

Review Article

A HISTORICAL REVIEW OF THE CHINESE DOCUMENTARY PROGRAMS

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Abstract

This study is to review the source, development, and evolution of Chinese documentary programs through the historical dimension; it can better draw production experience and improve the creative ability for the producers. From the founding of China to the present, the changes of Chinese documentary programs can be divided into six different historical stages. Moreover, the content of Chinese documentary programs has origins in China's political background, especially Chinese unique social nature and cultural traditions. As a result, they continue to evolve as China changes. In particular, with the rapid development of China's economy, on the one hand, Chinese television stations continue to invest in the creation of documentary programs to consolidate their audience. On the other hand, online platforms have opened up new channels for viewing documentaries. Chinese documentary programs have become a window for audiences at home and abroad to learn about Chinese history, culture, and tradition. The use of Chinese documentary programs to tell China's story will show the real, three-dimensional, and comprehensive picture of China to the whole world.

Keywords: China, Documentary programs, History, Development of TV programs, Review

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INTRODUCTION

According to the similarities and differences of mass media, the documentary has always existed in documentary film and television documentary. It is in the alternation of these two forms that Chinese documentaries come all the way. "Dingjun Mountain," the first film made after the birth of Chinese film in 1905, is an opera documentary (Wang, 2005; Sang, 1957). The main media of documentary broadcasting experienced a shift from film to television after the establishment of the People's Republic of China. With the continuous progress of society and the development of the film industry, the Chinese documentary is also developing rapidly. The documentary of mainland China in the first half of the 20th century was mainly

news documentary films. Documentary programs dominated the second half of the 20th century. According to different ages, the history of Chinese documentary programs is mainly divided into the following stages:

1949-1959

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, under the guidance to the literature and art policy which is "let a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend" posed by the communist party of China, the documentary has entered a new period of development with its unique publicity characteristics. Moreover, along with the historical process of the socialist revolution, the entire Chinese

film industry presented construction and vigorous development (Gerry & Tian, 1952; Luo, 1952; Heyfitz & Wu, 1952). In July 1953, to develop journalistic documentary films, the central journalistic documentary film studio was established (Huang, 1957).

By 1958, many ministries of the central government of China set up news documentary crews. News documentary film is through recording the real people and events in daily life, reflecting the pace of the era and the general situation of historical development (Xu, 1958; Li, 1958). It adopted authentic screen images and irrefutable chronicled facts to infect and influence the audience. This feature makes the news documentary film become the record of life, the mirror of the era, and the witness of history (Shao, 1958). Documentary programs carried the cultural value, historical value, and economic value. At that time, producers were not very clear about what was the documentary program, and they mainly studied imitating film documentaries (Li, 1958).

China Central Television (CCTV) was founded in 1958, and TV news and documentaries have appeared on television since then. At that time, the news program team is the original documentary photographer, director mainly composed of (Xia, 1958; Xiao, 1958). They were pioneers in the documentary program, shooting at the rate of "two long and eight short" (that is, two feature films and eight short films) per month (Shi, 1958). Some scholars (2001) have pointed out that the first documentary program in mainland China was "the heroic people of Xinyang"(1958), which told the touching story of the people in Xinyang, Henan province who fought against drought and achieved a harvest. It was followed by a 20-minute news documentary program titled "the Ninth anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China," filmed in Tian'anmen Rostrum (Ren, 1995).

In the initial stage of the documentary program in mainland China, the creation of a television documentary is influenced by the thoughts and habits of television news creation. Since the 1950s, documentaries in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and mainland China had been accustomed to adopting a style of governmental reports (Ji, 1960a). Thus, in the topic selection, the material selection was monotonous and boring, only limited to current political, economic construction, and other aspects (Li, 1960; Han, 1960; Ji, 1960b). The main reason for this pattern was that for quite a long time, the

documentary programs were regarded as "Visual Politics." Since its birth in 1958, documentary programs in mainland China had developed for more than 60 years. Once brilliant, once the bottom is a true portrayal of them.

