

Communicating Qin Culture Globally: Constructing International Discursive Power around the Terracotta Army

Yutong Mu

Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum, Xi'an 710600, China

Abstract

The Terracotta Army of the Mausoleum of the First Emperor of Qin, as a spiritual emblem of Chinese civilization and the so-called "Eighth Wonder of the World," constitutes a core vehicle through which Chinese culture engages the global public. Within the context of globalized communication, the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum has built the international discursive power of the Terracotta Army through practices such as establishing an overseas social media matrix, innovating content production, and expanding diversified communication channels. Based on the implementation background, resource advantages, operational strategies, and communication outcomes of the museum's overseas promotion initiatives, this article systematically analyzes the pathways and methods through which the international discursive power of the Terracotta Army has been constructed, providing practical reference for the international communication of Chinese culture.

Keywords

Qin Culture; Terracotta Army; International Communication; Discursive Power; Social Media; Cultural "Going Global".

1. Introduction

In an era characterized by civilizational exchange and mutual learning, cultural heritage with global visibility has become a central bridge for cross-cultural communication. Renowned for its monumental scale, exquisite craftsmanship, and profound historical significance, the Terracotta Army of the Mausoleum of the First Emperor of Qin-often referred to as the "Eighth Wonder of the World"-serves not only as a spiritual emblem of Chinese civilization but also as a "golden calling card" for China's engagement with the world. To date, the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum has received more than 100 million visitors worldwide, with overseas visitors accounting for approximately 30 percent. Exhibitions themed around the Terracotta Army have traveled to more than 200 cities across 49 countries and regions on five continents.

However, the limitations of traditional communication models-particularly in terms of interactivity, timeliness, and precision-have constrained the full transformation of the Terracotta Army's cultural value into international discursive power. In recent years, the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum has taken overseas social media as its primary communication arena, innovating concepts and methods through digitalized, interactive, and routinized communication practices. These efforts have promoted the transformation of the Terracotta Army from a mere "cultural symbol" into an active "communicative subject," thereby constructing an international discursive system that combines influence with affective appeal [1]. Drawing on the concrete practices of the museum's overseas promotion initiatives, this article systematically examines the background, pathways, outcomes, and implications of constructing the international discursive power of the

Terracotta Army, offering experiences that are replicable and scalable for the international communication of Chinese culture in the new era.

2. Background and Resource Foundations for Constructing the International Discursive Power of the Terracotta Army

2.1. Historical Context: Strategic Imperatives for the International Communication of Chinese Culture

Against the backdrop of deepening globalization, cultural discursive power has shifted from a form of “soft influence” to a crucial pillar of national comprehensive strength, becoming deeply embedded in international public opinion structures and the global system of meaning production. The current international communication landscape remains characterized by pronounced structural imbalance. The “West-strong, East-weak” distribution of discourse has subjected Chinese culture, in its external communication, to the dual constraints of insufficient visibility and limited intelligibility [2]. This predicament is commonly manifested in the situation of “having compelling ideas but being unable to articulate them effectively, articulating them without achieving wide dissemination, and disseminating them without generating resonance.” Such challenges do not stem from a lack of cultural substance, but rather from the misalignment of narrative frameworks, modes of expression, and mechanisms of value translation with the cognitive structures of international audiences.

Within this context, the Terracotta Army—an exceptionally condensed cultural symbol of Chinese civilization endowed with strong visual and symbolic power—possesses strategic significance that goes well beyond the communication of a single category of cultural relics. On the one hand, it embodies the historical achievements of Qin civilization in institutional construction, technological systems, and aesthetic order, serving as a critical entry point for understanding early Chinese state formation and civilizational logic. On the other hand, the Terracotta Army already enjoys a high level of global recognition and distinctiveness, providing a solid foundation for extending communication from surface-level display toward deeper value interpretation and civilizational resonance. Accordingly, discourse construction centered on the Terracotta Army is not only vital to the overseas dissemination of Qin culture, but also directly linked to the international shaping of China’s national image and the contemporary articulation of its civilizational narrative.

