

Dissemination of Chinese Culture in Chinese-language Films

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ABSTRACT

Chinese-language films are important carriers of Chinese culture, embodying profound historical heritage and abundant spiritual connotations. Meanwhile, they are significant media for intercultural communication, and present the unique charm of Chinese culture to the world with diverse Chinese cultural elements as the support, rich cultural content as the foundation, and profound cultural spirit as the core essence. Based on the three dimensions of Chinese cultural elements, content and spirit, this paper dissects the specific presentation forms of Chinese culture in Chinese-language films, and then explores development paths from aspects such as integrating cultural differences, strengthening the expression of cultural elements, and exploring the dissemination potential of genre films. It aims to provide insights for Chinese-language films to more efficiently convey the core essence of Chinese culture and enhancing the international community's understanding and recognition of Chinese culture, and facilitate the extensive dissemination and high-quality development of Chinese culture on a global scale.

KEYWORDS

Chinese-language films; Chinese culture; Cultural dissemination; Dissemination path

1 Introduction

In the current era of in-depth globalization, films, as a cultural form that combines artistry and dissemination power, have become an important carrier of cultural dissemination that transcends geographical and linguistic boundaries. Rooted in the soil of Chinese culture, Chinese-language films have achieved remarkable results in the commercial field through years of accumulation and occupied an irreplaceable position in cultural dissemination. They integrate the essence of Chinese culture into stories through concrete visual narratives, and enable audiences from different cultural backgrounds to intuitively perceive the profound heritage and unique charm of Chinese culture^[1]. A thorough analysis of the presentation forms and dissemination logic of Chinese culture in Chinese-language films is an intensive exploration of the cultural value of Chinese-language films, an important endeavor to promote the global outreach of Chinese culture and facilitate the exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations, and furthermore a crucial practice to enhance the international influence of Chinese culture.

2 Chinese Culture in Chinese-language Films

2.1 Chinese Cultural Elements in Chinese-language Films

The Chinese cultural elements in Chinese-language films are the concrete and intuitive manifestation of Chinese culture, including material carriers such as traditional costumes, architecture and folk customs, as well as spiritual symbols such as etiquette norms. The flowing yet dignified Hanfu skirts in "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon", the symmetrical and neat northern courtyards in "Rise the Red Lantern", the traditional Chinese wedding rituals in "The Wedding Banquet", and the home-style dishes with perfect color, aroma and taste in "Eat Drink Men Women" have all created highly recognizable visual scenes, and served as important media for the dissemination of Chinese culture. These elements have transform abstract cultural connotations into perceptible visual symbols, enabled the audience to intuitively experience the material forms and aesthetic characteristics of Chinese culture during the viewing process, and laid a concrete foundation for the cross-contextual dissemination of Chinese culture.

2.2 Chinese Cultural Content in Chinese-language Films

The Chinese cultural content in Chinese-language films is deeply rooted in the historical accumulation and life practice of the Chinese nation, covering multiple aspects such as ethical concepts, value orientations, and folk traditions. Traditional ethical principles such as the same structure of family and country, filial piety and respect for the elderly, and harmonious neighborhood relations are embodied in the film through the development of character relationships and the natural progression of the plot, and convey the traditional wisdom of interpersonal and person-society interactions, which constitutes the core orientation of the ethical expression of Chinese-language films. The adherence to justice, admiration for kindness, and praise for tenacious character in films echo the core pursuit of "self-cultivation and moral establishment" in Chinese culture, and are indispensable and important components in the transmission of the work's

value orientation^[2]. Meanwhile, the detailed depictions of the life scenes in films, such as the lively scenes of folk festivals across different regions, the traditional rituals of weddings, funerals, and the daily presentation of food culture, directly highlight the daily nature and the hustle and bustle of Chinese culture. The films showcase the rich connotations and diverse forms of Chinese culture, and become an important medium for inheriting cultural memories and sustaining the national spirit.

2.3 Chinese Cultural Spirits in Chinese-language Films

The Chinese culture spirit in Chinese-language films is deeply rooted in the spiritual core of the Chinese nation, and features core traits such as self-improvement, virtue bearing all things, and patriotic sentiment. For instance, "Yellow Earth" showcases the farmers' deep attachment to the land and tenacious struggle for survival, "Wolf Warriors" film series expresses the firm protection of national dignity and overall national interest, "Ne Zha: Birth of the Demon Child" reveals the rebellious spirit that "my fate is governed by none but myself", and "The Wandering Earth" demonstrates the collectivist belief of "uniting as one to overcome hardships". Instead of deliberately piling up cultural symbols, these films allow the cultural spirit to flow naturally through the ups and downs of characters' fates and the tension of narrative conflicts. And through the characters' perseverance and growth in critical choices, they enable the audience to intuitively feel the spiritual character formed by the Chinese nation in its long historical accumulation, thus effectively inheriting and deeply elevating the Chinese cultural spirit in the visual expression.