1960-1979

During this period, the "Cultural Revolution" took place in mainland China from 1966 to 1976. Before the "Cultural Revolution," there were some documentary programs with high quality and good audience feedback, such as "Pearl River Delta"(1962), "Walking with the Yangtze River" (1963), "Happy Xinjiang"(1964) and "Reed Flute Cave"(1965). Specially recorded in Dayi County, Sichuan province "Rent Collection Courtyard" (1966), in addition to broadcast on television platform, has issued by film distribution to all parts of mainland China.

During the five years, the documentary programs were mainly about the beautiful mountains and rivers in mainland China, people's daily life and local conditions and customs. There were also some battlefield documentaries reflecting the "Vietnam War" at that time (Zhou, 1963), such as "People in the south of Vietnam during the war"(1963). In terms of formal skills, influenced by the modes of the former Soviet Union and the idea that the documentary is "Figurative politics," it paid more attention to the political education function of the documentary programs. The frames and music showed a great emphasis on the formal beauty, with more emphasis on the commentary and montage editing effect, and almost no contemporaneous sound.

During the "Cultural Revolution" from 1966 to 1976, when Lin Biao and Jiang Qing forcibly occupied TV stations, many documentary programs were also used as extreme "the Ultra-left" route and gang propaganda services. The documentary programs of this period had a completely narrow theme, and the art forms and techniques were rigid. Specifically, the theme of mountains and rivers, historical sites, and diachronic culture was imprisoned and could not be filmed. In the form of expression and spite of the use of the lens, some cumbersome rules and regulations could not be exceeded. Even the arrangement of the commentary and the processing of the music sound had many restrictions, and it was impossible to step beyond the threshold.

However, workers of documentary programs in mainland China did not forget their duties. After the initial turmoil of the "Cultural Revolution" subsided slightly, since 1972, a group of relatively high qualities of documentary programs appeared on the screen of CCTV such as "Deep Mountain Road Maintenance"(1972) and "After Class" (1973). Although these programs were more or less branded with the era of the "Cultural Revolution," there were certain deficiencies and problems determined by that period of history. Nonetheless, their basic ideological content and creative tendencies were worthy of recognition. The common feature of these works was that they enthusiastically sang the Chinese people's love for the motherland, their self-confidence to the Chinese nation, and the struggle for nature and hardship through the spirit of self-reliance and hard work.

Joris Ivens (1898-1989), a world-renowned Dutch documentary master. At the beginning of 1973, Ivens and his wife came to mainland China at the invitation of Premier Zhou Enlai. They made a documentary titled "YuGong Moved," which reflected the Chinese "Cultural Revolution" and the current social status (Wuwo, 2000). "Yu Gong Moved" consisted of 12 series, including four feature films, four medium and long films, and four short films with a total length of 11 hours and 50 minutes. At first, the film title of this large documentary program was "The Second Long March," which was released as a more Chinese-style "YuGong Moved" (Shan, 2001).

In the process of filming "Yu Gong Moved," Ivens often made the camera face the subject and sometimes used close-up shots. The person being photographed speaks directly to the camera to answer the questions from Ivens. "Yu Gong Moved" reflected the ideological face of the Chinese people in a particular historical period through wonderful details. The release of the documentary program was a great success in foreign countries. It had a seating rate of more than 140,000 in Paris. In 1977, "Yu Gong Moved" was premiered in Beijing and was screened for some chapters. Until now, this documentary with great valuable historical literature has not been fully publicized in mainland China.

After the end of the "Cultural Revolution," the creation of documentary programs began to enter a recovery phase. Its characteristics were that from the content of the subject to the form of expression, it had quickly broken through the extreme

"the Ultra-left" route imprisonment, and a large number of works have emerged, such as "The Office of Premier Zhou" (1978) and "The Wrangler girl" (1979). At the same time, a series of documentary programs began to appear, such as "Mount Tai" (4 episodes, Shandong TV and CCTV).

