

# Space Production of “Poetry and Distance” Based on Islands-Analysis of Variety Show “I’m Reading on the Island”

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**Abstract:** Based on the geographical space of “Boundary Island”, I read on the Island, using the unique space of the island to construct the image of “poetry and distance. Through the narrative technique of life flow, the variety show constructs the literary “Peach Blossom Land” in the public’s imagination, realizes the dual mirror expression of the spiritual outlet and interpersonal relationship of contemporary urbanites, and embodies Foucault’s concept of “Heterotopia” (heterotopias). At the same time, according to the “Third Space” (Third Space) theory, “I read in the island” in different cultures with differences to find a negotiated interactive channel, for the marginalized literature, reading and paper media to provide a rising way, not only to alleviate the cultural anxiety of the media era, but also to promote the public attention to literature, the new orientation of the activation of literature.

**Keywords:** I study in the island; Space production; Heterotopia; The third space

“I’m reading on the island” is a documentary reading program on location jointly produced by today’s headlines and Jiangsu Satellite TV. In the program, Yu Hua, Su Tong, Xichuan and host Fang Qi jointly manage the island bookstore on Hainan’s boundary island and start reading life. The program is based on the continuous and in-depth social background of national reading, and creates a different reading experience in the form of “literary friends. Among the reading variety shows, “I’m Reading on the Island” chose to set up a small island away from the hustle and bustle of the city, relying on the beautiful and simple island environment to operate a bookstore. Among them, the space setting of “island” makes people have a pleasant reverie of “poetry and distance”, and has become a feature that distinguishes the program from other reading variety shows, and a major element that attracts the public. This paper discusses the “island” setting of the variety show, according to the theory of “space production”, and analyzes the unique ideographic role of island space in the life flow variety show.

## 1. Construction of Heterotopia: Mirror Expression of Heterogeneous Space

The scenery of “Boundary Island” is beautiful and pleasant, and the “relaxation” of several literary circles in the island life has quickly created the poetic habitat of the program. “Island” and “city” cleverly form a set of geographical coordinate references in variety shows, in which the life scene created is far away from impetuosity and full of spiritual power, which is just in line with the psychological expectation of “poetry and distance” of the current urban youth and forms a mirror expression of heterogeneous space.

Since 2017, the type exploration of variety shows in China has gradually shifted to the quiet and introverted “slow variety” form, with “life flow” narrative as the main feature and “immersion” instead of “pleasure”. “I’m reading on the island” is an extension of the narrative technique of this kind of slow variety show, abandoning the profit-seeking mode, following the natural time sequence, showing the simple life of the writers in detail while de-dramatizing, and using the island geographical space as the carrier to create a “Peach Blossom Spring” at the spiritual level of urban youth “. As the field of narrative occurrence, islands are naturally separated from the noisy world and have strong heterogeneity characteristics. In 1967, Foucault put forward the concept of “heterotopia”, which “holds that” heterotopia “is different from illusory” Utopia “. It is a real space with uncertain characteristics such as flow, pluralism and ambiguity intervened by power” . In “I am reading on the island”, the island space presented on the screen is not only the field of “poetry and distance”, but also the real space mediated. It is real and contains the “heterotopia”

imagined by people “. The program takes the boundary bookstore as the extension center, and creates a heterogeneous space with reading as the core through the means of variety arrangement. For example, in the decoration, we should grasp the audience’s aesthetic orientation and create a concentrated landscape of “poetry and distance”; in the picture composition, we should take the view of “one person, one book, one dog” to give the audience psychological hints. The creation of the island’s “heterotopia” provides a powerful mirror expression for the purpose of variety content. First of all, it builds a mirror image of the inner world of modern urbanites. Variety shows the life picture of several protagonists who are far away from the hustle and bustle and seek spiritual power in books, so that the audience can obtain alternative satisfaction and release anxiety from the spiritual and practical levels. Secondly, variety also provides a mirror image of people’s emotional needs for abundant interpersonal relationships. In “I am studying on the island”, several old friends in the literary world sit together, across the physical space interval between the north and the south, and live and chat face to face for a long time. This is an experience absent from modern urban life. This lack of human feelings in real life makes up for people’s psychological lack in actual communication, and creates emotions that people desire and are difficult to obtain through image media.

