

Analysis of Narrative Innovation and Communication Strategies of Domestic Mainstream Film and Television Art from the Perspective of Cultural Identity

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ABSTRACT

From the perspective of cultural identity, domestic mainstream films are the most capable of showcasing the Chinese spirit and inspiring the patriotic feelings of the audience. However, some domestic mainstream film and television works currently suffer from issues such as narrative homogeneity, inadequate identity adaptability, and insufficient exploration of cultural connotations, which urgently need innovation and breakthroughs. This article holds that the innovation of domestic mainstream film and television works lies in the improvement and transformation of the narrative paradigm in three aspects: historical memory writing approach, values expression method, and aesthetic stimulation method. Specifically, it shifts from the macro to the micro perspectives, from mythological heroes to the epics of ordinary people, and from one-way indoctrination to evoking emotional resonance, in order to consolidate the foundation of cultural identity. The all-media platform broadens the coverage of identity, the segmentation strategy precisely reaches the audience, the ritualized communication deepens the degree of identity, and the IP-based development prolongs the time of identity, thus forming an identity strengthening mechanism jointly driven by narrative innovation and integrated communication.

KEYWORDS

Cultural identity; Mainstream film and television art; Narrative innovation; Communication strategy

1 Introduction

In the current era of accelerated globalization and deep integration of media, the construction and communication of cultural identity have become important factors in enhancing a country's cultural soft power. Domestic mainstream film and television works are important media for spreading mainstream values and consolidating national consensus. Their narrative methods and communication channels play a decisive role in shaping cultural identity. However, with the profound changes in social structure, the generational shift in the audience, and the intense collision of diverse cultures, some overly outdated narrative models can no longer fully meet the identity demands of contemporary society. From the perspective of cultural identity, this article attempts to comprehensively analyze the realistic predicaments of domestic mainstream films and TV series at the narrative level, and deeply explore the innovative transformation of their narrative paradigms from macro narrative to micro depiction, from hero shaping to ordinary person portrayal, and from one-way indoctrination to emotional resonance. On this basis, it proposes the integrated communication strategies to broaden the breadth, precision and depth of cultural identity in the context of the all-media era, thus providing solid theoretical support and feasible practical solutions for strengthening cultural identity.

2 The Current Narrative Situation and Innovation Demands of Domestic Mainstream Films and TV Series from the Perspective of Cultural Identity

Domestic mainstream film and television works is irreplaceable in shaping the collective memory and enhancing cultural identity. However, with the continuous changes in social structure, accelerated generational changes, and the renewal of the media environment, the narrative models of some works cannot meet the requirements of the new era. There are mainly three prominent problems. First, the narrative homogeneity is severe. Some works focus too narrowly on a limited number of major historical events or exemplary deeds in topic selection, failing to fully explore the diverse social landscape. Their plot structures often fall into a simple cycle of "encountering difficulties - overcoming difficulties - achieving victory", lacking artistic depth and struggling to evoke strong resonance among the audience, thereby weakening the emotional foundation of cultural identity. Second, there is inadequate identity adaptation. Particularly, the aesthetic tastes and discourse systems of Generation Z youth are quite different from the traditional narrative of the main theme. However, many works fail to effectively integrate the online cultural elements familiar to young people, resulting in poor communication effects among the younger generation. Additionally, the insufficient cultural translation ability and the superficiality of culture representation in cross-cultural communication also restrict the expansion of international recognition^[1]. Thirdly, some works confine the exploration of traditional culture to the mere application of symbols, without integrating it with the contemporary people's life realities and emotional anxieties. The value manifestation remains superficial, making it difficult for cultural identity to be deeply and sustainable. These

predicaments at the narrative level jointly constitute the innovative directions that domestic mainstream films and TV series urgently need to break through.

3 The Cornerstone of Cultural Identity Construction: Narrative Innovation in Domestic Mainstream Films and TV Series

3.1 From Macro Narrative to Micro Depiction: The Concrete Writing of Historical Memory

The shift of narrative perspective from macro to micro represents a highly noteworthy innovation approach. Most traditional mainstream works adopt a grand narrative structure, focusing on the development trends of the country and the nation. Although this approach is solemn and serious, it has a distance from individual life experiences. In contrast, recent works pay more attention to the fate of an individuals in the long river of history, the changes in family life, and the warmth in the trivialities of daily life, transforming abstract concepts into tangible and perceptible life journeys. For instance, the TV drama "The Age of Awakening" presents a grand historical panorama of the New Culture Movement and meticulously portrays the ideological pursuits and family conflicts of figures like Chen Duxiu and Hu Shi, bringing history to life. The TV drama "Minning Town" transforms the grand narrative of the national poverty alleviation strategy into a life ode with a rural flavor, centered on the struggles of ordinary characters like Ma Defu and Shuihua. Such micro-narratives not only bridge the gap between history and the audience, but also facilitate emotional resonance among the audience, thus laying a solid emotional foundation for the formation of cultural identity^[2].