In August 1979, the "Silk Road" jointly produced by mainland China and Japan was not only the first large-scale documentary program in mainland China but also the prelude to the co-production of mainland China and foreign countries. In its overall form, although it still maintained its ideological attributes, it had been weakened by the skills and ideas of NHK in Japan and the bluntness and dogma of the early Chinese documentary era. The documentary programs of this period, the content of the subject involved ordinary people, urban scenery, folk customs, religion, nationality, history, and culture. However, the main modes of documentary programs during this period were the addition of commentaries to the frames. In many works, the commentary overwhelmed the frames (Zhou, 2005).

The "Cultural Revolution" had made the development of the documentary program a detour, and there had been some documentary programs with uneven artistic standards and over-emphasis and political expression. After the end of the "Cultural Revolution," the ideological emancipation movement, which brought order out of chaos, made China's documentary programs re-enter the correct development path, and a large number of outstanding works emerged.

1980-1989

The first documentary program series in mainland China was the documentary "Silk Road" broadcast in May 1980. It started the form of documentary program serialization, and it was generally continued to today. "Story of the Yangtze River," which was initiated into 1983, could best reflect the characteristics of the "Propaganda mission film" of this period, and it had achieved commendable viewing effect, was an as well collective memory of the audiences in that times. After following it, the first completed by mainland China's documentary workers independently created "Story of the Grand Canal," it completely continued the form of propaganda and education of "Story of the Yangtze River." In other words, starting from the ontology of documentary programs, observing of CCTV documentary programs in this period, we

could see the whole form had deviated from the essence of the documentary, overall reflected a kind of "Propaganda mission film" form.

In the 1980s, documentary program creation in mainland China had a very obvious feature—more and more commentary (Ren, 2001). Television media is based on visual images and assisted by hearing—however, documentary programs of this period more focused on the role of language. "River Elegy," which was broadcast on CCTV in 1988, had more than 200 words of commentary per minute. It was a sensation in society and was also the most-watched documentary program of its genre. It was a sensation in society and was also the most-watched documentary program of its genre (Situ, 2001).

The documentary program consisted of 6 episodes, which were named "Dream Seeking," "Destiny," "Miraculous Brightness," "New Century," "Hardships," and "Azure Blue." Based on the Yellow River, this documentary explored the dilemma and outlet of Chinese national culture and discussed the hot cultural issues in this period by the mass media. The series of ideas put forward in "River died young" were quite thought-provoking and had aroused fierce debate. "River died young" focused on the interpretation and rational argumentation of viewpoints, thus losing the attention on frames, which were completely reduced to the appendage of commentary (Li, 2018).

By the end of the 1980s, some documentary program makers in mainland China began to realize the problems of documentary production. Through the exploration in practice and exchange and study with foreign counterparts, they realized that they must change the existing shooting ideas and methods, conformed to the trend of communal development and historical progress, and produced a better and more accurate reflection of social life, ideological and artistic with a certain depth and height of the new documentary program (He, 2005). Thus, this kind of creation tendency developed almost spontaneously carried out outside the system and inside the system at the same time.

From the late 1980s to the early 1990s, CCTV produced some documentary programs about "mountains, roads, rivers and walls," which were memories of history and culture in mainland China. When numerous documentary programs such as "Silk Road," "Story of the Yangtze River," "Story of the Grand Canal" and "the Great Wall" dominated the television screen,

there was a question: how did these documentary programs tightly grasp the audience's aesthetic taste and psychological satisfaction? This series of documentary programs could maintain a high audience stickiness for a long time (Pei, 1982). Dutch documentary master Ivens, when evaluating the audience's miracle of "Story of the Yangtze River," Shan (2001) concluded that "the program has captured the audience's psychological artery."

1990-1999

Since the policy of "Economic Reform and open up," with the gradual popularization of television in mainland Chinese families, traditional documentary films have progressively given way to documentary programs with a wider audience. To be specific, some regular broadcast documentary columns, such as "50 minutes of local TV stations" (1989), "On This Land" (1989), and some large-scale documentary programs, such as "the Weight of Time" (1990), have gradually become new highlights on the screen.