Cultural institutions represented by the Emperor Qinshihuang’s Mausoleum Site Museum have systematically advanced the overseas dissemination of Qin culture by taking the Terracotta Army as a core carrier. This approach constitutes both an active response to national strategies for cultural outreach and a pragmatic pathway for overcoming barriers in cross-cultural communication. The key lies not in merely expanding exhibition scale or increasing exposure frequency, but in re-extracting and re-encoding the civilizational meanings embedded in the Terracotta Army at the level of values. By foregrounding dimensions such as the concept of “grand unification,” the institutionalized practice of craftsmanship, and the historical continuity of civilizational transmission, cultural meanings rooted in the Chinese historical context are translated into public value issues that are understandable, discussable, and comparable within international society [3]. Through this process, the Terracotta Army is transformed from a “spectacular Oriental curiosity” into a “dialogical civilizational experience.”

This shift signifies a fundamental upgrading of international communication logic: from object-centered “cultural display” to meaning-centered “value communication,” and from one-way output emphasizing historical uniqueness to two-way understanding highlighting civilizational commonality. In this transformation, the Terracotta Army is no longer merely a symbol of ancient Chinese military and artistic achievement, but becomes an important medium for discussing global issues such as state-building, social organization, labor ethics, and

civilizational continuity. Through ongoing narrative optimization and scenario-based communication practices, the Chinese experience embodied by the Terracotta Army is gradually embedded within international public discourse, providing a demonstrative model for the steady construction of China's international cultural discursive power.

2.2. Resource Advantages: The Distinctive Communicative Endowments of the Terracotta Army

Building upon existing communication practices and institutional accumulation, the Terracotta Army has developed multiple structural advantages in the construction of international discursive power. These advantages reinforce one another, creating favorable conditions for its transition from a symbol of high visibility to a narrative with strong explanatory capacity.

First, its global recognition advantage provides a rare audience entry point for discourse construction. Since its discovery in 1974, the Terracotta Army has rapidly entered the global public imagination through its awe-inspiring scale, complete military formations, and the imperial civilizational imagery it conveys, and it has widely been labeled as the "Eighth Wonder of the World." While such labeling carries elements of spectacle, it has nonetheless secured stable cross-cultural and cross-generational attention. In international communication practice, the Terracotta Army no longer needs to compete for attention from scratch; instead, it benefits from an inherent traffic gateway and concentrated cognitive anchor, laying a solid audience foundation for further value interpretation and meaning expansion.

Second, systematic digital resource reserves provide technological support for innovation in communication forms. Over many years, the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum has continuously advanced the digital preservation of cultural relics, three-dimensional modeling, and database construction, accumulating relatively mature technical and content foundations in high-definition imaging, virtual reconstruction, and digital storytelling. This has freed the international communication of the Terracotta Army from the temporal and spatial constraints of physical exhibitions, enabling large-scale reach through online exhibitions, digital education, and immersive experiences. The online exhibition *Parallel Time and Space: Encountering the Terracotta Army in Greece* serves as a representative example. By placing Qin dynasty general figures and the Greek statue of the Kouros within the same virtual narrative space, the exhibition transcended linear modes of civilizational display and activated comparability and resonance between different civilizations through dialogical structures, achieving more than 820 million instances of global "cloud encounters" and demonstrating the significant effectiveness of digital communication in amplifying international discursive influence [4].

Third, its interdisciplinary value dimensions expand the interpretive space for segmented communication. The Terracotta Army is not merely an object of archaeological or historical study; the sculptural systems, military organization, technological craftsmanship, and social division of labor it embodies possess inherent potential for interdisciplinary interpretation. From the perspective of art history, attention may be directed to its realist style and individual differentiation; from military and institutional history, to its formation systems and state mobilization capacity; and from the history of science and materials studies, to its production techniques and technological systems. This multidimensional value structure allows the Terracotta Army to be repeatedly accessed and reinterpreted across different countries, cultural backgrounds, and interest groups, providing multiple entry points for segmented and differentiated international communication while avoiding the dissipation of meaning caused by a single narrative path.

Fourth, a solid foundation of international cooperation offers institutionalized channels for discourse expansion. Over the long term, the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum has established stable cooperative mechanisms with museums, academic institutions, and

international media platforms across multiple countries, and overseas touring exhibitions themed around the Terracotta Army have formed a mature communication network covering multiple regions. This institution-based communication model not only enhances professionalism and credibility, but also creates favorable conditions for joint curation, collaborative research, and co-narration. Within frameworks of international cooperation, the Terracotta Army is more readily transformed from a “displayed object” into a “civilizational case jointly researched and narrated,” thereby becoming more deeply embedded in international cultural exchange and knowledge production systems.

