

Case study

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A Study on the Pathways of Immersive Technology Empowering the Dissemination of China's Red-Culture

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes how the immersive technology rejuvenates the dissemination of the revolutionary culture of China, taking the Guizhou Long March Digital Technology Art Museum (Red Ribbon) as an example to follow the dual transformation of the revolutionary culture in terms of narrative approaches and value dimensions in the digital media context. Research shows that the immersive technology transforms static displays into navigable historical sites through virtual scenes and symbolic reconstruction, and transforms the audience from spectators to participants through embodied experiences and interactive narratives. When emotions are triggered by the environment, value cognition crystallizes into self-awareness. This technological intervention does not only innovate dissemination formats, but also creates new trajectories for the reproduction of cultural and social values, providing a reproducible paradigm for sustaining red culture in the new era and crafting its overseas narratives.

INTRODUCTION

Red culture was conceived gradually under the leadership of the Communist Party of China during the revolution, nation-building, reform, and the construction of the new era. It is a value system rooted in Chinese soil, including not only the material traces such as revolutionary sites and archives, but also the spiritual legacies like the spirit of the Red Boat, the Jinggangshan Spirit, and the Yanan Spirit. The red culture has injected vitality into the development of socialist culture and become a key pillar supporting the civilization progress of the country. Following the dissemination of red culture, we can find a track of continuous changes: from the

early text records to the later audio-visual transmission, and then to the digital wave, each step forward driven by new media technology. However, the traditional dissemination modes are still plagued by one-way indoctrination, passive acceptance of the audience, and lack of diversity of experience, which leads to a clear gap with the current media consumption habits and aesthetic expectations. How to rebuild the channels of disseminating red culture by means of new tools, new scenarios, and new concepts has become the focus of common concern for both the academic and practitioner circles.

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Immersive media (including virtual reality, augmented reality, mixed reality, holographic imaging, digital twin, etc.) is rapidly maturing and spreading to more scenarios. These media simulate perception and encourage interaction to build layered immersive spaces beyond the traditional limitations of time and space, putting the audience in a narrative setting as if they were there in person. The application of these media to the dissemination of revolutionary culture is not only a format transformation, but also reconstructs the cognitive framework of dissemination methods, the way the audience accepts information, and the identity of the revolutionary culture itself. This article examines three mechanisms—scenario immersion, embodied interaction, and emotional resonance—and analyzes representative cases to explain how these media assist the digital dissemination of revolutionary culture.

THE CURRENT STATE AND CHALLENGES OF RED CULTURE DISSEMINATION

Limited Dissemination Formats

At present, the spread of red culture mainly depends on physical space such as revolutionary memorial halls, red culture exhibition centers, revolutionary sites, etc. Relevant data show that by 2025, there were more than 1,600 red culture museums and memorial halls in China, holding more than 1.5 million red-themed cultural exhibitions. Nevertheless, the spread of these activities still mainly depends on revolutionary artifacts, event display boards, documentary videos, etc., and the content is often one-way delivered to the audience according to the timelines of history or the biographies of heroes, without sufficient interactivity and motivation. Although this dissemination model can impart knowledge and promote values, it also tends to put the audience in a passive state of watching. It is difficult to really transfer the audience to the historical scenes, and their cognition remains at the superficial level of watching, which greatly restricts the deepening of red cultural memory and the internalization of spirit. At the same time, most red exhibitions use static presentation methods and formulaic narrative methods. The cultural symbol system they build does not have the ability to be recontextualized and renarrated, which restricts the reproduction and social diffusion of red culture.