3 Development Paths of Chinese Culture Dissemination in Chinese-language Films

The dissemination of Chinese culture in Chinese-language films can be promoted from different aspects, such as integrating domestic and foreign cultures, enriching Chinese cultural elements, and exploring the potential of genre films.

3.1 Integrate Domestic and Foreign Cultures

Bridging cultural differences at home and abroad is an important path for Chinese-language films to break through cultural barriers and effectively disseminate Chinese culture. The key of this path lies in accurately striking the balance between universal human values and the characteristics of Chinese culture, and taking shared emotions as the entry point to build a bridge for intercultural communication.

Although cultures in different regions vary in their expression forms and value priorities, the emotional appeals such as the attachment to family affection, the persistence of friendship, the pursuit of justice, and the reverence for life are universal, which provides a natural communication foundation for the intercultural dissemination of Chinese-language films. In the creation of Chinese-language films, it is essential to fully explore these universal values and deeply integrate them with Chinese cultural elements to enable overseas audiences to perceive the charm of Chinese culture while understanding the emotional core. For example, with the martial arts theme as its vehicle, "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" integrates the Eastern chivalrous spirit of keeping promises with the Western individualism of self-awakening. In this film, Li Mubai's pursuit of the ultimate state of swordsmanship not only embodies the Eastern martial arts spirit, but also aligns with the Western audience's perception of personal value realization. And Yu Xiulian's restrained choice between emotion and responsibility conforms to the the implicit and reserved traits of Eastern traditions, and evokes global audiences' resonance with emotional predicaments. This precise alignment of shared values makes the film a classic model for Chinese culture to go global^[4].

To bridge cultural differences, it is also necessary to pay attention to the adaptability of the communication discourse, and adjust the narrative rhythm and the logic of visual expression on the premise of retaining the core connotation of Chinese culture to conform to the aesthetic habits of international audiences. Eastern narratives tend to focus on creating artistic conception and implicit expression, while Western narratives place more emphasis on plot conflicts and linear progression. Chinese-language films can organically integrate the two narrative styles in their creation. For instance, "Hero" adopts a multi-perspective narrative structure, which not only inherits the impressionistic imagery and suggestive understatement of Eastern aesthetics, but also facilitates understanding of Western audience through a clear plot. The pursuit of the value of "great harmony under heaven" in this film is also conveyed through concrete narrative.

Collaboration among cross-cultural creative teams is also an effective way to bridge cultural differences. Chinese-language films can recruit creative talents with different cultural backgrounds, such as screenwriters, directors and cinematographers, to avoid cultural misinterpretation at the source of creation and ensure the expression of Chinese culture more in line with the contextual requirements of international communication. For instance, the co-produced "The Great Wall" recruits various talents while retaining the aesthetic of Eastern weaponry and the spirit of collective collaboration, and integrates the narrative rhythm of Western adventure stories, thus enabling the Chinese cultural

elements in the film to gain wider exposure and recognition in global cinemas, and effectively reducing cognitive barriers in intercultural communication.

3.2 Enrich Chinese Cultural Elements

Enriching Chinese cultural elements means achieving a deep integration of these elements with the narrative core, making them an organic component that drives plot development, highlights the character's moment of glory, and carries cultural connotations, and expanding the dimension of cultural dissemination through diverse exploration and innovative presentation of these elements.

Firstly, the selection of elements should take into account both classicism and representativeness. It is necessary to screen content that is visually recognizable and culturally profound from the treasure house of China's fine traditional culture, including multiple aspects such as material culture, spiritual culture, and institutional culture. The precise restoration of elements such as traditional etiquette, institutions and decrees, architecture, and costumes in historical-themed films can create authentic historical and cultural scenes. For instance, the film version of "The Longest Day in Chang'an" meticulously recreates the Tang-dynasty clothing like round-collared robes and sleeveless long shirts, accurately presents the Fangshi system (residential and commercial areas) and curfew regulations, and vividly portrays the life scenes integrating Hu and Han cultural styles, which not only enhances the sense of historical authenticity, but also enables the audience to gain a deep understanding of the social and cultural ecology of the Tang Dynasty. The exquisite presentation of the palace architecture, music and dance art, and food culture of the Tang Dynasty in "Legend of the Demon Cat" visualizes the grand spirit of the prosperous Tang Dynasty, and allows the audience to feel the profound heritage of flourishing Chinese culture while immersing themselves in the plot. The integration of elements such as traditional cuisine, tea culture, traditional festival customs, and intangible cultural heritage skills in contemporary-themed films can build a cultural bond between tradition and modernity^[3]. For instance, "Eat Drink Men Women" takes home-cooked dishes as the narrative thread. In this film, the spiciness and numbness of Sichuan cuisine, the sweetness and freshness of Cantonese cuisine, and the lightness and freshness of Jiangsu and Zhejiang cuisine not only carry the emotional evolution of the characters, but also convey the dietary culture concept that "food is the paramount necessity of the people" and the family ethics of "reunion and harmony". "Myth of Love" integrates elements such as the Shanghai alley culture, the dietary traditions of Wu and Yue, and the urban folklore into modern urban emotional narratives to enable revitalize traditional regional cultures in the contemporary context.