Taken together, these advantages do not operate in isolation; rather, they form an interlocking configuration of communicative conditions across cognitive foundations, technological capacity, value structures, and institutional networks. It is precisely on the basis of this composite advantage that the Terracotta Army possesses the realistic potential to evolve from a highly exposed cultural symbol into an international discursive carrier with sustained explanatory power and value-guiding capacity [5].

3. Core Pathways for Constructing the International Discursive Power of the Terracotta Army

Centered on a communication orientation characterized by precision, routinization, creativity, interactivity, and clustering, the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum has developed a full-chain communication pathway of platform construction–content innovation–channel integration–activity empowerment, thereby achieving the systematic construction of the Terracotta Army's international discursive power.

3.1. Platform Construction: Building an Overseas Social Media Communication Matrix

In September 2023, the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum simultaneously launched official accounts titled “Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum” on four major overseas social media platforms—Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube—initially forming an overseas communication matrix that reaches multilingual and multi-circle audiences. In operational practice, each platform has been assigned differentiated functions based on its media attributes: Facebook focuses on comprehensive information dissemination and interactive communication, balancing event announcements, academic updates, and public feedback; Instagram prioritizes high-quality images and short videos to enhance the visual impact and aesthetic appeal of the Terracotta Army; Twitter emphasizes timeliness and issue-oriented communication, serving as a channel for news briefs and milestone-based dissemination; and YouTube centers on medium- to long-form videos and thematic content, supporting in-depth storytelling and systematic interpretation. Guided by the principle of “platform differentiation with content integration,” this approach enables multi-platform synergetic diffusion within a unified narrative framework [6].

In visual identity design, the museum deliberately challenges overseas audiences' stereotypical perceptions of the Terracotta Army as “gray, old, and static.” It adopts a colorful, line-drawn illustration of a senior military officer figurine as the account avatar, using a more fashionable and approachable visual language to attract younger users. At the same time, the homepage banner juxtaposes the Chinese phrase “Millennia-Old Qin Mausoleum” with the museum's English name, maintaining international readability while underscoring cultural subjectivity and symbolic confidence, thereby strengthening overall brand recognition and continuity.

Building on the operation of its official main accounts, the museum has further developed a clustered communication network comprising three main accounts + overseas partner institution accounts + accounts with civilian identities. On the one hand, overseas partner

institution accounts facilitate content reposting and audience diversion, enhancing credibility within professional and cultural circles; on the other hand, secondary dissemination via civilian-identity accounts increases the elasticity and contextual adaptability of content diffusion across social networks, generating a multi-point, layered amplification effect. In parallel, the museum actively collaborates with the State Council Information Office's overseas social media account VideoChinaTV, cultural offices of Chinese embassies abroad, and leading overseas travel influencers, promoting a three-dimensional communication structure characterized by official-civilian coordination and domestic-overseas interaction, allowing Terracotta Army narratives to circulate continuously and be reproduced across diverse discursive arenas.

Overall, this overseas social media matrix is not a simple aggregation of platforms. Rather, through clear platform differentiation, unified visual and narrative identification, and multi-actor collaborative mechanisms, it has gradually formed a stable, efficient, and sustainable overseas communication foundation, providing solid platform support for subsequent value interpretation and the deepening of international discursive power.

3.2. Content Innovation: Building a “Professional + Entertaining” Cross-Cultural Content System

Content production constitutes a critical component in constructing international discursive power. In response to the communication logic and audience preferences of overseas social media, the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum has consciously abandoned the traditional museum model of one-way dissemination centered on the “accumulation of artifact descriptions.” Instead, it has adopted a content strategy of “professional foundations with distinctive breakout,” transforming highly academic Qin cultural resources into content products suited to the rhythm and aesthetics of overseas platforms. While ensuring academic accuracy, this strategy significantly enhances communicative affinity and participation [7].

At the level of overall planning, the museum advances communication depth through a “point-line-plane” three-step approach. In the first stage, the Terracotta Army serves as the core “point,” with a focus on basic content such as the museum's location, ticketing information, and introductions to representative artifacts, thereby quickly lowering information barriers and attracting initial attention. In the second stage, the focus extends to the “line” of the First Emperor of Qin and Qin dynasty history, helping overseas audiences build a more comprehensive understanding of the historical context and institutional background. In the third stage, the perspective expands to the broader “plane” of Chinese civilization, systematically elucidating the profound influence of Qin culture on China's historical trajectory and civilizational form, shifting the communication focus from “artifact display” to “civilizational interpretation” and elevating the overall value hierarchy of content.