3.2 From Heroic Myths to Epics of Ordinary People: The Popularization of Value Expression

In terms of character portrayal, the innovation is manifested in the abandonment of deification and the return to the depiction of authentic human nature. In previous works, most heroic images are nearly perfect, and the depictions of their growth trajectories and emotional fluctuations are relatively scarce, making it difficult for ordinary audiences to resonate emotionally. In recent years, the works focused on showcasing the ordinary traits of characters and their spiritual growth and transformation. In the film "The Battle at Lake Changjin", Wu Wanli gradually transforms from an innocent and naive rural youth into a resolute soldier. The fear, struggle and perseverance in his heart provide a genuine and perceptible psychological support for the patriotic sentiment. The series "Medal of the Republic" breaks away from the stereotypical "flawless heroes" by depicting the setbacks, hardships, emotional entanglements and life choices of meritorious figures in their daily lives, and integrates noble values into the emotional fabric of ordinary people. This epic narrative approach of ordinary people makes the expression of core values more persuasive and emotionally penetrating, effectively narrowing the psychological distance with the audience.

3.3 From one-way Indoctrination to Emotional Resonance: Aesthetic Stimulation of Collective Emotions

From the perspective of narrative techniques, the key to innovation lies in changing the previous didactic communication methods and instead using aesthetic experiences to evoke emotional resonance. Through ingenious audio-visual expression, the integration of genre elements, and the setting of suspense, the transmission of values is implicitly contained within a high-level viewing experience. "Cliff Walkers" blends the espionage genre with a cold and stern visual aesthetic style, creating a tense and thrilling atmosphere that immerse the audience in emotional experiences while conveying the power of faith. "My People, My Country", "My People, My Homeland" and "My Country, My Parents" use the anthology format and a warm and humorous narrative style to evoke collective memories and patriotic sentiments across generations^[3]. By integrating ideological guidance into artistic appreciation through professional video language, it achieves a leap from passive acceptance to active resonance, and enhances the consciousness and stability of identity.

4 Strengthening Paths of Cultural Identity: Integrated Communication Strategies of Domestic Mainstream Films and TV Series

4.1 All-media Matrix Communication: Expanding the Breadth of Cultural Identity

In this era of information deluge, even the finest wine hidden in a deep alley would be hard to discover. Therefore, mainstream film and television works should proactively adapt to the changes in the media ecosystem, establish an all-media communication matrix, and expand the audience range of cultural identity to achieve the best communication effect. This means that we can no longer rely solely on traditional media such as television and newspapers, but should

actively engage in emerging channels like social media platforms, video communities, and news clients to carry out diverse and interactive communication activities. By creating social hot topics, promoting the extensive dissemination of short videos, arranging online meetings for the main creators, and encouraging users to create derivative works, a cross-platform, multi-form, and high-penetration communication network can be built ^[4]. The communication effect of the TV drama “The Age of Awakening” is a typical example. After the drama was aired, the rich and meticulous details, insightful and unique dialogues, and vivid character portrayals are voluntarily recreated by netizens, especially the younger generation, into a huge number of short videos, memes and internet catchphrases on platforms such as Bilibili and Weibo. This approach not only significantly increases the attention and discussion of the series, but also dissolves the seriousness of historical themes in a way that young people are willing to accept, stimulating their interest in actively exploring and discussing history. In a subtle way, it achieves the flexible transmission of mainstream values and effectively expands the audience group of cultural identity.