Disconnect Between Audience and Content

The media ecology is ever-changing, changing audience habits with it. At present, the younger generation, especially Generation Z and Generation Alpha, has become the main target audience who needs to be captured and profoundly influenced in the dissemination of red culture. Red culture itself possesses strong historical, political and value characteristics, often reproducing historical events and heroic deeds in a standard-

ised and formulaic way. In its narrative logic, the dissemination of red culture often unfolds in a linear way along the threads of time and events, highlighting the enumeration of facts and conclusive outputs. Its communication forms depend heavily on the textual, monumental grand narratives. The dissemination process lacks expressions containing physical sensation, emotional tension, daily life scenes and youthful vigour, failing to adapt to the cognitive preferences and aesthetic habits of contemporary youth, who prefer experiential, emotional, digital and interactive participation. This results in a huge generational gap between red narratives and young peoples daily digital lives, making it difficult for the content to resonate emotionally and foster identification among youth. It is often regarded as preachy propaganda, reducing the emotional attractiveness and value guidance that red culture should have innately. (Liang, K. 2020)

Stagnation in Communication Scenarios

The communication context plays a decisive role in the construction of meaning and identity. At present, the dissemination of red culture still mainly depends on physical venues such as museums, memorial halls, and revolutionary education bases to transmit information in the form of carefully arranged exhibitions, lectures, and promotional activities. This process is still one-way, superficial, and mechanical, unable to form a loop of immersion, participation, and recreation. Visitors are still passive receivers, unable to interact in real time with the exhibits and establish emotional ties. This strategy is difficult to attract the younger generation who are used to interactive experience to explore and learn by themselves. At the same time, this rigid single-channel dissemination mode cannot resonate with the current urban public space, online social platform, and immersive digital environment. Therefore, the narrative of red culture is still bound by physical space and traditional cognitive framework, unable to integrate into the daily life of young people. This disconnection results in a gradual weakening of its cultural influence.

In general, the spread of red culture still has many difficulties, such as single formats, mismatched contents and audiences interest, out-of-date scenarios and interaction modes, etc. In this paper, we explore how immersive technologies can be used to enhance the spread of red culture. We discuss several aspects, such as scenario immersion and historical context recreation, embodied interaction and narrative participation, emotional resonance and spiritual internalization, and analyze related cases. We hope to offer suggestions and inspirations for promoting the development and inheritance of red culture in the new era.

THE MECHANISM OF SPATIAL IMMERSION AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTUAL RECONSTRUCTION

The immersive technology empowered red culture dissemination scenarios recreate the historical context and symbolic texts into perceptible virtual scenes. From the remediated point of view, it is a profound rewrite and reshape of legacy media content by new media, which greatly facilitates the audiences understanding of history visibility. (Moschini, I., & Sindoni, M. G. 2021) With the production of virtual space and multisensory participation, red historical resources are no longer exhibited artifacts but perceptible real contexts for audience. This approach also brings out red cultural symbols in virtual scenes again, and constantly reinforces and rejuvenates its meaning in the process.

The Integration of Virtual Reenactment and Historical Narrative

Virtual recreation in immersive environments is less a reproduction of history than a re-enactment of history mediated technologically in specific contexts. Bolter and Grusin argue in their theory of remediation that new media do not simply redefine boundaries of the visible and credible, but also absorb and rewrite the ways of presentation of old media (Bolter, J. D., & Grusin, R. 2000). Therefore, the use of immersive technology for disseminating revolutionary culture will inevitably transform traditional historical narratives and their inherent logic, which in turn alters audience perception and understanding of the past. The most fundamental transformation lies in the transfer of discursive power. In traditional exhibitions, text, objects and static images follow a linear path along the wall panels, and visitors assemble history independently through the textual display. In this case, institutions and their docents held the narrative power; history was told instead of entered. With 3D modelling, spatial audio and real-time rendering, immersive technology re-creates historical scenes into navigable environments. Under this dissemination model, the narrative power is co-determined by the narrative script, interactive systems and participants, resulting in a co-authored narrative. (Ryan, M.L. 2015) At the same time, the narrative perspective is transformed: under traditional communication models, the third-person narrative prevails, positioning the audience as outsiders to historical stories participating in textual narratives through an external focus (displaced, over-head perspective). Immersive media, on the other hand, narrates through first- or second-person perspectives. Audiences are situated within historical contexts, becoming witnesses and participants to history. This facilitates more direct affective engagement with revolutionary culture at the cognitive-affective level. The organisational structure of communication content has also been transformed. Traditional historical narratives strictly follow a macro-level timeline, stressing causal logic and

authoritative conclusion. Immersive storytelling, on the other hand, generates experiential environments by virtually reconstructing historical contexts and details. Narrative content moves from linear exposition to multi-dimensional, open-ended personal experiential generation.

