Great Universal Geographic Map</p> <p>坤輿万国全图</p> <p>3. Brick Painting of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove and Rong Qiqi</p> <p>竹林七贤与荣启期砖画</p>
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Season 2

Museum (9 museums)	Description lines	Collections (27 objects)
<p>The Palace Museum Beijing 故宫博物院</p>	<p>Hyper-connected with the world. 与世界超级链接</p>	<p>1. Yangshilei Jianzhu Tangyang 样式雷建筑烫样 2. Li Bai's Cursive Script 'Shang Yangtai Tie' (Ascending Mount Yangtai) 李白草书 《上阳台帖》 3. Tripod Wine Utensil 金甌永固杯</p>
<p>Guangdong Provincial Museum 广东省博物馆</p>	<p>The flower blooms in the Lingnan area, where the Maritime Silk Road started. 花开岭南，扬波海丝之路</p>	<p>1. Export Wallpaper of Farming and Trading of Qing dynasty 清乾隆农耕商贸外销壁纸 2. Gold Necklace of Song dynasty 宋金项饰 3. Gold Lacquer Woodcarving Grand Shrine 金漆木雕大神龕</p>
<p>Hebei Museum 河北博物院</p>	<p>The place where vehement aspirations from all places are rendered. 纳四方慷慨之志</p>	<p>1. Square Gold and Silver Inlaid Bronze Table Stand with Four Dragons and Four Phoenixes 错金银四龙四凤铜方案座 2. Colored Relief Sculpture of Informal Musical Performance 彩绘散乐浮雕 3. The 'Changxin' Palace Lamp 长信宫灯</p>
<p>Sichuan Museum 四川博物院</p>	<p>Where the rhythm of the house of heaven is hidden and the beauty and joy were born. 藏天府之韵，生欢喜之美</p>	<p>1. Portrait Brick of Salt Manufacturing 东汉制盐画像砖 2. King Gesar Thang Ka 格萨尔唐卡 3. The Remnants of Stone Classics in the Later Shu period 后蜀残石经</p>
<p>Yunnan Provincial Museum 云南省博物馆</p>	<p>Standing in the south of the iridescent clouds, the cultural</p>	<p>1. Bronze Cowrie Shell Container with Four Bulls and Gilded</p>



	center that reflects towards South and Southeast Asia. 立彩云之南，辐射南亚东南亚的文化中心	Rider 四牛鎏金骑士铜贮贝器 2. Gilded Silver Golden-Winged Bird Embedded with Beads of Dali Kingdom 大理国银鎏金镶珠金翅鸟 3. Nie Er's Violin 聂耳小提琴
Museum of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region 新疆维吾尔自治区博物馆	Writing the romantic legends of multi-dimensional culture. 书写多元文明的浪漫传奇	1. Silk-clothing Colored Wooden Figurines 绢衣彩绘木俑 2. Painting of Fuxi and Nuwa 伏羲女娲图 3. The 'Five Stars Rise in the East, benefiting China' Brocade Arm Protector “五星出东方利中国”锦护膊
Gansu Provincial Museum 甘肃省博物馆	Guarding the spirits of Hexi, transmitting the culture of the Silk Road. 守河西魂魄，传丝路文明	1. Flying Horse of Gansu 铜奔马 2. Portrait Brick of the Courier Painting 驿使图画像砖 3. Painted Pottery Jar with Human Head Shaped Seal 人头形器口彩陶瓶
Shandong Museum 山东博物馆	The long-lasting model for teaching and ritual, which formed the idea of 'family-country'. 率万世师表，礼成家国	1. Bamboo slips of <Sun-Tze, The Art of Warfare> and <Sun Bin, The Art of Warfare> of Yinqueshan 银雀山《孙子兵法》《孙臆兵法》汉简 2. Bronze Dishware of Warring States Period 战国铜餐具 3. Court Garment of Duke Yansheng of the Ming dynasty 明衍圣公朝服

<p>Shanxi Museum 山西博物院</p>	<p>Its roots connected to the culture of San Jin period, and the 5000 years of the Huaxia civilization. 根系三晋，贯通五千年华夏文明</p>	<p>1. Houma Oath of Alliance 侯马盟书</p> <p>2. Chinese Opera Figure in Dong's Tomb in Houma of Jin dynasty 侯马金代董氏墓戏俑</p> <p>3. Lacquer painting over Wood from Northern Wei 木板漆画</p>
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## Appendix 2. the Selected Objects for Special Exhibitions (2018 and 2019)

Place: Jianting Square, the Palace Museum, Beijing

February 2018

Museums	Collections
The Palace Museum Beijing 故宫博物院	The Stone Drum of Qin 乍原石鼓
Hubei Provincial Museum 湖北省博物馆	Shuihudi Qin bamboo texts 云梦睡虎地秦简
Henan Museum 河南博物院	Bronze Jin with cloud design 云纹铜禁
Shenxi Historical Museum 陕西历史博物馆	Mural painting of Imperial Gate Towers and Guard of Honor in Prince Yide's Tomb 懿德太子墓阙楼仪仗图
Liaoning Provincial Museum 辽宁省博物馆	Unknown Copy of Calligraphy by Wan Xizhi 万岁通天贴
Hunan Provincial Museum 湖南省博物馆	Min Fanglei 皿方罍
Shanghai Museum 上海博物馆	Da Ke Ding (food vessel) 大克鼎
Zhejiang Provincial Museum 浙江省博物馆	Jade Cong 良渚文化玉琮王
Nanjing Museum 南京博物院	Arched Door of Porcelain Tower of Nanjing 大报恩寺琉璃塔拱门

February 2019

Museums	Collections
The Palace Museum Beijing 故宫博物院	Li Bai's Cursive Script 'Shang Yangtai Tie' (Ascending Mount Yangtai) 李白草书 《上阳台帖》
Guangdong Provincial Museum 广东省博物馆	Gold Lacquer Woodcarving Grand Shrine 金漆木雕大神龕
Hebei Museum 河北博物院	The 'Changxin' Palace Lamp 长信宫灯
Sichuan Museum 四川博物院	The Remnants of Stone Classics in Later Shu period

	后蜀残石经
Yunnan Provincial Museum 云南省博物馆	Nie Er's Violin 聂耳小提琴
Museum of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region 新疆维吾尔自治区博物馆	The 'Five Stars Rise in the East, benefiting China' Brocade Arm Protector “五星出东方利中国”锦护膊
Gansu Provincial Museum 甘肃省博物馆	Flying Horse of Gansu 铜奔马
Shandong Museum 山东博物馆	Bamboo slips of <Sun-Tze, The Art of Warfare> and <Sun Bin, The Art of Warfare> of Yinqueshan 银雀山《孙子兵法》《孙臏兵法》汉简
Shanxi Museum 山西博物院	Chinese Opera Figure in Dong's Tomb in Houma of Jin dynasty 侯马金代董氏墓戏俑