Responding to fragmented and highly interactive media use patterns among overseas audiences, the museum has emphasized column-based and serialized production, establishing recognizable and anticipated content rhythms through stable themes and continuous updates. The “Treasures of the Qin People” series adopts vertical short videos to highlight selected artifacts, reducing comprehension barriers through English voiceovers and bilingual subtitles, and encouraging discussion by posing interactive questions in each episode. To date, the series has released 14 videos, achieving more than 570,000 views across platforms, effectively balancing academic rigor and communication efficiency. Meanwhile, the “Play with the Terracotta Army” series integrates artifact elements into interactive formats such as puzzles, spot-the-difference games, and digital riddles, enabling audiences to receive cultural information through gamified engagement; a post related to the Qin bronze chariot puzzle blocks generated 3,667 interactions, significantly enhancing participatory experience.

Building on this foundation, the “Terracotta Army Cosplay” series deconstructs details such as hairstyles, costumes, accessories, and postures, inviting overseas users to imitate and recreate them, thus transforming static artifacts into participatory cultural images. On Twitter, a single cosplay poster achieved an exposure of 110,000 views, effectively activating proactive audience engagement. The “Terracotta Army You Can Buy” series, by contrast, uses cultural and creative products as an entry point, integrating Terracotta Army imagery into everyday consumption and life scenarios. Through narratives about design concepts and cultural meanings, it achieves a dual effect of cultural communication and product dissemination; a post featuring Qin-style figurines garnered 15,000 likes, reinforcing the connection between Qin culture and contemporary life.

In addition, the museum links column-based production with temporal nodes, launching themed content around occasions such as traditional Chinese solar terms, World Tourism Day, and Cultural and Natural Heritage Day. For example, within the 24 solar terms series, the “Awakening of Insects” poster achieved 780,000 impressions and 25,000 likes in a single post, enabling the integrated presentation of overarching Chinese cultural narratives and specific Qin cultural expressions within the same communicative context. Through this stable yet diverse column-based production, the museum has formed a content supply mechanism that combines continuity with novelty, providing reliable anchors for sustained attention and repeated entry into Qin cultural narratives among overseas audiences.

Alongside sustained output of distinctive content, the museum amplifies communication effects through authoritative channels. It collaborates with the State Council Information Office’s overseas social media account VideoChinaTV, the cultural counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, Zhang Heqing (Director of the China Cultural Center in Pakistan), and overseas accounts such as LETS-Share Journey, which repost content related to the Emperor Qinshihuang’s Mausoleum Site Museum. This further expands international reach while enhancing authority and credibility across different audience circles.

Overall, this content system that balances professionalism and entertainment—through phased planning, serialized production, and authoritative amplification—enables the Terracotta Army and Qin culture to remain continuously visible, repeatedly accessible, and progressively understood within overseas social media environments, laying a solid content foundation for the stable construction of international discursive power.

3.3. Channel Integration: Building a Three-Dimensional Network of “Online + Offline” and “Domestic + Overseas”

In designing communication pathways, the Emperor Qinshihuang’s Mausoleum Site Museum seeks to break away from single-channel and one-way circulation by integrating digital platforms, physical spaces, and transnational cooperative resources. Through this integration, it has gradually established a three-dimensional communication network characterized by online–offline coordination and domestic–overseas linkage, enabling Qin culture’s international communication to evolve from mere “reach” to immersive engagement.

Responding to new demands for heritage communication in the post-pandemic era, the museum has actively explored digital communication formats. In collaboration with the National Archaeological Museum of Greece, it launched the online exhibition “Parallel Time and Space: Encountering the Terracotta Army in Greece,” which was simultaneously released on the official websites of both museums. This initiative represents an innovative practice in cross-national digital cooperation on cultural heritage. As an important activity of the China–Greece Year of Culture and Tourism, the exhibition uses digital technologies to transcend the temporal and spatial constraints of physical exhibitions, placing significant artifacts from two major civilizations within a shared virtual narrative space and offering a replicable model for cross-

cultural digital communication, while expanding international audiences' interpretive horizons of Qin culture [8].