Symbolic Reconstruction in Immersive Spaces

Famous cultural semiotician, Yuri Mikhailovich Lotman believed that symbols make texts, texts make culture, and culture makes a semiotic circle. This semiotic circle, in his opinion, has synchronous and diachronic connections but is bounded; crossing boundaries requires the constant reconstruction and interpretation of cultural symbols. (Lotman, Y. M. 1990) If we regard red culture as a cultural semicircle, then the application of immersive technology updates the construction of cultural meanings in this semicircle, allowing it to adapt to the rapidly changing media landscape and audience aesthetics. In traditional red culture exhibitions, cultural symbols are often static and captioned, and their meanings are restricted to the exhibited context, without dynamic links to other symbols. However, immersive technology situates them in a multisensory, interactive 3D environment, breaking the static boundaries of meaning production and interpretation for red cultural symbols via spatial narratives and sensorial involvement. This boundary-breaking expression allows red cultural symbols to generate new contextual frames through technological mediation, continuously sustaining their cultural significance and refreshing interpretive dimensions while maintaining their inherent values, thus constantly rejuvenating themselves with new life in the current media.

Virtual recreation and symbolic reconstruction change the representation of historical contexts on different levels. Firstly, the construction of virtual scenarios changes the narrative logic of historical texts, from contexts that are told to contexts that can be lived. Secondly, by means of recontextualisation techniques, red cultural symbols are changed from passive exhibits to interactive, contextualised dynamic signifiers. (Davison, P., & Klinghardt, G. 1997) These components constitute the mechanisms of scene immersion and historical context reconstruction which enable further embodied interaction and narrative participation mechanisms.

THE MECHANISM OF EMBODIED INTERACTION AND NARRATIVE PARTICIPATION

Hypertext is a cultural concept originated by Ted Nelson, who argued that hypertext reading enabled readers to choose and move freely among texts, ideally on interactive screens. The texts are not bound to the authors intended reading order but could be read and experienced in ways chosen by the reader. (Nelson, T.

H. 1965) Although the original notion of hypertext referred to screen-based, visual, non-linear and interactive reading experiences, from the perspective of the theory of embodied cognition, it turns out that the communicative context or mode of reading constructed by immersive technologies is in essence an embodied hypertext reading experience. In this context, users' current interactions and narrative participation are the main driving forces for the generation of meaning in red cultural texts.

Embodied Cognition and Experiential Construction

The theory of embodied cognition argues that human cognition is not limited to the brain, but arises from the body's spatial perception, actions, and interaction with the environment. (Lakoff, G., Johnson, M., & Sowa, J. F. 1999) In technology-built immersive scenarios, the audience places its body into narrative contexts via interactive media. Actions in virtual space build real links to red cultural texts, forming a coupling between body, space, and meaning making that promotes embodied cognition. Posture tracking, motion capture, and real-time rendering are among the mechanisms used by immersive technologies such as VR, AR, and MR to deliver instant feedback on users' behaviour in virtual space. Behaviours such as gazing, picking things up, and walking acquire narrative functions and become the driving force of the immersive scenario. At the same time, embodied experience amplifies the perception of meaning. Psychological studies show that bodily involvement greatly increases attention and memory for information received (Malafouris, L., 2004). When historical narratives resonate with physical perception, cognition becomes context-bound. Historical knowledge ceases to be abstract propositions and becomes lived emotional experiences. This cognitive process further consolidates into deep understanding, freeing revolutionary history from abstract, disengaged reception and building it as the lived experience of the audience to be understood and remembered.