### **Appendix 3. Full text of Xi Jinping's Speech at UNESCO headquarters**

2014年3月27日，国家主席习近平在巴黎联合国教科文组织总部发表演讲。演讲全文如下：

Chinese President Xi Jinping delivers a speech at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in Paris, France, March 27, 2014. Following is the full text:

在联合国教科文组织总部的演讲

（2014年3月27日，巴黎）

中华人民共和国主席 习近平

Speech by Chinese President Xi Jinping At UNESCO Headquarters

Paris, 27 March 2014

尊敬的博科娃总干事，

女士们，先生们，朋友们：

Your Excellency Madame Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Friends,

大家好！有机会来到联合国教科文组织总部，感到十分高兴。首先，我谨对博科娃女士再次当选教科文组织总干事，表示衷心的祝贺！对教科文组织为推动人类文明交流互鉴作出的卓越贡献，表示诚挚的敬意！

Good morning. It gives me great pleasure to have an opportunity of visiting the UNESCO headquarters. Let me begin by offering Madame Bokova my heartfelt congratulations on her re-election as the Director-General of the Organization and paying my sincere tribute to UNESCO for the extraordinary contribution it has made for greater exchanges and mutual learning among human civilizations.

教科文组织诞生于 69 年前，那时世界反法西斯战争硝烟刚刚散去。面对战争给人类带来的惨烈后果，人类又一次反思战争与和平的真谛。千百年来，人类都梦想着持久和平，但战争始终像一个幽灵一样伴随着人类发展历程。此时此刻，世界上很多孩子正生活在战乱的惊恐之中。我们必须作出努力，让战争远离人类，让全世界的孩子们都在和平的阳光下幸福成长。UNESCO was born 69 years ago when the smoke of the World War against Fascism had barely dissipated. The grisly horror of war forced mankind once again to reflect on the nature of war and peace. Throughout the centuries, people have yearned for lasting peace, but war, like a haunting ghost, has been accompanying the journey of human progress every step of the way. As we speak, many children on this planet are subjected to the horror of armed conflicts. We must do our utmost to keep war as far away as possible from mankind so that children across the world can grow up happily under the sunshine of peace.

在教科文组织总部大楼前的石碑上，用多种语言镌刻着这样一句话：“战争起源于人之思想，故务需于人之思想中筑起保卫和平之屏障。”

The stone wall at the entrance to the UNESCO headquarters carries the inscription of one single message in several languages: Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.

只要世界人民在心灵中坚定了和平理念、扬起了和平风帆，就能形成防止和反对战争的强大力量。人们希望通过文明交流、平等教育、普及科学，消除隔阂、偏见、仇视，播撒和平理念的种子。这就是教科文组织成立的初衷。

As long as the idea of peace can strike deep roots and the sail of peace can be hoisted in the hearts and minds of people all over the world, a strong defense will be constructed to prevent and stop war. People hoped to promote inter-civilization exchanges, equality of educational opportunities and scientific literacy in order to dispel estrangement, prejudice and hatred, and spread the seeds for the idea of peace. This is precisely why UNESCO was established in the first place.

这样一种期待，这样一种憧憬，是我们今天依然要坚守的。不仅要坚守，而且要通过跨国界、跨时空、跨文明的教育、科技、文化活动，让和平理念的种子在世界人民心中生根发芽，让我们共同生活的这个星球生长出一片又一片和平的森林。

The aspiration and vision as such deserve our renewed commitment. Not only so, but we must also step up cross-border, cross-time-and-space and cross-civilization activities in education, science, technology and culture to spread the seeds of the idea of peace far and wide so that they will sprout, take root and grow in the hearts and minds of the world's people, and provide the planet we share

with more and more forests of peace.

自 1945 年成立以来，教科文组织忠实履行使命，在增进世界人民相互了解和信任、推动不同文明交流互鉴方面进行了不懈努力。中国高度重视同教科文组织的合作，愿意加大参与教科文组织的各项活动。为体现对非洲的支持和帮助，我们决定把通过教科文组织向包括非洲国家在内的发展中国家提供的长城奖学金名额由每年 25 人扩大为 75 人，我们还将同教科文组织一道把援助非洲信托基金的活动继续开展下去。

Since its inception in 1945, UNESCO has faithfully lived up to its mandate and worked untiringly to enhance trust and understanding among the world's peoples and promote exchanges and mutual learning among the various civilizations. China attaches great importance to its cooperation with UNESCO and stands ready to expand its participation in UNESCO activities. We have decided to expand the Great Wall Fellowship, a scheme that provides scholarship to developing countries, African countries included via UNESCO, from 25 to 75 people every year to demonstrate China's support and assistance for Africa. We will also continue to work within the framework of the UNESCO trust fund to help Africa.

女士们、先生们、朋友们！

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Friends,

文明因交流而多彩，文明因互鉴而丰富。文明交流互鉴，是推动人类文明进步和世界和平发展的重要动力。

Civilizations have become richer and more colorful with exchanges and mutual learning. Such exchanges and mutual learning form an important drive for human progress and global peace and development.

推动文明交流互鉴，需要秉持正确的态度和原则。我认为，最重要的是坚持以下几点。

To promote exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations, we must adopt a right approach with some important principles. They, in my view, contain the following:

第一，文明是多彩的，人类文明因多样才有交流互鉴的价值。阳光有七种颜色，世界也是多彩

的。一个国家和民族的文明是一个国家和民族的集体记忆。人类在漫长的历史长河中，创造和发展了多姿多彩的文明。从茹毛饮血到田园农耕，从工业革命到信息社会，构成了波澜壮阔的文明图谱，书写了激荡人心的文明华章。

First, civilizations have come in different colors, and such diversity has made exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations relevant and valuable. Just as the sunlight has seven colors, our world is a place of dazzling colors. A civilization is the collective memory of a country or a nation. Throughout history, mankind have created and developed many colorful civilizations, from earlier days of primitive hunting to the period of agriculture, and from booming industrial revolution to the information society. Together, they present a magnificent genetic map of the exciting march of human civilizations.

“一花独放不是春，百花齐放春满园。” 如果世界上只有一种花朵，就算这种花朵再美，那也是单调的。不论是中华文明，还是世界上存在的其他文明，都是人类文明创造的成果。

“A single flower does not make spring, while one hundred flowers in full blossom bring spring to the garden.” If there were only one kind of flower in the world, people will find it boring no matter how beautiful it is. Be it the Chinese civilization, or other civilizations in the world, they are all fruits of human progress.

我参观过法国卢浮宫，也参观过中国故宫博物院，它们珍藏着千万件艺术珍品，吸引人们眼球的正是其展现的多样文明成果。文明交流互鉴不应该以独尊某一种文明或者贬损某一种文明为前提。中国人在 2000 多年前就认识到了“物之不齐，物之情也”的道理。推动文明交流互鉴，可以丰富人类文明的色彩，让各国人民享受更富内涵的精神生活、开创更有选择的未来。

I have visited the Louvre Museum in France and the Palace Museum in China, both of which house millions of pieces of art treasures. They are attractive because they are able to present the richness of diverse civilizations. Exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations must not be built on the exclusive praise or belittling of one particular civilization. As early as over 2,000 years ago, the Chinese people came to recognize that "it is only natural for things to be different". Greater exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations can further enrich the colors of various civilizations and the cultural life of people, and open up still greater alternatives in the future.

