

## An Analysis of the Practice of Cultural Inheritance in Colleges and Universities

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**Keywords:** Cultural inheritance of colleges and universities, Cultural carrier, Form of practice, Jimei school village, Endless life

**Abstract:** Colleges and universities can form their unique spiritual and cultural traditions in their own development process. It is an important work for the growth and development of colleges and universities to inherit their unique spiritual and cultural traditions. This kind of inheritance work is long-term and uninterrupted, and has objective characteristics of the times. Therefore, specific ways and methods of inheritance work should not be unchangeable. The study of inheritance work is conducive to relevant workers to broaden their horizons and to learn from each other, so that the inheritance work can effectively grow and evolve in different times of history. This paper takes Jimei School Village's cultural inheritance practice at its centennial celebration as an example and conducts an analysis from the perspective of the cultural carrier of practice. The participation way of practice and the objective era of practice has certain practical reference and academic research value. Its practice work can comprehensively use a variety of cultural carriers. Besides, in the process of practice, an eclectic way of participation was adopted. The degree of participation had a considerable breadth and depth. At the same time, it can integrate the traditional campus spiritual culture into the contemporary social spiritual civilization in combination with the background of the times and the new height of the contemporary political culture. The research on the operation and implementation methods of this kind of practical work has certain practical significance for the work of spiritual culture inheritance of colleges and universities.

### 1. Introduction

Spiritual culture is the soul of colleges and universities. For them, while carrying the mission of knowledge imparting and scientific research, the inheritance of their own spiritual culture is a unique spiritual level education. The spiritual culture of colleges and universities, which comes from its historical background and grows up in the changes of the times is different from each other. Besides, it can shine its campus spirit, show its temperament and promote its cohesion. The practice of its spiritual culture inheritance has been continuous for a long time, with various forms and enduring innovation. Among them, it is understandable and touching to promote spiritual culture by means of artistic expression. On the occasion of its centennial celebration, Jimei School Village ignites its shining campus culture soul with the musical *Endless Life*, which can directly strike people's heart and promote the essence of its patriotic campus culture.

Located in Jimei District, Xiamen City of China, the Jimei School Village enjoys a history of one hundred years, and its shining campus spirit is "patriotism". This is due to the history of its establishment. Mr. Jiageng CHEN, a patriotic overseas Chinese who is honored as the "school master", devoted his whole life to developing education and establishing schools at the time of the national crisis in modern China. From a number of primary schools at that time, Jimei School Village has grown to a school district with more than 100 colleges and universities, and has cultivated many students. The noble patriotism spirit of Mr. Jiageng CHEN, a patriotic overseas Chinese who was called "the flag of the overseas Chinese, the glory of the nation" by Mr. Zedong MAO deeply flows in the spiritual blood of every school in the school village, nourishes every student. Besides, it is the spiritual food for generations of school village people, and the spiritual treasure of every school village people.

The musical, *Endless Life* was jointly created by Mr. Mu YANG, a music producer from Taiwan, China and Ms. Yin BO, a native writer of Xiamen. Based on the rich cultural background of

“patriotism” in Jimei Centennial School Village, combined with the spirit of “culture saves the nation, education prospers the nation” proposed by the spiritual leader of Centennial School Village, Mr. Jiageng CHEN, a famous overseas Chinese, the musical is a full of patriotism complex. The plot is based on the ordinary life of the young students in the Jimei School Village and the past of their growth. The timeline has a historical sense of leaps and bounds, praising the patriotic spirit of our patriotic overseas Chinese, Mr. Jiageng CHEN, showing the expectation for the future and paying tribute to the history of the development of the Centennial School Village. The musical reflects the brilliant history of development of Jimei Centennial School Village from different aspects, transmits its profound cultural background and noble patriotic spirit, and implies that the “patriotic spirit” of the School Village will continue to live. In the practice of campus spiritual culture inheritance, with the help of multiple cultural carriers, the musical is easy to understand and effective, and it touches people's hearts very much. In the process of practice, it has the characteristics of multi-dimensional participation, which has a wide range of participation and deep influence. It also caters to the political advocacy, combines the theme of the times, and keeps the spirit and culture fresh for a long time.

## **2. Multiple Cultural Carriers**

Compared with many forms of cultural inheritance, the cultural carrier of the musical, *Endless Life* is diverse. Among them, drama is realistic. Based on the development history of Jimei School Village, the moving stories of the village are selected to reflect the history. As another important cultural carrier, the music is very contemporary. Besides, it can deeply understand the emotions of contemporary music and art, directly strike people's hearts and arouse resonance.