Interactive Narrative and Participatory Communication

Unlike traditional linear texts, interactive narratives view meaning as the result of real-time interactions between participants and the system, instead of the pre-determined outcome of a linear text (Mateas, M., & Stern, A., 2005). It frees itself from the shackles of linear causality chains in traditional storytelling; the deeper meanings of the text only appear when the participants actively participate in the narrative system. Therefore, immersive scenarios constructed by immersive technology can be seen as a hypertext reading that transcends conventional methods. That is to say, the use of immersive technology maintains an open narrative structure, granting audiences greater narrative agency; their paths of action directly determine how

meaning is realized, transforming the dissemination of red culture from one-way communication to co-creation and participation. The openness is also reflected in the decentralisation of the production of meaning. In traditional linear texts, the text or narrator pre-determines the logic and value trajectory of the story, with audiences able to do no more than receive and re-interpret. However, in interactive narratives, user behaviour and feedback are incorporated into the communication chain, with each choice made within the immersive environment immediately impacting presentation methods and value generation. More importantly, such interaction adds a new social dimension to red culture; individualised experiences and differentiated interpretations resonate even further through social media, propelling red narratives out of isolated sites into wider public spaces.

Immersive technology situates somatic sensation and spatial/temporal action in historical contexts via embodied cognition, allowing people to literally step into events and participate in the continuous discourse with the narrative and co-author the story, shifting them from spectators to co-constructors of meaning. As a result, the spread of revolutionary culture penetrates to deeper psychological transformation and cultural rooting at the deep layers of emotional resonance, value identification, and spiritual inheritance.

THE MECHANISM OF EMOTIONAL RESONANCE AND SPIRITUAL INTERNALIZATION

In his work *On Collective Memory*, Maurice Halbwachs argues that collective memory is the collective remembrance of events, experiences and values that have certain significance to a particular group. (Halbwachs, M. 1997) Every collective memory needs the support of a community defined by time and space to survive. Hence, the collective memory serves as a symbolic element rooted in the spirit and culture of a nation, which needs the endorsement of the community and remembered to sustain. Scenario immersion and embodied interaction turn red culture from unilateral indoctrination to participatory first-hand experiences. The emotional resonance generated elevates sensory excitement to the identification of values. Immersive technology does not only amplify the textual information of red culture, but also evokes people's collective memories of it through emotional and psychological resonance, transforming communication from visible to felt. In other words, emotional resonance and spiritual internalization are the essence and final destination of technological empowerment. Therefore, research on how immersive technology can be used to enhance the dissemination of red culture is not just about making visual spectacles, but about seeking narrative strategies and psychological mechanisms to crystallize the essence of

red culture from special scenarios into tangible spiritual strength.

Narrative Strategies of Emotional Resonance

Emotion is not a by-product of communication, but an intermediate link in the construction of the meaning of information. Therefore, the emotional response elicited by the audience in immersive scenarios is crucial to the production of meaning and value identification in red culture. In traditional communication models, red culture tends to appear in the form of symbols and concepts. By comparison, communication texts endowed with immersive technology often take emotional nodes as the organizational framework, use emotional cues as the driving force for the advancement of narrative and the transformation of virtual space, and use the physical experience of users to trigger emotional highlights in specific scenarios and amplify the psychological tension of the rhythm of the narrative. This experiential emotional rhythmic narrative transforms history from a topic of narration into a real-life process. At the same time, the first- or second-person role immersion provided by immersive technology gives the audience a sense of agency, synchronizing emotion with narrative. The emotional structure of the revolutionary spirit is reactivated through experience. This is not just a technological innovation, but a strong catalyst for promoting the inheritance of revolutionary culture to shift from superficial symbolic interpretation to deep emotional and neural self-construction.

The Internal Generation of Spiritual Identification

Samuel Huntington once said that when people answer the questions who am I and who are we, they often use the things they think are meaningful, and some symbols become the markers of cultural identity.(Huntington, S. P., & Jervis, R. 1997) Such identity is formed by repeated emotional refinement through cognitive integration and value reflection (Anderson, B. 2020). That is to say, cultural identity is not derived from inherent biological instincts, but a dynamic process of meaning construction based on cultural symbols and emotions. In the context of red culture dissemination, red cultural symbols, as symbols of self-cultural identity, are being transformed into perceptible, interactive emotional symbols by immersive technology. Through participatory immersive interaction mechanism, people participate in red historical scenarios embodied. Their perception intensity towards red cultural symbols is constantly deepened through multi-directional, multi-sensory stimulation and emotional ups and downs from interactive media. These symbols rich in historical memory and cultural sentiment are gradually strengthened through immediate interactive feedback. The audience emotionally elevates these symbols to internal spiritual values, turning them into symbolic answers to the question who are we.