第二，文明是平等的，人类文明因平等才有交流互鉴的前提。各种人类文明在价值上是平等的，都各有千秋，也各有不足。世界上不存在十全十美的文明，也不存在一无是处的文明，文明没有高低、优劣之分。

Second, civilizations are equal, and such equality has made exchanges and mutual learning among



civilizations possible. All human civilizations are equal in terms of value. They all have their respective strengths and shortcomings. There is no perfect civilization in the world. Nor is there a civilization that is devoid of any merit. No one civilization can be judged superior to another.

我访问过世界上许多地方，最喜欢做的一件事情就是了解五大洲的不同文明，了解这些文明与其他文明的不同之处、独到之处，了解在这些文明中生活的人们的世界观、人生观、价值观。我到过代表古玛雅文明的奇琴伊察，也到过带有浓厚伊斯兰文明色彩的中亚古城撒马尔罕。我深深感到，要了解各种文明的真谛，必须秉持平等、谦虚的态度。如果居高临下对待一种文明，不仅不能参透这种文明的奥妙，而且会与之格格不入。历史和现实都表明，傲慢和偏见是文明交流互鉴的最大障碍。

I have visited many places in the world. The best thing I wanted to do is to learn about differing civilizations across the five continents, what make them different and unique, how their people think about the world and life and what they hold dear. I have visited Chichen Itza, a window on the ancient Maya civilization, and the Central Asian city of Samarkand, an epitome of the ancient Islamic civilization. It is my keenly-felt conviction that an attitude of equality and modesty is required if one wants to truly understand the various civilizations. Taking a condescending attitude toward a civilization can not help anyone to appreciate its essence but may risk antagonizing it. Both history and reality show that pride and prejudice are two biggest obstacles to exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations.

第三，文明是包容的，人类文明因包容才有交流互鉴的动力。海纳百川，有容乃大。人类创造的各种文明都是劳动和智慧的结晶。每一种文明都是独特的。在文明问题上，生搬硬套、削足适履不仅是不可能的，而且是十分有害的。一切文明成果都值得尊重，一切文明成果都要珍惜。

Third, civilizations are inclusive, and such inclusiveness has given exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations the needed drive to move forward. The ocean is vast for it refuses no rivers. All civilizations are crystallizations of mankind's hard work and wisdom. Every civilization is unique. Copying other civilizations mechanically or blindly is like cutting one's toes just to fit his shoes, which is not only impossible but also highly detrimental. All achievements of civilizations deserve our respect and must be treasured.

历史告诉我们，只有交流互鉴，一种文明才能充满生命力。只要秉持包容精神，就不存在什么“文明冲突”，就可以实现文明和谐。这就是中国人常说的：“萝卜青菜，各有所爱。”

History also tells us that only by interacting with and learning from others can a civilization enjoy

full vitality. If all civilizations can uphold inclusiveness, the so-called "clash of civilizations" will be out of the question and the harmony of civilizations will become reality. This is like what we Chinese often say, "radish or cabbage, each to his own delight."

中华文明经历了 5000 多年的历史变迁，但始终一脉相承，积淀着中华民族最深层的精神追求，代表着中华民族独特的精神标识，为中华民族生生不息、发展壮大提供了丰厚滋养。中华文明是在中国大地上产生的文明，也是同其他文明不断交流互鉴而形成的文明。

Having gone through over 5,000 years of vicissitudes, the Chinese civilization has always kept to its original root. Unique in representing China spiritually, it contains some most profound pursuits of the Chinese nation and provides it with abundant nourishment for existence and development. Though born on the soil of China, it has come to its present form through constant exchanges and mutual learning with other civilizations.

公元前 100 多年，中国就开始开辟通往西域的丝绸之路。汉代张骞于公元前 138 年和 119 年两次出使西域，向西域传播了中华文化，也引进了葡萄、苜蓿、石榴、胡麻、芝麻等西域文化成果。西汉时期，中国的船队就到达了印度和斯里兰卡，用中国的丝绸换取了琉璃、珍珠等物品。中国唐代是中国历史上对外交流的活跃期。据史料记载，唐代中国通使交好的国家多达 70 多个，那时候的首都长安里来自各国的使臣、商人、留学生云集成群。这个大交流促进了中华文化远播世界，也促进了各国文化和物产传入中国。15 世纪初，中国明代著名航海家郑和七次远洋航海，到了东南亚很多国家，一直抵达非洲东海岸的肯尼亚，留下了中国同沿途各国人民友好交往的佳话。明末清初，中国人积极学习现代科技知识，欧洲的天文学、医学、数学、几何学、地理学知识纷纷传入中国，开阔中国人的知识视野。之后，中外文明交流互鉴更是频繁展开，这其中有冲突、矛盾、疑惑、拒绝，但更多是学习、消化、融合、创新。

In the 2nd century B.C., China began working on the Silk Road leading to the Western Regions. In 138 B.C. and 119 B.C., Envoy Zhang Qian of the Han Dynasty made two trips to those regions, spreading the Chinese culture there and bringing into China grape, alfalfa, pomegranate, flax, sesame and other products. In the Western Han Dynasty, China's merchant fleets sailed as far as India and Sri Lanka where they traded China's silk for colored glaze, pearls and other products. The Tang Dynasty saw dynamic interactions between China and other countries. According to historical documents, the dynasty exchanged envoys with over 70 countries, and Chang'an, the capital of Tang, bustled with envoys, merchants and students from other countries. Exchanges of such a magnitude helped the spread of the Chinese culture to the rest of the world and the introduction into China of the cultures and products from other countries. In the early 15th century, Zheng He, the famous navigator of China's Ming Dynasty, made seven expeditions to the Western Seas, reaching many Southeast Asian countries and even Kenya on the east coast of Africa. These trips left behind many stories of friendly

exchanges between the people of China and countries along the route. In late Ming Dynasty and early Qing Dynasty, the Chinese people began to learn modern science and technology with great zeal, as the European knowledge of astronomy, medicine, mathematics, geometry and geography were being introduced into China, which helped broaden the horizon of the Chinese people. Thereafter, exchanges and mutual learning between the Chinese civilization and other civilizations became more frequent. There were indeed conflicts, frictions, bewilderment and denial in this process. But the more dominant features of the period were learning, digestion, integration and innovation.