4.2 Segmented Communication: Precisely Matching the Identity Needs of Different Audiences

In the current social environment, the interests, values and media usage behaviors of the audience tend to diversify. The traditional “one-size-fits-all” communication model can no longer meet such demands, and it is imperative to implement a segmented communication strategy. Accurately understanding different target groups and formulating different communication plans based on them is an important means to enhance communication effectiveness and audience recognition. Starting from the youth group, the communication content should be in line with the unique online language system, aesthetic orientation and interaction habits of the youth. It should skillfully incorporate elements such as anime elements, bullet screen interactions, and internet catchphrases. Additionally, it invites young role models with positive influence to participate in promotion or make guest appearances. It focuses on relying on platforms such as Bilibili, Rednote and Douyin to carry out in-depth content operations and interactions, thereby shortening the psychological distance, and enhancing cultural identity. For the middle-aged and elderly groups, the communication content should strengthen the narrative techniques they are familiar with, such as red memories, patriotic sentiments, and resonance of the Times. In terms of communication channels, the advantage of wide coverage of large TV screens should continue to be leveraged. Information should be precisely pushed through channels such as WeChat communities and nostalgia-themed public accounts to consolidate and awaken their sense of cultural belonging. In terms of overseas communication, there are both challenges and opportunities. It is necessary to follow the inherent laws of cross-cultural communication and conduct meticulous cultural coding and transformation. Specifically, it is to complete high-quality localization adaptation and in-depth cultural interpretation, so as to reduce cultural barriers, help overseas audiences bridge cultural gaps, and ultimately enable them to understand and accept the Chinese logic and values embedded in the story, thus gradually enhancing the international influence and recognition of Chinese culture

4.3 Ritualized Viewing and Interactive Communication: Enhancing the Depth of Cultural Identity

The enhancement of cultural identity requires not only high-quality content itself, but also relies on certain communication scenarios and shared experiences. By creating ritualized film-watching activities and integrating diverse online and offline interactions, the private film-watching behavior of individuals can be elevated to a symbolic collective cultural ritual, thereby deepening the depth and breadth of identity. On major commemorative days such as the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China and National Day, or during traditional festivals, films on related themes are screened in a concentrated manner, and various systems and communities are organized to watch them collectively. This approach has a strong sense of ceremony and can closely link the film-watching with collective honor and national identity, strengthening collective memory. At the same time, online activities such as film review competitions and themed essay contests can be held, and offline events like creator meetups and expert seminars can be organized. It can transform the audience from passive acceptances to active creators and disseminators. Through interactive sharing, it can deepen their understanding of the works, strengthen their sense of participation and belonging as members of the cultural community, and transform cultural identity from emotional resonance to rational rational consciousness.

4.4 IP Development and Derivative Creation: Extending the Duration of Cultural Identity

The cultural resonance evoked by an outstanding film or television work should not fade with the end credits. To continuously deepen the sense of identity, it is necessary to rely on IP-based operations and systematic derivative development to create a sustainable mainstream cultural ecosystem, allowing cultural identity to accumulate over a longer period of time and in more consumption scenarios ^[5]. It requires us to take high-quality film and television IPs with strong vitality and audience base as the center to carry out in-depth development in multiple forms and across media

platforms. After the film "The Battle at Lake Changjin" receives a wide social response, a documentary that records the arduous shooting process and restores the true appearance of history can be produced, and then related historical readings, educational courses, commemorative albums and themed cultural and creative products can be developed. It not only continues the market popularity and economic value of the IP, but also leads the audience's initial emotional resonance with the film to deeper levels of reverence for historical truth, remembrance of the spirit of martyrs, and in-depth understanding of the connotation of patriotism, thereby breaking the inherent life cycle of film and television works, and generating a more stable, profound and lasting cultural identity effect.

5 Conclusion

In the context of globalization and media convergence, the narrative innovation and integrated communication of domestic mainstream films and TV series have provided an effective path for the construction of cultural identity. The transformation in narrative from macro to micro perspectives, from heroes to ordinary people, and from indoctrination to resonance enables mainstream values to take root in genuine emotions and the texture of daily life. The synergy of a full-media matrix, audience segmentation, ritualized interaction and in-depth IP development in communication broaden the breadth, precision and depth of identity. These explorations not only break through the predicament of traditional narratives, but also enable the genes of Chinese culture to be deeply rooted in people's hearts through images. They not only consolidate the national consensus among diverse domestic audiences, but also lay a foundation for telling China's stories well and enhancing cultural soft power in cross-cultural communication. In the future, only by continuously delving into cultural connotations and innovating expression and communication paradigms can mainstream films and TV series become important carriers for consolidating cultural identity and demonstrating cultural confidence.

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