The large-scale documentary program series "Odyssey of the Great Wall" produced and broadcast by CCTV in the early 1990s is generally regarded as a milestone in the development of a documentary program in mainland China. The program was completed in the winter of 1989. Previously, there was only a "Television topic piece" on TV screens of mainland China. "Odyssey of the Great Wall" broke the production tradition of "separation of sound and frames," and boldly adopted the actual sound and spot effects sound when shooting. The chief director Liu Xiaoli required all the directors to strictly follow the documentary style of "integration of sound and frames," which means the sound completely followed the rhythm of frames.

The practice has proved that "Odyssey of the Great Wall" had a revolutionary impact on the creation of a Chinese documentary program. The traditional trilogy production process of "commentary -- shooting frames -- post-production supplements" has been abandoned. The sense of scene created by "sound and frames combination" showed the unique charm of the TV language itself. Also, more importantly, "Odyssey of the Great Wall" focused on the human theme, the living conditions of people around the Great Wall. Many of its wonderful fragments were composed of records of life itself and the behavioral process of daily life (Wang & Wang, 1996).

Since the 1990s, the term "Television topic piece" gradually faded out and was replaced by "Documentary Programs," which was generally accepted by audiences (Hu, 1999). Since then, the "Documentary Campaign" in mainland China sprouted, and "Odyssey of the Great Wall" became a huge sensation once it was broadcast. It also led to the emergence of a large number of documentary programs in the same style following it, such as "Sand and Sea" (1990), "The Family of Northern Tibet" (1991), "The Last Mountain God" (1992) and "Try to Find a Home in Beijing" (1993), which won some international documentary competition awards. Since then, documentary programs quickly became a new hot tag of TV stations (Thomas & Tian, 1992; Sun, 1993).

From 1991 to 1995, the documentary programs of CCTV showed a tendency towards humanism. If "Odyssey of the Great Wall" used the method of shooting to interview the lives of people born near the Great Wall, then "Living Space"(1993), with the "History, is written and accomplished by the small potato" column concept, expanded the scope of recording the lives of ordinary people(Huang, 1994). The second peak of the creation of documentary program campaign was focused on the following: led by the important TV stations of documentary programs in the south and the north of mainland China, TV stations all over the country set off a wave of creating documentary programs (Ren, 1995).

In February 1993, Shanghai TV station set up a documentary newsroom, the first documentary column in mainland China, which was broadcast in primetime at 8 PM every night on the main channel. The column had broadcasted many works reflecting the fate and emotions of ordinary people, such as "Mosuo People," "Dexing Point," "Maomao Indictment," "The Fading Village," "Big Relocation" and so on, which were deeply loved by the audience. Moreover, the newly established Oriental TV station and Shanghai cable TV station have as well started a documentary column after the Shanghai TV station (Shi, 2000).

The launch of "Oriental Horizon" on May 1, 1993, was widely regarded as the beginning of the second round of TV station reform in China (Hu, 1999). Taking documentary programs as the form of production and broadcasting, it marked the beginning of the documentary column in China. "Oriental Horizon" was the "special economic zone" of Chinese TV stations, and its influence on Chinese TV media was extremely

far-reaching: the program made Chinese TV media step into a new milestone, which was characterized by the standardization and scale of TV program production. It is of great significance to explore the production and dissemination rules of TV programs (Liu, 1995). The column of TV program makes the producer of TV introduction, until now, TV program producers system already matured with each passing.

"Mao Zedong" was broadcast on December 26, 1993, which was the 100th anniversary of Chairman Mao's birth, which was the first docudrama in mainland China. In 1994, a documentary program named "Longji Mountain" appeared, which used a large number of empty shots to tell the life of ordinary people, especially children, in the Longji mountain area of Guangxi, realistically. This was a strong reversal of the early indoctrination and a return to the documentary itself. At the end of 1994, CCTV established a documentary studio based on the original documentary team. In 1997, documentary studio and social education center combined and CCTV established a documentary department (Duan, 2005).