佛教产生于古代印度，但传入中国后，经过长期演化，佛教同中国儒家文化和道家文化融合发展，最终形成了具有中国特色的佛教文化，给中国人的宗教信仰、哲学观念、文学艺术、礼仪习俗等留下了深刻影响。中国唐代玄奘西行取经，历尽磨难，体现的是中国人学习域外文化的坚韧精神。根据他的故事演绎的神话小说《西游记》，我想大家都知道。中国人根据中华文化发展了佛教思想，形成了独特的佛教理论，而且使佛教从中国传播到了日本、韩国、东南亚等地。

Buddhism originated in ancient India. After it was introduced into China, the religion went through an extended period of integrated development with the indigenous Confucianism and Taoism and finally became the Buddhism with Chinese characteristics, thus making a deep impact on the religious belief, philosophy, literature, art, etiquette and customs of the Chinese people. Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang), the Tang monk who endured untold sufferings as he went on a pilgrimage to the west for Buddhist scriptures, gave full expression to the determination and fortitude of the Chinese people to learn from other cultures. I am sure that you have all heard about the Chinese classics Journey to the West, which was written on the basis of his stories. The Chinese people have enriched Buddhism and developed some special Buddhist thoughts in the light of Chinese culture, and helped it to spread from China to Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia and beyond.

2000 多年来，佛教、伊斯兰教、基督教等先后传入中国，中国音乐、绘画、文学等也不断吸纳外来文明的优长。中国传统画法同西方油画融合创新，形成了独具魅力的中国写意油画，徐悲鸿等大师的作品受到广泛赞赏。中国的造纸术、火药、印刷术、指南针四大发明带动了世界变革，推动了欧洲文艺复兴。中国哲学、文学、医药、丝绸、瓷器、茶叶等传入西方，渗入西方民众日常生活之中。《马可·波罗游记》令无数人对中国心向往之。

In the course of some two thousand years and more, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity have been introduced into China successively, which allowed the country's music, painting and literature to benefit from the advantages of other civilizations. China's freehand oil painting is an innovative combination of China's traditional painting and the Western oil painting, and the works of Xu

Beihong and other masters have been widely acclaimed. China's Four Great Inventions, namely, papermaking, gunpowder, movable-type printing and compass, led to changes in the world, including the European Renaissance. China's philosophy, literature, medicine, silk, porcelain and tea reached the West and became part of people's daily life. The Travels of Marco Polo generated a widespread interest in China.

大家都知道，中国有秦俑，人们称之为“地下的军团”。法国总统希拉克参观之后说：“不看金字塔，不算真正到过埃及。不看秦俑，不算真正到过中国。”1987年，这一尘封了2000多年的中华文化珍品被列入世界文化遗产。中国还有大量文明成果被教科文组织列入世界文化遗产、世界非物质文化遗产、世界记忆遗产名录。这里，我要对教科文组织为保存和传播中华文明作出的贡献，表示衷心的感谢！

Many people know about the terracotta warriors, "the buried legions of Emperor Qin". After his visit to the site, President Chirac of France said that a visit to Egypt will not be complete without seeing the pyramids, and that a visit to China will not be complete without seeing the terracotta warriors. In 1987, this national treasure of China, shrouded in secrecy for over two thousand years, was put on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage list. There are many prouder Chinese achievements that have been included in the World Cultural Heritage list, the World Intangible Cultural Heritage list and the Memory of the World list. Here, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to UNESCO for its contribution to the preservation and dissemination of the Chinese civilization.

女士们、先生们、朋友们！

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

当今世界，人类生活在不同文化、种族、肤色、宗教和不同社会制度所组成的世界里，各国人民形成了你中有我、我中有你的命运共同体。

Today, we live in a world with different cultures, ethnic groups, skin colors, religions and social systems, and the people of various countries have become members of an intimate community of shared destiny.

中国人早就懂得了“和而不同”的道理。生活在2500年前的中国史学家左丘明在《左传》中记录了齐国上大夫晏子关于“和”的一段话：“和如羹焉，水、火、醯、醢、盐、梅，以烹鱼

肉。” “声亦如味，一气，二体，三类，四物，五声，六律，七音，八风，九歌，以相成也。” “若以水济水，谁能食之？若琴瑟之专壹，谁能听之？”

The Chinese have long come to appreciate the wisdom of “harmony without uniformity”. Zuo Qiuming, a Chinese historian who lived 2,500 years ago, recorded in the Chronicle of Zuo the following comments by Yan Ying, Prime Minister of the State of Qi during the Spring and Autumn Period: “Harmony is like cooking the thick soup. You need water, fire, vinegar, meat sauce, salt and plum to go with the fish or meat.” “It is the same when it comes to music. Only by combining the texture, length, pace, mood, tone, pitch and style rightly and executing them properly can you produce an excellent melody.” “Who can eat the soup with nothing but water in it? What ear can tolerate the same tone played repeatedly on one instrument?”

世界上有 200 多个国家和地区，2500 多个民族和多种宗教。如果只有一种生活方式，只有一种语言，只有一种音乐，只有一种服饰，那是不可想象的。

There are 200-odd countries and regions, over 2,500 ethnic groups and a multitude of religions in the world today. We can hardly imagine if this world has only one lifestyle, one language, one kind of music and one style of costume.

雨果说，世界上最宽阔的是海洋，比海洋更宽阔的是天空，比天空更宽阔的是人的胸怀。对待不同文明，我们需要比天空更宽阔的胸怀。文明如水，润物无声。我们应该推动不同文明相互尊重、和谐共处，让文明交流互鉴成为增进各国人民友谊的桥梁、推动人类社会进步的动力、维护世界和平的纽带。我们应该从不同文明中寻求智慧、汲取营养，为人们提供精神支撑和心灵慰藉，携手解决人类共同面临的各种挑战。

Victor Hugo once said, “There is a prospect greater than the sea, and it is the sky; there is a prospect greater than the sky, and it is the human soul.” Indeed, we need a mind that is broader than the sky as we approach different civilizations. Civilizations are like water, moistening everything silently. We should encourage different civilizations to respect each other and live in harmony, so that exchanges and mutual learning between civilizations will become a bridge promoting friendship between people around the world, an engine driving progress of human society, and a bond cementing world peace. We should draw wisdom and nourishment and seek spiritual support and psychological consolation from various civilizations, and work together to tackle the challenges facing mankind.

1987 年，在中国陕西的法门寺，地宫中出土了 20 件美轮美奂的琉璃器，这是唐代传入中国的东罗马和伊斯兰的琉璃器。我在欣赏这些域外文物时，一直在思考一个问题，就是对待不同文明，不能只满足于欣赏它们产生的精美物件，更应该去领略其中包含的人文精神；不能只满足

于领略它们对以往人们生活的艺术表现，更应该让其中蕴藏的精神鲜活起来。

In 1987, 20 exquisite pieces of colored glaze were excavated at the underground chamber of Famen Temple in Shaanxi, China. These East Roman and Islamic relics were brought into China during the Tang Dynasty. Marveling at these exotic relics, I thought hard and concluded that as we approach the world's different civilizations, we should not limit ourselves to just admiring the exquisiteness of the objects involved. Rather, we should try to learn and appreciate the cultural significance behind them. Instead of only satisfying ourselves with their artistic presentation of people's life in the past, we should do our best to breathe new life into their inherent spirit.