Secondly, the presentation of elements should be combined with modern video technology to achieve innovative expression, and break the traditional inherent presentation mode of elements to enhance their appeal and dissemination power. For instance, "Ne Zha: Birth of the Demon Child" reshapes the traditional mythological characters with modern animation technology, and retains the core spirit of "punishing evil and promoting virtue" while endowing Ne Zha with visual traits of rebellion and vividness, thus making traditional mythological elements more in line with the aesthetic tastes of young audiences. "Creation of the Gods I: Kingdom of Storms" employs advanced special effects technology to restore traditional mythological characters such as Lei Zhenzi and Yang Jian, and combines traditional divine and demonic culture with modern visual effects to create a highly impactful visual spectacle.

Thirdly, it is necessary to expand the range of element selection, and extend from traditional classic elements to contemporary achievements of Chinese culture, including modern aerospace technology, innovative achievements of intangible cultural heritage, and cultural elements in the practice of rural revitalization, to enable the Chinese cultural elements in Chinese-language films to form a diverse pattern where tradition and modernity coexist, fully demonstrate the inheritance vitality and contemporary value of Chinese culture, and enhance the breadth and depth of cultural dissemination.

3.3 Explore the Potential of Genre Films

To explore the potential of genre films and promote the dissemination of Chinese culture, it is necessary to base on the narrative advantages and audience base of all types of film to implant the core essence of Chinese culture in a targeted manner, and construct a precise and efficient cultural dissemination path while promoting genre innovation and cross-border integration.

Specifically, martial arts films should adhere to core connotations such as the chivalrous spirit and the concept of integrity, break through the traditional limitations of time and space as well as narrative frameworks, deeply bind the chivalrous spirit with contemporary social issues, incorporate regional cultural symbols such as Lingnan martial arts and Jiangnan martial arts, focus on the theme of upholding justice in modern society, and endow traditional spirit with contemporary interpretations through innovative narratives to enhance the resonance among young audiences and overseas audiences. Family ethics films should closely align with the Chinese cultural concept of family, take modern family life as the narrative setting, demonstrate the inheritance and adaptation of traditional ethics in contemporary

society, explore the cross-cultural universal emotions of family affection, naturally integrate elements such as traditional festivals, folk customs, and dietary culture into intergenerational interactions, and convey the concepts of filial piety, respect for the elderly, and harmony in the family leads to prosperity in all undertakings to enable overseas audiences to understand the connotation of Chinese culture through emotional resonance ^[5]. Animated films need to rely on traditional mythological legends, folk tales and other cultural materials, adopt modern animation technology and youthful expression forms to reconstruct traditional cultural content, strengthen the cultural core such as the thoughts of the Hundred Schools of Thought in character development and plot design, and cater to the aesthetic tastes of both young children and young audiences to spread traditional culture in a more acceptable form. Science fiction films should break through the Western narrative paradigm, integrate Chinese cultural concepts such as collectivism, harmonious coexistence, and nostalgia for homeland into future narratives, embed the ecological wisdom of harmony between man and nature when constructing future survival scenarios, and convey the spirit of Chinese culture through plots depicting humans collective collaboration in dealing with crises. At the same time, it is necessary to promote the cross-border integration of genres such as suspense and traditional culture, as well as romance and opera culture, expand the carriers for the dissemination of Chinese culture through innovative genre expression, optimize dissemination strategies based on the characteristics of different audiences, and form a diversified and collaborative communication pattern, so that Chinese culture can achieve precise and efficient cross-cultural dissemination through genre films.

4 Conclusion

Chinese-language films are not only the carriers of Chinese culture, but also an important medium for Chinese culture dissemination. The cultural elements and spiritual cores they embody are an integral part of Chinese culture. The development paths such as deeply exploring the genes of Chinese culture, bridging cultural differences at home and abroad, and unleashing the creative potential of genre films are continuously injecting impetus into the dissemination and inheritance of Chinese culture. In the future, Chinese-language films need to further uphold their cultural original aspiration, delve deeply into the rich connotations of Chinese culture in their creation, ignite innovative sparks through the collision of tradition and modernity, and build communication bonds with expressions that transcend cultural boundaries, thus promoting the broader recognition and dissemination of Chinese culture worldwide, and highlighting its unique charm and distinct contemporary value.

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