In 1997, the People's Republic of China resumed the exercise of sovereignty of Hong Kong, 12-episode documentary programs aired vicissitudes of life in Hong Kong, with a grand historical perspective, showed the Hong Kong real a series of major chronicled events during 150 years. Also, the programs as tightly linked with the political policy also expressed the comrade of Deng Xiaoping in dealing with attitude and proposition on the question of Hong Kong.

The marginal cultural form was relative to the mainstream ideology. Because it was far away from the discourse center, independent documentaries existed in the underground form. The independent documentaries focused on marginalized people outside the orthodox social system, recording their inner feelings and emotional statements, such as "Bumming in Beijing" (1990), "Tian'anmen Rostrum" (1990), "Self-portrait" (1991) and "The Old Man" (1999), which won the award at the YAMAGATA International Documentary Film Festival in Japan. Chinese documentary programs ushered in a new look and concept: "Bumming in Beijing," the originator of the independent documentary, was the first step towards the concept of "New Realism" and inheriting the concept of "Direct film"(Zhang, 2004).

However, from the mid-1990s, the wave of "Documentary Campaign" began to ebb, gradually into a trough. The

audience's enthusiasm had declined, and the production of documentaries has gone into decline (Lv, 1997). However, the reduction of documentary programs did not mean they were stagnant. Many wonderful and excellent works had been produced. For example, the independent documentary named "No. 16, Barkhor South Street" (1996) won the 1998 "Cinéma du Réel, Festival international de films documentaries" award.

2000-2009

At the beginning of the new century, the creative themes of documentary programs were still focused on the "Economic Reform and open up." However, the social structure and economic environment of mainland China in this period were complex and diverse, so the content creation of Chinese documentary programs was as well influenced by these factors. Furthermore, the tide of the market economy further radiated from TV stations, and "Viewership Rate" and "Commercialize" became the producer's main consideration factors (He, 2002). In the past, as a non-market documentary industry, it began to approach the mainstream of society and the market. Under the guidance of "Market" and "Social Responsibility," Chinese documentary programs in this period presented a series of changes: themes from old, young, marginal and poor to complicated real life, from individualistic self-appreciation to mass communication, from small workshops to the assembly line of columns. Thus, the market discourse power began to emerge, and the themes and expressions of documentary programs became more diversified (Gao, 2004).

The science and education channel of CCTV's "Exploring" documentary column began broadcasting in 2001, and until 2010, a large number of classic historical and humanities documentary programs were broadcast, such as "Shanxi Merchants" (2003), "the Summer Palace" (2006) " and "New Story of the Yangtze River" (2006) "Quest the Water" (2008). The characteristics of the documentary programs gradually get rid of the mission, purposely cater to the television stations' competitive environment, gradually increased to a certain height of the attention to the aesthetic subject. Moreover, the social nature of documentary programs also progressively was made cognition by the audience; they consciously assumed social responsibility (Xue, Zhang, & He, 2011). The documentary programs of this period presented a new form of socialization.

In CCTV's survey report on the overall audience index in the fourth quarter of 2002, "audience turnover rate" of "Discovery" in the science and education channel of CCTV was ranked the first in this index, which had been running for less than two years, and as well consistently be ranked among the top ten in the audience rating (Li & Zhu, 2006).

History has entered the 21st century; China's rise had become an indisputable fact. In 2003, Ren Xue' a director of CCTV, began preparing for the documentary program "The Rise of the Great Powers," which means that Chinese documentary producers shifted the perspective to the world. In 2006, "The Rise of the Great Powers" aroused strong reactions in China and became a hot topic among the audience. Roh Moo-hyun, then South Korea's President, even suggested that all ministers watched this documentary program. The derivative products of it, program CD and book of the same name, all sold very well at home and abroad. Thus, it became an important representative of the marketization and internationalization of Chinese documentary program at that time. Chinese elite thinking was reflected in a 12-part Chinese documentary television series broadcast by CCTV from 13 to 24 November 2006 on "The Rise of the Great Powers," which viewed the rise of nine powers previously viewed as aggressive exploiters as something China should study and emulate (while avoiding the pitfalls of those that failed).