女士们、先生们、朋友们！

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

拿破仑曾经说过，世上有两种力量：利剑和思想；从长而论，利剑总是败在思想手下。我们要积极发展教育事业，通过普及教育，启迪心智，传承知识，陶冶情操，使人们在持续的格物致知中更好认识各种文明的价值，让教育为文明传承和创造服务。我们要大力发展科技事业，通过科技进步和创新，认识自我，认识世界，改造社会，使人们在持续的天工开物中更好掌握科技知识和技能，让科技为人类造福。我们要大力推动文化事业发展，通过文化交流，沟通心灵，开阔眼界，增进共识，让人们在持续的以文化人中提升素养，让文化为人类进步助力。

Napoleon Bonaparte once said, "There are only two forces in the world, the sword and the spirit. In the long run the sword will always be conquered by the spirit." We should develop education more actively. Education can open people's mind, impart knowledge, and cultivate temperament. The continued process of learning will enable our people to better appreciate the value of different civilizations. In this sense, education is an effective vehicle for the continuation and creation of civilizations. We should develop science and technology more vigorously. Scientific advancement and innovation can help people understand themselves and the world and be in a stronger position to change their society for the better. The continued process of exploiting nature will enable our people to master still more knowledge and skills. In this sense, science and technology are a powerful tool to make the world a better place for mankind. We should promote cultural undertakings more energetically. Cultural exchanges can help open our hearts to each other, broaden our horizon and build greater consensus among us. The continued process of cultivating people morally and intellectually will result in a higher standard of humanity. In this sense, culture is a big booster for human progress.

女士们、先生们、朋友们！

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

中国人民正在为实现中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦而奋斗。实现中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦，就是要实现国家富强、民族振兴、人民幸福，既深深体现了今天中国人的理想，也深深反映了中国人自古以来不懈追求进步的光荣传统。

The Chinese people are striving to fulfill the Chinese dream of the great renewal of the Chinese nation. The Chinese dream of the great renewal of the Chinese nation is about prosperity of the country, rejuvenation of the nation, and happiness of the people. It reflects the ideal of the Chinese people of today as well as the fine tradition of relentlessly seeking progress that we have had since ancient times.

实现中国梦，是物质文明和精神文明均衡发展、相互促进的结果。没有文明的继承和发展，没有文化的弘扬和繁荣，就没有中国梦的实现。中华民族的先人们早就向往人们的物质生活充实无忧、道德境界充分升华的大同世界。中华文明历来把人的精神生活纳入人生和社会理想之中。所以，实现中国梦，是物质文明和精神文明比翼双飞的发展过程。随着中国经济社会不断发展，中华文明也必将顺应时代发展焕发出更加蓬勃的生命力。

The Chinese dream requires balanced development and mutual reinforcement of material and cultural progress. Without the continuation and development of civilization or the promotion and prosperity of culture, the Chinese dream will not come true. Forefathers of the Chinese nation long yearned for a world of great harmony in which people are free from want and follow a high moral standard. In the Chinese civilization, people's cultural pursuit has always been part of their life and social ideals. So the realization of the Chinese dream is a process of both material and cultural development. As China continues to make economic and social progress, the Chinese civilization will keep pace with the times and acquire greater vitality.

每一种文明都延续着一个国家和民族的精神血脉，既需要薪火相传、代代守护，更需要与时俱进、勇于创新。中国人民在实现中国梦的进程中，将按照时代的新进步，推动中华文明创造性转化和创新性发展，激活其生命力，把跨越时空、超越国度、富有永恒魅力、具有当代价值的文化精神弘扬起来，让收藏在博物馆里的文物、陈列在广阔大地上的遗产、书写在古籍里的文字都活起来，让中华文明同世界各国人民创造的丰富多彩的文明一道，为人类提供正确的精神指引和强大的精神动力。

A civilization carries on its back the soul of a country or nation. It needs to be passed on from one generation to the next. Yet more importantly, it needs to keep pace with the times and innovate with courage. As we pursue the Chinese dream, the Chinese people will encourage creative shifts and innovative development of the Chinese civilization in keeping with the progress of the times. We need to inject new vitality into the Chinese civilization by energizing all cultural elements that transcend time, space and national borders and that possess both perpetual appeal and current value, and we need to bring all collections in our museums, all heritage structures across our lands and all records in our classics to life. In this way, the Chinese civilization, together with the rich and colorful civilizations created by the people of other countries, will provide mankind with the right cultural guidance and strong motivation.

女士们、先生们、朋友们！

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

“等闲识得东风面，万紫千红总是春。” 明年是教科文组织成立 70 周年，我相信，在博科娃总干事领导下，教科文组织一定能为推动人类文明交流互鉴、促进世界和平谱写新的篇章。

As an old Chinese poem goes, “When I glance at the visage of vernal breeze, I know that a thousand flowers of purple and red set spring aglow.” UNESCO will mark its 70th anniversary next year. I am confident that under the stewardship of Director-General Bokova, the organization will make still more achievements in its efforts to promote exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations and advance the cause of peace in the world.

谢谢大家。

Thank you.



## Appendix 4. Translation of the Comments on the ‘Nie Er’s Violin’

The image shows a screenshot of a YouTube comment section. The comments are in Chinese and express various sentiments, including pride in national heritage, nostalgia for home, and reflections on the diaspora experience. Each comment includes the user's profile picture, name, and the time since they posted (all '1 year ago').

**璐璐 1年前**  
小时候升旗唱国歌时其实没有多大的感触，慢慢长大到国外留学，每次看到国旗听到国歌时自己那微妙的情绪变化的确是今生不悔入中华  
68 回复  
[查看回复](#)

**赤轩赤 1年前**  
作为一个在日本留学的学生，听到：“你还记得你为何来日本吗？在安逸的日本你是否忘记了你最初的理想？”的时候真的哭了，在国外留学真的很容易懈怠，很容易沉沦！但是每当想放弃的时候，深藏在心底深处那最初梦想时又充满了力量。  
为中华崛起而读书！  
64 回复  
[查看 5 条回复](#)

**serena ss 1年前**  
今生不悔入华夏，泪目～  
76 回复

**嘿嘿嘿 1年前**  
可能会有非议，但是我支持聂耳的小提琴作为国宝，这是面对亡国灭种的抗争，真 中华之精神。  
92 回复

**777白 1年前**  
西方说华国无信仰 是没有灵性的国家 可是国家宝藏这个节目里多次出现了各个时期都有华夏人对神和信仰的表现啊 信仰和宗教是两回事 中华历史上很少有势力强大赢利性质干扰政权甚至有兵权武力值的宗教 这其实对人民来说是好事 信仰是必须的可是宗教的好坏很难说 不晓得西方人的宗教优越感从何而来 千百年被宗教势力洗脑剥削控制有什么了不起不成？  
46 回复  
[查看 3 条回复](#)

**ds KKK 1年前**  
这一季比上一季在国宝的选择上更加注重文物所承载的文化和精神了，真的很感动，中华的工匠强，中华民族的精神力量更强。  
45 回复

**Mo Kii 1年前**  
在美国哭成一只狗了.. 我好想家啊 我永远都是云南人  
24 回复

**Yanyee H 1年前**  
我觉得这期云南的立意很高呀！厉害！  
22 回复

**Shuqi Wan 1年前**  
此生不悔入华夏，来生还做中国人！  
52 回复

**陈深 1年前**  
小时候升旗仪式经常不在乎 甚至缺席 现在人在国外 一听国歌就泪崩 幸好现在我还知道珍惜  
13 回复

**Michael Duo 1年前**  
在美国留学的云南人报到，为我的家乡自豪，为祖国自豪！  
25 回复

**Jon Ramsay 1年前**  
不离家不知何为想家、不离国不知何为爱国。身在天涯处、心在故乡土。

Figure 1. Comments on Youtube

@ 璐璐

I did not have any strong feelings when I saw the national flag raised and sang the national anthem at a young age. However, when I grew up and went abroad for education, I felt my emotions change when I hear the national anthem and see the national flag. It makes me feel that I do not regret being Chinese.