Leveraging overseas social media platforms, the museum has continued to advance a "museum + livestreaming" model, broadcasting archaeological updates, popular science lectures, and virtual museum tours in real time to enhance immediacy and presence. On this basis, it invites overseas KOLs and foreign participants to join interactive programs such as "Twelve Foreigners Explore the Qin Mausoleum" and "Online Archaeology at the Qin Mausoleum." Through the joint participation of cross-cultural actors, professional content is transformed into socially interactive communication scenarios, significantly enhancing audiences' sense of participation and experiential immersion, and shifting communication logic from one-way output to interactive co-creation.

At the physical level, the museum organizes on-site visits for foreign participants to the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum, where they engage in immersive activities such as Terracotta Army coloring experiences and reciting passages from The Book of Songs while wearing Qin-era military attire. The entire process is documented and edited into a five-episode video series released on overseas social media platforms, forming a closed loop of "offline experience-online dissemination." This series was simultaneously distributed across multiple platforms, with the highest single-post view count reaching 140,000, effectively enhancing authenticity, first-hand presence, and emotional appeal, and enabling overseas audiences to enter the lived context of Qin culture through the perspectives of others.

Overall, through the organic integration of digital exhibitions, livestreaming interaction, and immersive experiences, this multi-channel linkage mechanism facilitates a transformation in international communication from "being seen" to "being entered," and from "being narrated" to "being participated in," providing stable and multidimensional channels for the sustained expansion of the Terracotta Army's international discursive power.

3.4. Operational Safeguards: Establishing Precision-Oriented and Routinized Communication Mechanisms

To ensure the long-term, stable operation of the overseas communication matrix and the continuous release of discursive effectiveness, the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum has simultaneously advanced strategic refinement and institutionalization at the operational level, shifting international communication from project-based initiatives to routinized and sustainable practice.

Relying on data analytics tools provided by overseas social media platforms, the museum continuously monitors and analyzes audience structures, interaction behaviors, and content feedback, gradually developing a clear profile of its overseas Terracotta Army fan base. On this basis, it adopts a combined approach of globalized expression, regionalized expression, and segmented expression, enhancing content adaptability while maintaining narrative coherence. For instance, when addressing audiences in English-speaking countries, the museum emphasizes professional yet engaging English-language content that balances informational density and communicative friendliness; for Southeast Asian audiences, it increases culturally associative content, narrowing interpretive distance through themes of historical exchange and civilizational commonality, thereby improving targeting and effectiveness.

Based on platform attributes and user habits, the museum has formulated differentiated yet highly standardized update mechanisms: Facebook and Twitter maintain at least one post per day to ensure continuous visibility in information feeds; YouTube publishes at least one video per week, ensuring a steady supply of in-depth content; and professional pages on each platform are updated no fewer than four times per year to keep overall account imagery and information structures dynamically optimized. As of June 2024, the four platforms had cumulatively released 425 posts and 26 videos, forming a content output system with clear

rhythm and stable frequency that cultivates habitual attention and anticipatory engagement among overseas audiences.

Beyond content publication, interaction management constitutes a key component of operations. The museum has set a response standard of no less than a 95% comment reply rate, promptly addressing inquiries and feedback from overseas users to enhance immediacy and trust. It also regularly plans online thematic activities-no fewer than five per year-using topic-based interaction and incentive mechanisms to boost user engagement and account activity. In addition, the museum actively interacts with industry KOLs and peer cultural accounts through comments, reposts, and topic linkage, expanding the peripheral reach of content and continuously amplifying communicative impact [9].

In sum, this operational safeguard system-grounded in data analysis, supported by institutional norms, and driven by interactive feedback-ensures that overseas communication of the Terracotta Army no longer depends on isolated viral moments, but instead forms a long-term mechanism integrating precise reach, stable output, and sustained interaction, providing a solid operational foundation for the steady accumulation of international discursive power.

4. Communication Outcomes of Constructing the Terracotta Army's International Discursive Power

4.1. Significant Growth in Communication Scale and International Influence

Since the launch of systematic operations in September 2023, the overseas social media communication matrix of the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum has achieved simultaneous growth in communication scale and international influence within a relatively short period, establishing an initial yet stable and sustainable overseas audience base. As of June 25, 2024, the museum's total follower count across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube had surpassed 150,000. Specifically, Facebook reached 102,199 followers, Instagram 32,733, Twitter 11,505, and YouTube 10,724. These figures demonstrate the particular strength of platforms oriented toward comprehensive information and interactive exchange in accumulating audiences, while also reflecting the overall growth effect generated by coordinated multi-platform deployment.