In conclusion, the importance of immersive technology in promoting the spread of revolutionary culture is reflected not only in the innovation of its dissemination forms and contents, but also in the construction of collective memory and cultural identity. With the help of scene immersion and embodied interaction, the revolutionary culture has shifted from passive watching to active experiencing. The strong emotional resonance and association aroused by this builds profound value ties between individuals and revolutionary culture, which ensures that the dissemination of revolutionary culture is constantly rejuvenating its cultural significance.

CASE STUDY AND ANALYSIS

This paper selects the Guizhou Long March Digital Technology Art Museum as a representative case study to analyze the mechanism by which immersive technology empowers the dissemination of revolutionary culture, thereby validating the aforementioned theoretical analysis.

Case Introduction

The Guizhou Long March Digital Technology Art Museum (hereinafter referred to as Red Ribbon) is China's first comprehensive cultural venue using a full-immersion digital experience model. With a total construction area of 12,000 square meters, the digital exhibition halls account for more than one third of the total area. Based on Guiyang's unique geographical importance as a major stopover point of the Red Army's Long March route, the museum has systematically integrated red cultural resources within a 300-kilometer radius, such as the Liping Conference Site in southeast Guizhou and the Zunyi Conference Memorial Hall. Since its trial operation began on October 22, 2023, the Red Ribbon has received millions of visitors from both inside and outside the province, becoming a classic tourist attraction and must-see site for red tourism in Guizhou.

Immersive Scenarios and Historical Context Reconstruction

The Red Ribbon project makes use of the latest immersive technologies such as virtual reality, holographic imaging, and motion capture in venue design. Such technologies build up multiple layers of mixed reality experiences in physical space, allowing visitors to relive the Long March in interactive virtual-physical space, thus fully embodying the mechanisms of immersive scenarios and historical reconstruction. For example, in the Digital Long March Panorama Theater part of the project, historical details of significant events such as the Battle of the Xiang River are recreated visually with precision. Hydraulic vibration units are installed in the floor of the venue to simulate explosive impacts of different magnitudes. In terms of acoustics, it adopts the advanced Dolby Atmos technology to accurately locate bullet whistles. A professional climate control system

gradually reduces the ambient temperature from 26 degrees Celsius to 18 degrees Celsius during the scenes reenactment to enhance the sense of presence on the battlefield. Similarly, in the Snowy Mountains and Grasslands Physical Challenge part, a special composite material floor is used to simulate the resistance when walking through mud. The environmental control system can instantly reduce the temperature from ambient to minus 15 degrees Celsius, combined with the artificial snow system and a 7.1 channel wind sound simulator to fully reconstruct the extreme conditions of the Jiajin Mountain snowfields. By means of such immersive technologies, visitors can personally enter the corresponding scenarios, turning the narration of history into experience and lived history. They can feel the original historical context physically, while historical memory is recontextualized through technological empowerment to achieve an immersive reproduction.

Embodied Interaction and Narrative Engagement

The Red Ribbon project allows visitors real-life spatial behavior to deeply intersect with true historical events in a virtual dimension, converting the red cultural stories presented on exhibition panels into bodily experiential scenarios. For example, when entering, visitors obtain a special-designed electronic souvenir badge with an NFC chip and motion sensor, which records real-time data such as visitor trajectories and staying time, and generates personalized Long March route maps via the venues central processing system for virtual interaction with authentic historical events. At the same time, the Red Ribbon project employs a modular arrangement, discarding the linear chronological or event-based narratives of traditional red exhibitions, and establishes a multi-threaded, multi-sensory and highly interactive narrative structure. It consists of six chapters: Unnamed Heroes, Baptism by Blood and Fire, Great Turning Point, Forging Ahead, Monument of Victory, and New Long March in the New Era. Red Ribbon: The Great Journey uses the latest technologies such as AI virtual interaction, holographic imaging, multidimensional mechanical motion, virtual reality, and 3D soundscapes to transform historical events into walkable, triggerable and responsive experiential spaces through dynamic spatial and visual transformations to digitally recreate iconic scenes of the Red Armys Long March. When entering the venue, visitors are no longer passive viewers but characters woven into the story. The project densely arranges interactive modules and experience zones throughout the space, fully promoting embodied interaction and participatory engagement. For example, five key zones - Digital Long March Panorama Theater, Interactive Revolutionary Relics Exhibition, Snow Mountain Grassland Physical Challenge, Red Family Letters Creation Station, and Light of Faith Signature Wall - firmly associate individual actions with narrative development, forming a closed loop of