@赤轩赤

As a student who is living in Japan for education, I teared when I heard ‘Do you still remember why you came to Japan? Have you forgotten your dream when you came to Japan?’. I feel it is easy to get lost and sluggish when studying abroad. But I feel powerful again, when I almost give up and think back to my dream.

(I will) work hard on study for the rise of China!

@ serena ss

I do not regret to be Chinese. (tears)

@嘿嘿嘿

It can be contested, but I support the selection of Nie Er’s violin as national treasure, it is the resistance against the state subjugation and genocide. It is the true spirit of China.

@777 白

China is criticized by the west as having no faith. However, the program National Treasure has introduced the faith of Chinese people on deities from various periods. Faith is different from religion. I think it is a good thing that China have never had a regime that was based on religion, or religious power that can disturb the regime. It is thus hard to conclude whether a religion is good or bad, but faith is different and necessary for the people. I have no clue why the western culture has such religious superiority.

@ds KKK

This season focuses more on the spirits and culture embedded within the cultural relics than the last season. It is very moving. China has strong workmen, and the spirits of the Chinese is even more powerful.

@Mo Kii

I am crying like a dog (crying very hard). I miss my home so much. I will always be Yunnan people.

@Yanyee H

I think this episode has a high implication. It is really nice.

@Shuqi Wan

I will never regret to be Chinese in my present life, and I will choose to be Chinese in my next life again.

@陈深

I did not care about raising the national flag and sing the national anthem, and was often absent from these events. Now I am abroad, and I tear every time I hear the national anthem. I feel lucky that I realized to cherish it.

@Michael Duo

I am from Yunnan and is current studying in the US, I am proud of my hometown and my home state.

@Jon Ramsay

One will never know about homesick if he does not leave home; one will never know patriotism if he does not leave the country. Staying at the edge of the world, while my heart is connected to my homeland.

## Appendix 5. Statistic Chart from the National Bureau of Statistics

指标	2018年	2017年	2016年	2015年	2014年	2013年	2012年	2011年
文物业参观人次(万人次)	122352	114773	101267	92508	84256		67059	56687
文物科研机构参观人次(万人次)	335	297	408	396	301		224	194
文物保护单位管理机构参观人次(万人次)	17616	17304	15798	14001	12182		10433	9442
博物馆参观人次(万人次)	104404	97172	85061	78112	71774	63776	56401	47051
中央文物业参观人次(万人次)	2938	2840	2683	2257	2592		2446	2180
省、市、区文物业参观人次(万人次)	12733	10901	10131	10929	9059		7116	7436
地、市文物业参观人次(万人次)	39300	37878	34680	31897	28993		23503	19930
县、市文物业参观人次(万人次)	67381	63154	53773	47425	43613		33994	27142
文物部门文物业参观人次(万人次)	99425	92239	82007	75659	70515		58501	50451
其他部门文物业参观人次(万人次)	22927	22534	19260	16849	13742		8558	6236

Figure 3. Number of visitors of museums and cultural relic related industry, 2011-2018