## 2. The Generation of the “Third Space”: Literature with Edge and Center

Through the special geographical location of the “island”, the dual concept of “edge” and “center” can be naturally extended. Under the theoretical candle of “space production”, the geographical significance of the island constructs an ideal reading space through the processing of image media. In addition to the heterogeneous spatial characteristics, its internal differences are also like a lens, reflecting the characteristics of the times of reading, books and literature, and at the same time, it also highlights the inner meaning behind the variety show’s call for “poetry and distance.

The island has the dual characteristics of edge and center at the same time, which makes the island a place for reading and creation in variety shows, with a different kind of symbolic meaning. In the 21st century, the fragmented mode brought by the era of paperless reading and streaming media has changed people’s reading habits to a great extent. In variety shows, the topic discussions of book writers, book publishers and book lovers all reveal their love for paper books alone. Their recollection of the grand occasion of literature in the past is nothing more than a reflection of the current state of literature. A variety show like “I’m studying on the island” makes the audience not only follow the writers to see literature from the “internal perspective”, but also reflect on the situation of literature from the current perspective. It is not difficult to conclude that the “island” reflects literature, reading and paper media, which is a marginal state exposed by the mainstream coordinate system. In the 1980 s, Edward W. Soja put forward the concept of “third space”, “emphasizing the openness, difference and inclusiveness in the” third space “, and striving to achieve” decentralization “through” otherness “. In the 21st century, with the rapid development of Internet technology, entertainment culture and consumer culture have become the mainstream. As a cultural part, literature inevitably needs to intersect with other cultures. “I read on the island” regards literature and other cultures as several physical spaces that are separated from each other and can interact with each other. It conforms to the current trend of media integration and explores new communication paths of literature. For example, the game book “to be no. 1” issued by the Forbidden City brought by Zhu Yong takes the current popular form of “script killing” as the carrier, refers to real historical documents, and combines with mobile phone app to obtain immersive game experience through “cross-media. However, the writers’ unfamiliar and skeptical attitude when they first tried “script killing” is also an intertext with “to be no. 1” itself. The program looks for an interactive channel that can be negotiated between the older generation and the younger generation, the paper media and the network media, that is, to seek the emergence of the “third space. In the theory of the third space, many scholars have mentioned that it is a “space that can accommodate differences”. Homi Bhabha believes that the “third space” breaks the cultural view of binary opposition, realizes the coexistence of differences, and provides a way for the voice of marginal cultures. The marginal state of literature corresponds to the mainstream position of entertainment media, just as the marginal state of the island corresponds to the central position of the city, and the older generation corresponds to the young people. This dual cultural difference can be released and coexist in the third space of “I read on the island. “I read on the island” uses the real geographical space of the island and the imaginary reading place to build a “hybrid” (hybridity) third space, including more people in the ranks of reading, and for marginalized literature, Reading and paper media provide room for improvement.

## 3. Epilogue

“I read in the island” adheres to the narrative technique of life flow, uses the unique geographical space of the island, and carries on the intertextual expression with literature. The setting of the island is similar to the villages and ancient towns in the past slow variety shows. Through the construction of “heterotopia”, the ideal space like peach blossom garden is completed, and the

spiritual way out is found for the young people today. As Su Tong said in the program, “the spirit of people in any era needs to be exported”, and “I am studying on the island” is the ideal social mirror image. At the same time, at a deeper level of ideography, “islands”, as a unique geographical existence that is both marginal and central, are linked to literature, reading and paper media, voicing the marginal position of literature and advocating people to pay attention to and activate literature. “I read on the island” as a location documentary reading program, its internal creative structure and content output is pure and full, in which “poetry and distance” space production, highlighting the maturity of China’s reading variety, and for China’s variety creation provides a good paradigm.

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