user action-system feedback-meaning regeneration, elevating the exhibition from cognitive enlightenment to experiential participation.

Emotional Resonance and Spiritual Internalization

As mentioned above, the final destination of the immersive technologys capability to empower the dissemination of revolutionary culture is to facilitate its penetration into the mind and heart. Red Ribbon project has achieved the audiences emotional resonance and spiritual internalization through a series of immersive technologies. Assisted by those technologies, different areas inside the venue use multi-sensory stimulation such as temperature simulation and control, vibration, simulated wind sound, etc. to enhance the visitors body memory and sense of environment presence so as to achieve emotional immersion and experience uplifting. In addition, the Red Ribbon venue includes ritualized activities that help to internalize emotion and evoke collective resonance through expression, collaboration and commemoration, e.g. Dawn Party Lecture, Starlight Storytelling Session, Red Family Letter Workshop, Light of Faith Signature Wall, etc., which allow participants to establish emotional bond with revolutionary culture through particular ritualized participation. Psychological studies show that repeated validation of beliefs through actions can transform identification from passive conformity to active internalization (Turner, J. C. 2010). Ritualized design does not only extend the duration of individuals emotions, but also helps to socially construct spiritual identification via shared emotional experiences in specific contexts. Moreover, the project uses AI semantic analysis and blockchain technology to statistically process and visualise visitors comments and signature data to generate emotional heat maps. This allows traceability and iterative optimisation of the dissemination route of the revolutionary spirit, and provides quantitative insight for further optimisation.

Case Summary

This project uses immersive technology as a vehicle to reconstruct historical scenes, allowing the audience to engage with the narrative through bodily actions and co-construct textual meanings. The ritualistic components also help internalize and circulate the revolutionary spirit. This shows that immersive technology does not only rethink the communication of revolutionary culture, but also open up new avenues for contemporary articulation and intergenerational transmission of such spirit.

CONCLUSION

This paper discusses how immersive technology empowers the spread of revolutionary culture, and describes the new approaches and models enabled by immersive media. Immersive technology is not just a

methodological update, but a paradigm shift: it changes the way audiences accept revolutionary education, transforming external audio-visual stories into internal value recognition, making cultural memory reverberate again in the modern era and continuing its spirit. Through immersive scenarios, revolutionary history breaks away from the physical limitations of traditional displays, transitioning from static texts into real, living, and interactive representational spaces that accomplish narrative re-contextualisation and reproduction. High interactivity enables individuals to step into history as active participants, completing an emotional journey from observing-participating-integrating. Audiences thus become co-producers of meaning, shifting communication from one-way dissemination to multi-party co-production, and transforming transient emotions into lasting value recognition. However, there are still several deficiencies in the implementation of immersive red culture: content homogenisation and overemphasis on technological showmanship favour audio-visual spectacle at the expense of historical context and value orientation; audiences are submerged by entertainment-oriented, ritualistic packaging, weakening the educational essence; and inconsistent evaluation indicators impede cross-comparisons. These problems need to be gradually overcome in future practice.

In general, immersive technology offers a new medium for rebuilding revolutionary memory, allowing Generation Z and even Generation Alpha to approach, acknowledge and sustain revolutionary traditions in a more instinctive way. In the future, with the penetration of artificial intelligence into these endeavors, the promotion of China's revolutionary culture will step into an intelligent era, narrating the story of revolutionary legacy in the new era from the perspective of digital civilization.

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