### **2.1 Realistic Musical**

The plot design of the musical is very realistic. Though, it is based on the development history of Jimei School Village, but doesn't follow the logic of historical events. Instead, it selects the stories of several young students happening in the contemporary School Village to recall the development history of the village with the help of its plot, reflect the spiritual civilization construction history of the village from the perspective of reality, and look forward to the future extended by the history of the School Village from the contemporary emotional dimension. Such a realistic musical is easy to understand and resonate with the audience. The simple and ordinary musical highlights its realistic characteristics. For any campus, the ordinary story line is based on the process of initial meeting, common growth, the ending, and future reunion. However, how to use ordinary plots to tell the 100 year development history of a school village is closely related to the logic of the plot. The realistic “angle” is the wonderful part in its plot design, though it is simple, it can highlight the wisdom of the artist. The content of the musical, *Endless Life* is divided into 5 parts, including Part I, Meeting; Part II, Dream Bud; Part III, Growth; Part IV, Cocoon breaking; Part V, Endless Life. From its logic, it is not difficult to see that it is the ordinary campus life main line, that highlights the realistic characteristics of the musical. It is worth mentioning that the artist's wisdom lies in the way the realistic plot is presented on the stage. The musical begins in the form of flashbacks. The plot that first caught the eyes of the audience on the stage was like an old movie, bringing the audience to the distant past. In the past, an old man was writing a letter. The voice over delivered the contents of the letter to the audience, that the old man recalled that his youth began in a beautiful campus, and the campus was the place where his dream began. There were also his beloved people on the campus. In order to protect this well-loved land, he said goodbye to the campus and from then on, he and his beloved girl were far apart geographically. The old man pinned his hopes on his grandson, hoping that his grandson, the future boy could return to the dreamy campus for his grandfather, find the person whom the grandfather had loved, and help his grandfather reunite with the 100-year campus. Then the Part I, Meeting was launched immediately, and what the stage presented was now, 10 years later, freshmen from all corners of the country came to the campus. Meanwhile, with the grandfather's wish, the boy from Singapore came to the campus of grandpa. Then the story began. An affectionate old man has a strong sense of historical substitution, and the youth comes from

history. The emotions of the two generations cross the region, the history and passes through the history of the Centennial School Village, witnessing the inheritance of the national spirit. The design of plot is based on the inheritance of history, and the development of plot implies endless future, to let spiritual culture sublimate from the ordinary reality. It focuses on the adaptability of the audience, and import storyline from the perspective of realism, which is conducive to the audience's appreciation, understanding and resonance.

## 2.2 Contemporary Music

As another important cultural carrier, the music part of the musical, *Endless Life* is epochal, easy for the audience to appreciate, and easy to arouse resonance. The music part is composed of 23 original singles, including solo, duet and chorus in different forms. The music style has the characteristics of the times, including campus style, jazz style, rock style, and traditional style, etc. The key to be able to coordinate different styles of music into a musical is the adaptability of music and character temperament as well as the plot. The integration of music and drama is a challenge for the creators. While, using music carriers to promote the development of drama, and carry forward the spiritual culture is the core of creation. The musical style of the *Endless Life* is very epochal. It is mainly composed of contemporary pop music, but without losing the artistic height. It not only combines the development needs of its plot, but also with its elegant artistic expression. It not only fits the role display, but also benefits the public to appreciate. It is not only easy to understand and resonate, but also with the sublimation of spiritual culture. Such kind of epochal musical style can integrate the tradition into the modern, to let the traditional spiritual culture be reborn in the new era.

## 3. Multi-Dimensional Practice Participation

As an emissary of school cultural inheritance, the participation of a musical needs to have a considerable breadth and depth. The practice of the musical is remarkable. In terms of the breadth of participation, its cast members are students and teachers from relevant majors of several universities and colleges, including Music Performance Major and Dance Major. It can be said that it has a wide range of participation without losing its professional level. Another factor that highlights the breadth of its participation is that it was jointly created by Ms. Yin BO, the local dramatist, and Mr. Mu YANG, the Taiwanese musician. The 23 singles of the whole musical, as well as the live music, were all written by Mu YANG. Mu YANG, the first generation of campus folk singer from Taiwan, China, whose music is warm, fresh and meaningful, with beautiful melodies and deep emotions. As a music producer, Mu YANG has long been committed to cross-strait music exchanges. The creation of the musical, *Endless Life* is a successful practice combining artists from both sides of the Taiwan Strait to jointly promote the campus spiritual culture. From the aspect of the depth of participation in the creation, the practice of this musical is also remarkable. First of all, the unique feature is that 5 main roles of one teacher and students from different colleges and universities in the school district play the roles of teacher and students in the play with their real names. Secondly, the main creator, Mu YANG also participated in the live music performance part. In the process of performance, even the audiences of the theatre were invited to participate in the plot. For example, the climax song of the whole musical, called *I Come from China* was performed by all audiences, who were invited by the conductor Mr. Mu YANG in the theatre. Thus, the patriotism complex was pushed to a climax with the passion of the audience and the performers “I come from the high mountains and the overlooked river was the blood of the Chinese people for thousands of years. It flowed through both my ancestors and me. I come from the deep years, I have experienced many trials. It is the unchanging style of China, illuminating both the ancestors and me. The sky is the sky where the ancestors flew, and the earth is the land where the ancestors passed. I stand between the heaven and the earth and spread my arms. I want to sing loudly. I come from China, I come from China...”.<sup>1</sup>Based on the profound cultural background