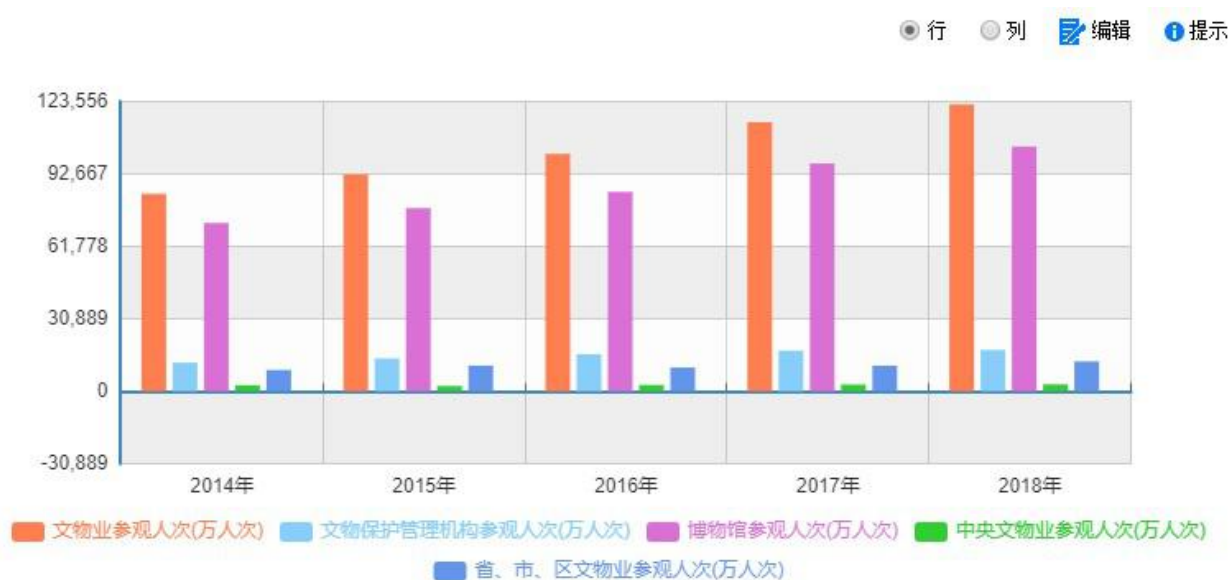


Figure 4. Number of visitors of cultural relic industry, 2014-2018, Bar Chart


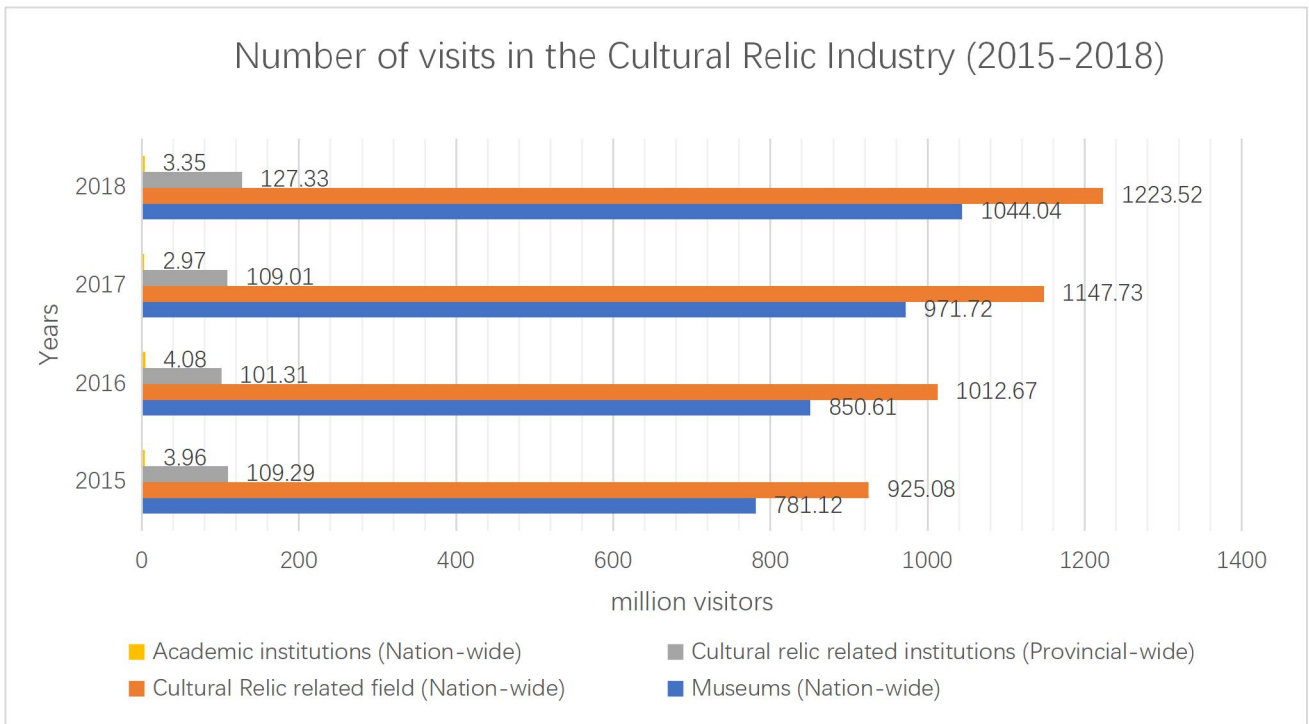
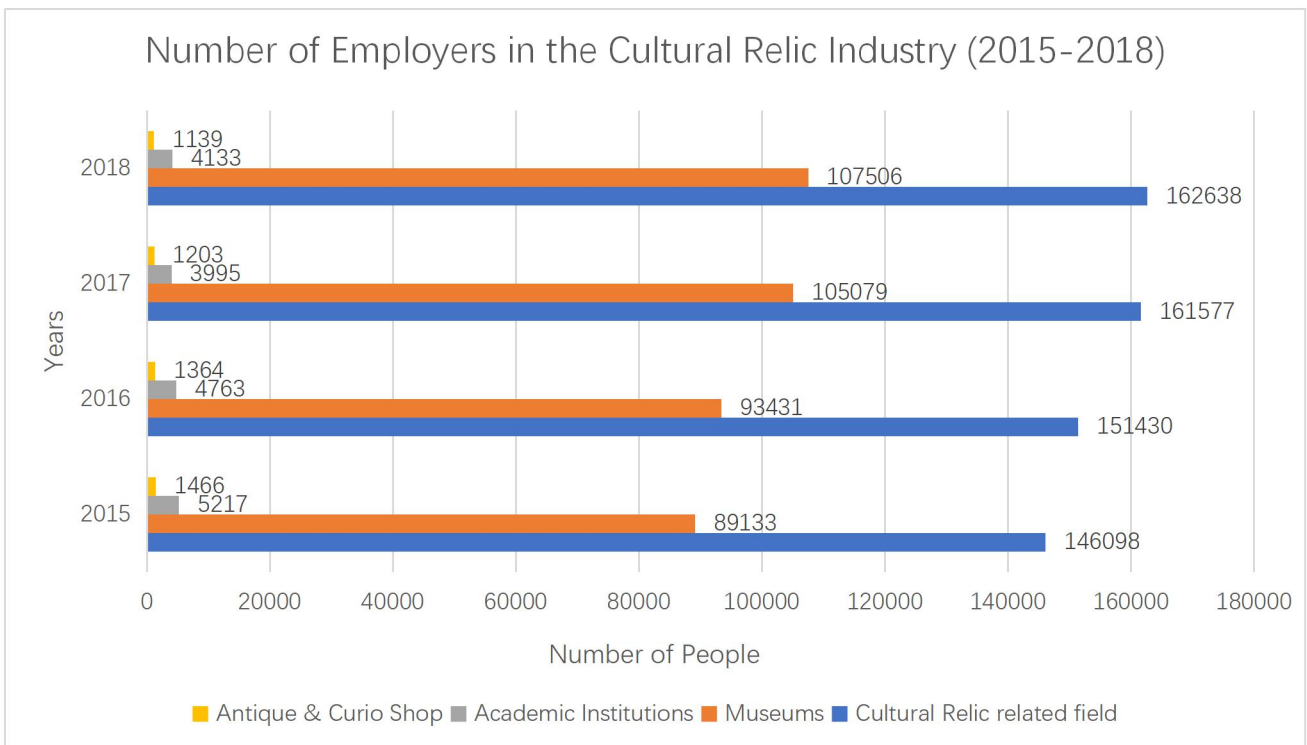
 <span style="float: right;">时间： <input type="text" value="请选择时间"/></span>								
指标	2018年	2017年	2016年	2015年	2014年	2013年	2012年	2011年
文物从业人员数(人)	162638	161577	151430	146098	148095	137173	125155	111338
文物科研机构从业人数(人)	4133	3995	4763	5217	7314	5243	4917	4078
文物保护管理机构从业人数(人)	32406	33400	33407	32030	37843	35334	34854	33035
博物馆从业人数(人)	107506	105079	93431	89133	83970	79075	71748	62181
文物商店从业人数(人)	1139	1203	1364	1466	1565	1596	1623	1719
其他文物机构从业人数(人)	17454	17900	18465	18252	17403	15925	12013	10325
中央文物从业人员数(人)	3073	3615	3285	3592	3582	3432	3462	3420
省、市、区文物从业人员数(人)	19246	19237	18616	18931	20831	18147	17527	16885
地、市文物从业人员数(人)	48452	47995	47140	44647	42422	40402	36671	32915
县、市文物从业人员数(人)	91867	90730	82389	78928	81260	75192	67495	58118
文物部门文物从业人员数(人)	136334	135856	129956	126776	130077	120282	113015	105462
其他部门文物从业人员数(人)	26304	25721	21474	19322	18018	16891	12140	5876