In the late autumn of 2000, Jin Tiemu, the chief director, started shooting "An Army Reborn" in Inner Mongolia. This documentary reproduced for the audience the historical process of the unification of China by the army of the great Qin Empire more than 2,000 years ago. The use of some non-documentary means, such as scene reappearance, role-playing, and digital special effects, enriched the visual experience of the audience and formed another kind of aesthetic appearance of the documentary (Xu, 2009). In 2005, CCTV's "the Forbidden City" took the technological aesthetics to the extreme and truly opened the era of "Blockbuster" documentaries in China. The rise of a documentary wave of the 1980s and 1990s led to the separation between documentary programs and documentary films. The market driving and industrial operation mode in this period made the technical technique and aesthetic appearance of documentary films return to documentary programs (Wang, 2005).

During this period, the opening of vision made many documentary producers turn their attention to the vast history and the broad world stage. Therefore, historical humanities documentary programs more and more were produced and broadcast, such as "the New Silk Road" (2006), "Song of the Forest" (2007), "Our Olympic" (2008), "the Summer Palace" (2008) "Masters" (2008) "Wild China" (2008), "the Macao Ten years" (2009). The Chinese documentary programs erupted a more powerful spirit, with a more mainstream expression of the return to the mainstream of society (Fan, 2007).

Attention to social reality was also the quality of documentaries in this period, such as "Our study abroad life" (2000), "Balance" (2001), "Ying and Bai" (2002), "the Sisters" (2003), "Kindergarten" (2004), "Migrating People" (2007), "Red Runway" (2008), "1428" (2009), "a Year in Tibet" (2009), "the Last Train Home" (2009). All the documentaries had a distinct sense of authorship, full of social responsibility and cultural consciousness, and became the representative of the multi-value and aesthetic exploration of Chinese documentaries in this period (Lei & Li, 2013).

The decade after 2000 was the lowest period for Chinese documentary programs, while foreign documentary programs were in the "golden decade." At the turn of the new century, foreign new documentary program modes were introduced into China. With the integration and reference of new technologies, new ideas and new notions, some new production methods and new program concepts from foreign countries began to impact the production on documentary programs in mainland China, and "Scene Emersion" regained its new life under the impact of "Nouvelle Vague." In other words, the birth of every valuable documentary redefined documentary programs in different degrees. Some scholars (Zhang, 2012) proposed that no matter how the form of documentary programs evolved in the future, they would develop towards enriching the means of expression and meet the audience's new needs as much as possible.

2010-2019

In October 2010, the National Radio and Television Administration of China launched "issued several opinions on accelerating the development of the documentary industry," which was undoubtedly a milestone in the history of Chinese documentary development. Taking this as the node, in the next

few years, China had successively introduced a variety of policies and incentive measures related to the development of the documentary, and the government had gradually established a strategic path to promote the development of the documentary industry with the idea of industrialization. Driven by the power of the government and the market, Chinese documentaries have entered the "politicized industry period."

At the end of 2010, CCTV-4 launched "Home Far Away" in the form of the documentary program, with the theme of walking, experience, and discovery, and under the guidance of journalists, which was closely related to the popular topic of "Tourism," and in this process to promote the beauty of China's nature and the profound Chinese culture. Therefore, this period of documentaries focused on the content of the common looking for identifying between national culture and popular culture, on the one hand, seeking the roots of ethnic culture and mining, on the other hand, trying to fit the popular mass culture. This also was in the competition for viewing index and took up more audience market under the trend of transformation.

After the transformation from single film to seriation, and from seriation to column, the external form of CCTV documentary programs had been "upgraded" once again in the second decade of the 21st century, when the documentary has gradually matured in all aspects. On January 1, 2011, CCTV documentary channel (CCTV-9) was officially launched, which was the first nationally broadcast documentary channel and the first global bilingual documentary channel in China. With the creation of the CCTV documentary channel, Chinese documentary programs made a great step forward from seriation to professionalization (Han & Zhao, 2011).