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<sup>1</sup>*I Come from China*, a work excerpted from the musical, *Endless Life*. Mu YANG Yin BO

of Jimei School Village and the spirit of Jiageng CHEN, an overseas Chinese, this musical work, with cross-strait blood and patriotism complex is a promotion of the patriotic spirit of Jimei School and a masterpiece of its own cultural inheritance.

#### **4. Incorporate the Main Theme of the Times**

Although the *Endless Life* aims to carry forward the traditional spiritual culture of the campus, it also has distinctive characteristics of the spirit of the times. It closely follows the spirit of the times and makes the traditional spirit shine in the new era. The work is guided by the Publicity Department of the Xiamen Municipality of the Communist Party of China, and carefully produced by the Publicity Department of the Jimei District Committee of the Communist Party of China and the regional production teams, fully embodying the spirit advocated by the 19th National Congress: “Strengthen the creation of realistic themes, and constantly launch excellent masterpieces that eulogize the party, the motherland, the people and heroes.” In light of the inheritance of campus spiritual culture, it should incorporate the theme of the times and make its traditional spiritual culture shine in the new era with the help of the strong background of the country and the times. The logical layout of the musical is a manifestation of its spiritual culture, besides, it is combined with strong political advocacy. The igniting of the spirit of patriotism is the spiritual climax of the whole work, which was presented in the chorus of the Part IV “Cocoon breaking”, called “I Come from China.” At this time, Mu YANG, the music producer from Taiwan, came to the front of the stage and asked the audience to join all the performers on the stage to sing together: I come from China, I come from China. The repeated lyrics spurred patriotism of all audiences to a climax. In addition, before and after the five parts of the musical, the opening and ending songs were designed respectively, which were well planned and meaningful. Among them, the opening song was designed as a grand symphony chorus, called *Songs of Jimei* to pay tribute to the history of Centennial School Village in Jimei: “I think I can settle down anywhere in the world. After roving all over the world, the place that I most want to go back is it. It enjoys green mountains, blue sea and beautiful scenery, and in the dream, I can see Jiageng and Liuxia in the dream; stop here, and each place is full of flowers. What the students and gentlemen in the city most want to protect is it. It enjoys arts and humanities, its beauty is like a charming story, and in the dream, I can hear the *Songs of China*”.<sup>2</sup>The whole musical ends with the ending symphony chorus, called *Endless Life*, implying that the inheritance of campus spiritual culture is endless: “Let the breeze continue to blow the green grass, let all things return to the earth, we follow the footprints of our ancestors, and we will live forever.”<sup>3</sup>As the program's list says: “Pay tribute to Mr. Jiageng Chen! Pay tribute to the Centennial School Village! Pay tribute to the Chinese dream!” The patriotic culture inheritance of Jimei Centennial School Village has continued in the new era.

#### **5. Conclusion**

Colleges and universities will form their unique spiritual and cultural traditions in the historical process of their development. The inheritance of their own spiritual and cultural work is an important part of the growth and development of colleges and universities. The practice of the inheritance of spiritual culture should be long-term and uninterrupted, with various forms and objectivity of the times. The practice of the inheritance of spiritual culture in Jimei School Village at its centennial celebration has its own characteristics and remarkable effect, which has certain practical significance and academic research value. From the perspective of practical significance, the practice work has comprehensively used a variety of cultural carriers, and in the process of practice, it has adopted the eclectic way of participation to integrate the traditional campus spiritual culture into the contemporary social spiritual civilization. From the perspective of research significance, it can be said that the spiritual and cultural inheritance practice of Jimei Centennial

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<sup>2</sup>*Songs of Jimei*, a work excerpted from the musical, *Endless Life*. Mu YANG Yin BO

<sup>3</sup>*Endless Life*, a symphony chorus excerpted from the musical, *Endless Life*. Mu YANG Yin BO

School Village is remarkable in the way and method of its comprehensive application of multiple cultural carriers. The depth and breadth of participation in the practice process and the way of participation are worth exploring. At the same time, it can combine the background of the times and incorporate the new height of the contemporary political culture, so that the traditional spiritual culture can shine in the new era and get new life. The operation and implementation method of such kind of practical work are worth learning and studying.

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