Figure 5. Number of employers in the cultural relic industry, 2011-2018



**Figure 6. Number of visits, 2015-2018**



**Figure 7. Number of employers, 2015-2018**

## Appendix 6. Cultural creative products on Taobao



Figure 8. Online cultural creative product shops for national museums on Taobao

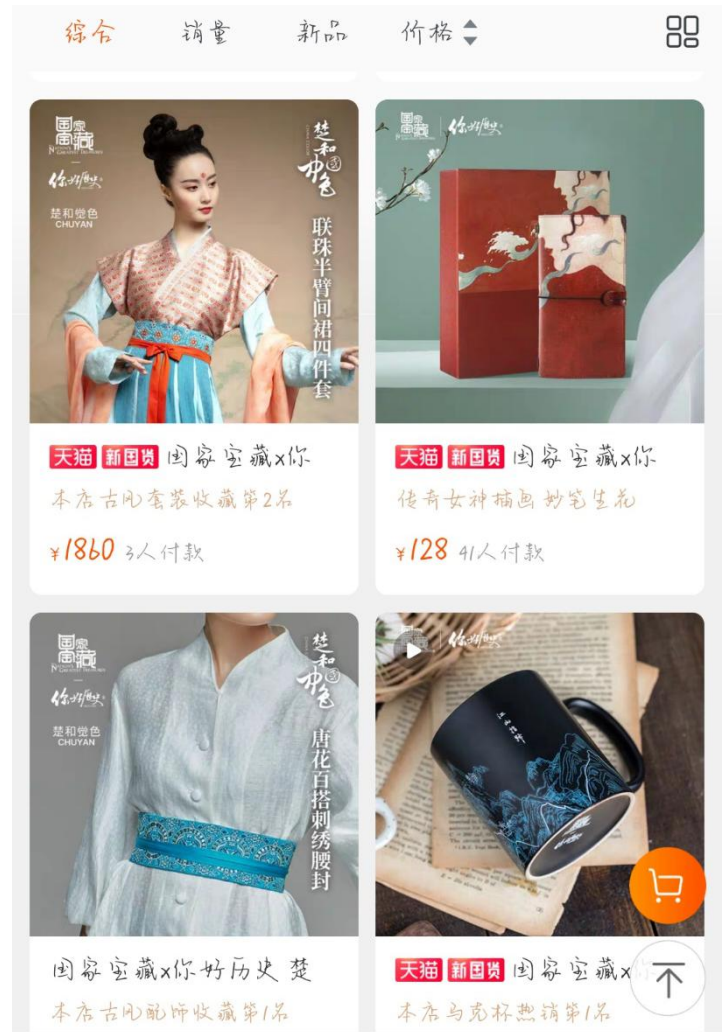


Figure 9. Online cultural creative product shop for National Treasure on Taobao



Figure 8. Cultural creative product of the national treasure *A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains*



## Appendix 7. Activities regarding Hanfu: the Xitang cultural Week / Xitang Hanfu festival



Figure 9. Hashtag #Hanfu# on Sina Weibo



Figure 10. Hashtag #Xitang Hanfu culture Week# on Sina Weibo



Figure 11. Hashtag #Xitang Hanfu culture festival# on Sina Weibo

## **Appendix 8. Interviews of museum directors (original texts and translation)**

Cai Qin (蔡琴), vice director of Zhejiang Provincial museum (浙江省博物馆副馆长):

“博物馆最主要的产品就是服务于观众的产品，让文物真正活起来，就是要大众可以获得分享，受到教益，博物馆的功能就是利用分享受益，回馈社会，为社会的进步和谐发展起到作用。”

“The main product of museums are the services for the visitor. Bringing cultural relics to life is to engage with the public, share (the knowledge) with the public. The function of museum is to use the benefit of sharing (among the public) to serve the society and contribute to the harmonious development of the society.”

Fang Qin (方勤), Director of Hubei Provincial Museum (湖北省博物馆馆长):

“博物馆代表了公共文化的均等性，大家享受平等的公共文化服务的权利，我们希望让更多人更方便更优雅地待在博物馆，提升服务质量，让我们的藏品给人愉悦感，给人一种创新的认识。”

“Museums represent the equality of public culture. Everyone has the equal rights to approach public culture. We hope to make museum into a place where more people can easily engage with and enjoy their staying. We improve our service quality so that to provide visitors pleasure, and the notion of creativity.”

“最令我感动的是一次我们办展览，一位观众走进来，刚开始他看到展品后兴奋地大喊大叫，保安还想进行干涉，后来他就安静了，完全被展品的力量感染，很放松地在欣赏，这就是展览的魅力。”

“There was one time that made me feel very touching. It was during one of our exhibitions. A visitor was excited and with a loud voice when he saw the collections, while he was soon attracted by the collections and quiet down. This is the charm of exhibitions.”

“中国现代化发展非常快速，但是我们的文化要补课，以前湖北省博物馆参观人数是每年 30 万人次，现在达到 200 多万人次，这就是公共文化的均等性，博物馆应该是能让人享受平等的公共文化服务的场所。”

“China is developing fast, however, we are lack in terms of cultural development. The visitor amount use to be 300,000 per year, but increased to around 2 million per year nowadays. This indicates the equality of public culture. Museums should be the place where people can equally access public cultural services.”

Duan Xiaoming (段晓明) Director of Hunan Provincial Museum (湖南省博物馆馆长):

“让文物活起来，我认为首先就应该让文物美丽起来，让展览亲切起来，让观众愉悦起来。”

“To bring cultural relics to life, it is important to first make cultural relics beautiful, and make the exhibitions engageable to the public, and provide visitors pleasure (in the exhibition).”

Yang Zhigang (杨志刚) Director of Shanghai Museum (上海博物馆馆长):

“我们一方面扎根和弘扬传统文化，另外一方面也面向世界、面向未来，这两方面的工作就是‘让文物活起来’。博物馆是保护和传承人类文明的重要殿堂，是连接过去、现在、未来的桥梁。”

“On the one hand, we should root in promoting traditional culture, on the other hand, we should face the world and the future. The combination of these two aspects is to ‘bring cultural relics to life’. Museums are important palaces to preserve and inherent human civilization, it is also bridges to connect the past, present and future.”

Gong Liang (龚良) Director of Nanjing Museum (南京博物院院长):

“博物馆要展示的物品不仅是我们看到的这么一点物，而是物背后相关的非物质的内容，我们要让文化遗产能够真正地活在当下，活在现代生活中，活在人们的心中。”

“The objects displayed in museums is not only about the objects themselves, but also the intangible contexts embedded within them. We need to bring cultural heritage alive in the present and in people’s mind.”

Ma Xiaolin (马萧林) Director of Henan Museum (河南博物院院长):

“博物馆是观众生活中不可或缺的一部分，我们希望通过潜移默化，让博物馆成为一个城市的重要的文化场所，也是代表一座城市最亮丽的名片和最明亮的窗口，成为公众休闲的最好一个去处。”

“Museums are indispensable components of people’s life. We wish to make museums into important cultural sites, bright windows and representatives of the cities, as well as a good place for relaxation through imperceptible and unobtrusive influence on the public.