In terms of reach and exposure, the global diffusion of the museum's overseas communication has continued to expand, with cumulative impressions exceeding 13.88 million worldwide. By platform, Facebook achieved a reach of 15.12 million, Instagram 2.89 million, Twitter 1.62 million, and YouTube 4.15 million. Each platform contributes differently in terms of coverage scale and content presentation, together forming a multi-layered and multi-scenario international communication network.

Engagement metrics likewise indicate high levels of participation and affective investment. Across the four platforms, total interactions reached 1.62 million. The maximum single-post performance included 37,000 likes on Facebook, 140,000 impressions on Instagram, and 128,000 views on YouTube. These data suggest that Terracotta Army-related content has not only achieved large-scale exposure but also elicited active and positive responses through likes, views, and interactive behaviors, gradually producing a communication effect in which high reach, high engagement, and high identification mutually reinforce one another.

Overall, these phase-based achievements indicate that the museum's overseas social media matrix has moved beyond the initial exploratory stage of "entering platforms and gaining attention," and has entered a routinized operation stage characterized by a stable audience base and substantial engagement, laying a solid foundation for deeper value interpretation and the sustained accumulation of international discursive influence.

4.2. Steady Improvement in Platform Rankings and Brand Influence

Within the national-level comprehensive evaluation system for overseas social media performance among cultural tourism institutions, the overall performance of the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum has continued to improve, with its average monthly ranking consistently remaining in the top ten. In particular, its sub-category rankings on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have placed it among the leading institutions in its category, indicating stable visibility and sustained competitiveness within the overseas cultural tourism communication ecosystem. These ranking results suggest that the museum has gradually shifted from being "one of many key cultural heritage accounts" to becoming an important entry point through which overseas audiences access information about Chinese culture, reflecting a clear structural advantage in platform influence [10].

At the level of content performance, the Terracotta Army, as a highly recognizable cultural symbol, has maintained a leading position in communication effectiveness. Posts centered on core artifacts-such as introductions to Pit No. 1 of the Terracotta Army and the bronze chariots-have consistently generated interaction volumes and communication heat noticeably higher than general content. This confirms the aggregating and amplifying potential of highly identifiable cultural symbols in international communication. Such stable high engagement not only reflects sustained overseas interest in the material form of ancient Chinese civilization, but also provides a robust attention base for deeper interpretation at the levels of institutions, technology, and civilization.

Meanwhile, the museum has not confined its communication focus to a single "star artifact." Rather, it has promoted a more comprehensive presentation of Qin mausoleum cultural resources through major exhibition-related content. For instance, the promotional post for the exhibition "More Than Terracotta Warriors-The Qin Mausoleum Garden Complex and the K0007 Accompanying Burial Pit" achieved 770,000 impressions, significantly increasing the overall visibility of Qin mausoleum culture in overseas social media environments. This outcome suggests that when communication narratives expand from a single symbolic point to a systematic cultural landscape, overseas audiences can likewise sustain effective attention and interest-helping to overcome the cognitive limitation of "knowing only the Terracotta Army while knowing little about the broader Qin mausoleum cultural whole."

Taken together, steady improvement in platform rankings and the sustained amplification of key content signal that the museum's overseas communication has preliminarily completed a transition from "traffic entry" to "brand sedimentation." The account has not only achieved stable operation at the technical level, but has also accumulated, at the level of meaning, an international cultural brand image centered on the Terracotta Army and supported by the broader Qin civilization, providing a reliable platform base and brand anchor for further strengthening China's civilizational narrative and international discursive power.

4.3. Prominent Gains in Cultural Identification and Educational Communication

As communication effects extend from "visibility" to "intelligibility" and "identification," the educational function of Qin culture dissemination has become increasingly evident. Supported by the development of online educational courses and mechanisms for international museum-school cooperation, the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum has continued to promote the digital sharing of Qin cultural educational resources, bringing the Terracotta Army-and the historical and civilizational meanings it carries-into overseas educational settings. Through structured and modular content design, the "Digital Education on the Terracotta Army" program has become a stable channel through which overseas adolescents can systematically learn about Qin culture. In this process, the Terracotta Army is no longer perceived merely as a visual spectacle, but is continuously introduced into classrooms and

educational platforms as a learning resource for understanding early Chinese state formation, social organization, and civilizational tradition.