"Global Vision, World Value, Chinese Culture, International Expression" was the core value concept of CCTV-9. Television was one of the traditional mass media, was also one of the best medium ways used to show its culture and history. Furthermore, from the perspective of CCTV-9 record channel positioning, it could be seen that the main focus is on cross-cultural communication, still couldn't completely strip ideology attribute from the government (He, 2011).

In recent years, CCTV documentary programs started to focus on the selection of materials worldwide, gradually opening up an international vision, trying to break the localization

threshold in the level of aesthetic value so that audiences could receive more comprehensive, advanced, and objective thinking through documentaries. The transition between national culture and popular mass culture could be reflected in the rise of a large number of documentary programs about "Food" and "Tourism"(Hu, Zhao & Fan, 2012). CCTV's "A Bite of China"(2012) documentary series and the similarly gastronomic "A Diverse Flavour in Each City" (2014) all fit in with popular cultural concerns such as "Foodies." "A bite of China" was popular on all media platforms and fermented by public praise, forming the phenomenon of "A Bite of China" in the documentary industry (Zhou & Zhou, 2014).

Documentary programs became a hot topic, and the audience's identification degree increased. The success of "A Bite of China" IP enabled the market to seek the possibility of "branding," "seasonal broadcasting," "industrialization" and "modeling" of documentary programs, which brought immeasurable significance and value to China's documentary industry. In 2013, the second season of "A Bite of China" won 83.91 million Yuan (11.8 million \$) of advertising sponsorship before shooting, and the naming fees for the third season of "A Bite of China" was 118 million Yuan (16.6 million \$), which strongly boosted the confidence in the documentary industry(Zhang et al., 2015).

After experiencing cultural worship, "Beauty Is Life," cultural interpretation, and other value changes, CCTV documentary programs in recent years have progressively emerged a new aesthetic value-"Critical Thinking." When the pursuit of the aesthetic value of CCTV documentary programs gradually came to a bottleneck period, a large number of programs with "Critical Thinking" as aesthetic appeal constantly appeared on CCTV-9. For example, in August 2014, CCTV broadcast the documentary "The Internet Age," which was the first large-scale documentary in China and the first-time television station to comprehensively, systematically, deeply and objectively analyze the Internet all over the world (GAO, 2015).

During this period, the continuous development of the documentary industry led to the diversification of market subjects, and the non-governmental companies were forming an organic interaction with the government and broadcasting groups. With the listing of private documentary companies on the new third board, the power of capital began to connect and

boost these market forces. Also, except for the continuous expansion of television broadcasting platforms driven by policies, new media and cinema lines, as the new platforms, were extending the living space of documentary programs. Given the development trend of the documentary industry in this period, the other two forces could not be ignored (Li, 2016).

According to data from China documentary research center (CDRC), the total number of video hits in 2017 was 1,292.86 billion, and the total number of documentary hits was 9.05 billion, accounting for 0.7%. After 2010, the content quality of video websites gradually had been greatly improved, and copyright management was increasingly standardized. The video websites had become an important force in documentary transmission and business model innovation since it was merely used as a communication platform. The documentary channel became a new hot spot on the competition of video websites. More and more online video websites were not only limited to serving as the "second communication" platform of documentaries. 2013 is the platform year of documentary programs in mainland China. According to the report on the development of Chinese documentary (2014), about 70,000 hours of documentaries were broadcast in China in 2013 through video websites, among which about 18,000 hours were premier programs (Zhang & Hu, 2014).

In recent years, documentary programs such as "The Great Shokunin"(2016), "Masters in Forbidden City"(2016), "Find the Craft"(2017), "Every Treasure Tells a Story"(2018), "The Story of Chuaner"(2018) "Once Upon a Bite" (2018), "Biography of fruit"(2018) and "Aerial China"(2019) were popular among the Internet and social media, becoming "New Cyber Celebrity." The new media platform was constantly innovating the watching and consumption mode of documentaries. In addition to the traditional advertising profit mode, with the advent of video member paying, documentary members paying to watch became an important consumption mode for new media documentary users (Lei, 2015). At present, iQIYI, Youku, and other platforms are exploring in the aspects of documentary paid viewing, platform, and television stations' sharing (He, 2017).

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