From audience feedback, comment sections and interactive content across overseas social media exhibit a clearly positive overall orientation. Large numbers of overseas users express interest and appreciation through likes, comments, and reposts, and in the course of interaction often extend their responses into discussions reflecting recognition of Chinese history, culture, and civilizational tradition. Such feedback does not remain at the emotional level of “curiosity” or “admiration,” but gradually develops into understanding and respect for the cultural value of China. At the same time, negative comments account for only a very small proportion of total interaction, and are appropriately handled through timely responses and rational communication. They have not escalated into broader controversy or discursive confrontation, contributing to a relatively friendly and stable international public opinion environment for the overseas dissemination of Qin culture.

Overall, education-oriented content supply and rational interaction mechanisms have enabled Qin culture’s international communication to move beyond short-term traffic logic, beginning to accumulate long-term cognition and affective identification among overseas audiences. The Terracotta Army thus functions not only as a “Chinese cultural symbol to be viewed,” but increasingly as a civilizational resource that can be learned, understood, and discussed—demonstrating a positive transformation from display-oriented communication to cognition- and identification-oriented communication.

4.4. Continued Expansion of International Cooperation and Communication Networks

In the long-term construction of international discursive power, institutionalized and routinized international cooperation is an indispensable support. Centered on the Terracotta Army as a core cultural symbol, the Emperor Qinshihuang’s Mausoleum Site Museum has continued to deepen partnerships with leading international cultural and communication institutions, gradually building a stable cooperative network spanning museum systems, academic institutions, and international media. Ongoing cooperation with organizations such as the Smithsonian Institution, the National Archaeological Museum of Greece, and the National Geographic Channel has enabled the Terracotta Army and Qin culture to enter more diverse and authoritative arenas of international communication.

In practice, such cooperation is no longer limited to single forms such as artifact loans for exhibitions or content reposting. Instead, it is pursued through multiple pathways including joint exhibitions, joint content production, and joint educational programs. Through co-curation and collaborative storytelling, the Terracotta Army is situated within comparative civilizational perspectives and global historical contexts, and its meanings are no longer interpreted by a single actor but are continuously enriched and reconstructed through multi-party participation. Through joint production and collaboration with international media, Qin culture is narrated in ways that better align with overseas audiences’ media habits, enhancing professionalism and credibility. Through joint educational programs, Qin culture is further embedded in overseas educational systems and public cultural spaces, strengthening communication sustainability and depth.

This multi-level and networked cooperation model has driven a structural shift in the museum’s external communication from one-way output to two-way interaction. The Terracotta Army is no longer merely a cultural object passively entering international vision, but increasingly becomes a shared topic of cross-cultural dialogue that is continuously discussed and reinterpreted. As a result, the international communication network formed around the Terracotta Army has gradually developed stability, extensibility, and self-renewal

capacity, laying a solid foundation for the long-term accumulation and sustainable development of its international discursive power.

5. Conclusion

The construction of the Terracotta Army's international discursive power represents a successful practice of Chinese culture's international communication in the new era. Taking overseas social media as its core arena, and drawing on distinctive cultural resource advantages, the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum has, through platform matrix building, content innovation, channel integration, and institutional safeguards, promoted the Terracotta Army's transformation from "cultural heritage" to an active "communicative subject," establishing an international discursive system that combines influence, affective appeal, and identification.

This practice suggests that constructing China's international cultural discursive power requires balancing cultural confidence with openness and inclusiveness-holding firmly to the standpoint of Chinese culture and extracting core values, while also respecting cross-cultural communication and innovating communication concepts and methods. It also requires balancing content primacy with channel strategic importance-producing high-quality cultural content products while effectively leveraging new media technologies and international communication platforms. Further, it requires balancing government guidance with social participation-strengthening the guiding role of official institutions while mobilizing the enthusiasm of diverse actors.

In the new era of civilizational exchange and mutual learning, the Terracotta Army, as an iconic symbol of Chinese civilization, will not only advance the global dissemination of Qin culture through the sustained construction of its international discursive power, but will also contribute to enhancing the international influence of Chinese culture, injecting cultural energy into the building of a community with a shared future for mankind. Looking ahead, the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum should continue to deepen communication practice, refine and consolidate experience, and provide more replicable and scalable models for constructing China's international cultural discursive power.

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