

Research on the creative development path of new mainstream films from the perspective of realism

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Abstract

With the continuous development of society, the emergence of new mainstream films has broken the creation mode of previous main theme films. The concept of The Times, the mainstream ideology, the new narrative characteristics, the authenticity and universality of the characters in the new mainstream movies have narrowed the distance between the film and the audience, and are easier to be accepted by the audience. How the new mainstream film develops in the current realistic theme has become the key point of research. This paper attempts to explore from three aspects: film theme, narrative mode and character image.

Keywords

New mainstream film; Realism; Authoring path.

1. Introduction

In recent years, China's film industry has gradually moved from high-speed development to high-quality development stage, and series of films such as "Changjin Lake", "Eight Hundred", "Me and My Motherland" and "Champion" have laid the foundation for the development of China's mainstream film industry, and promoted the innovation breakthrough of mainstream awareness publicity and commercial market.

"New mainstream film" was first proposed in 1999, mainly refers to the three types of "main theme, commercial film, art film", in respect of the mainstream film market and audience needs to present the film genre. The series of films such as "Assembly", "The Founding of an Army", "Operation Red Sea", "Me and My Hometown" and "Volunteer Army" have achieved the balance between mainstream ideology and commerciality and artistry, and have opened up a new way for the development and exploration of new mainstream films in China. The "14th Five-Year Plan" Chinese film Development Plan also proposed that the focus on the vision of building a powerful film country, on the basis of maintaining stable film production, to achieve significant quality improvement, the annual focus on the launch of about 10 popular and popular film masterpieces, the annual box office of more than 100 million yuan domestic films reached about 50. With the development of the current film market, how to realize the sustainable development of the new mainstream film has become the current research topic.

2. The exploration and development of new mainstream films and the realistic dilemma

2.1. The development of new mainstream films

In the 1980s, the concept of "theme" was first introduced into the field of film and television. For a long time, the main form of film and television creation is theme film, commercial film and art film, which have their own characteristics and bear different social functions. The main theme film aims to promote the mainstream ideology and mainstream values of the country, while the commercial film mainly meets the cultural consumption needs and economic benefits

of the public, and the art film focuses on aesthetic innovation. The main theme films initially developed on the principle of "light consumption, emphasis on missionary education". The government participated in the shooting, production and distribution, and most of them were revolutionary themed works. Films that praised heroes and recalled glorious history, such as Dong Cunrui, Shangganling, the Founding Ceremony, Baise Uprising, etc., appeared in this period. These films have strong missionary meaning. It played an important leading role in the dissemination of mainstream ideas at that time.

After entering the new century, commercial films occupy most of the market, and the main theme films, which bear the responsibility of carrying forward the national ideology, began to tilt towards the direction of commercial entertainment, such as the "Founding of a Republic" and "The Founding of the Party", which introduced the star system into the main theme films of revolutionary history. The new mainstream film creation represented by the Founding of a Republic has entered a new stage of historical development.

Films such as "Operation Mekong", "Wolf Warrior 2" and "Operation Red Sea" combine the Hollywood narrative model with Chinese characteristics, creating the image of a responsible great power in a heroic story with Chinese characteristics. These films mark that the new mainstream films have further completed the effective transformation of marketization and industrialization. Since then, a series of new mainstream films "Wandering Earth", "Eight hundred", "Changjin Lake", "Volunteer Army: The Mighty Army" and other films have further matured the integration mode, while maintaining the mainstream awareness of publicity, the realization of the marketization and industrialization of the film transformation. New mainstream films in the new century, while respecting the needs of the mainstream market, break through the restrictions of time and space, show the audience a broader history and life, and promote the prosperity and development of new mainstream films.

2.2. The development dilemma of new mainstream films

New mainstream films have been breaking through in recent years, and some phenomenon-level works have made people have higher expectations for their development, and play an important role in promoting mainstream ideas and guiding values. However, it is not difficult to find that the new mainstream films are facing difficulties and challenges at present. Some prominent problems, such as the narrowing of topics, the homogenization of content, the impact of network films, and the change of audience's aesthetic taste, restrict the development of new mainstream films. In addition, there are still problems in the current film quality and audience reviews.

First of all, the film topic narrowed. The creation of new mainstream films in the new century broadens the space of topic selection and enriches the content of topic selection on the basis of balancing life and art law. However, in recent years, the topic selection of new mainstream films mostly focuses on major revolutionary historical themes, and the story content mainly focuses on historical stories and historical models, and rarely goes deep into the current practical issues concerned by the public. For example, "The Taking of Tiger Mountain" and "On the Cliff" and other films are adapted from historical stories, "Chinese Doctor" and "Heroes of Fire" and other stories focusing on heroes of The Times, "Operation Mekong" and "Operation Red Sea" and other films are adapted from real events and presented to the public with the treatment of genre films. The relatively narrow topic selection makes the new mainstream films lack of cultural creativity, and also lack of cultural creativity in line with international standards, so that some good stories and good characters with realistic themes have no chance to show on the screen. Therefore, how to tell the Chinese story well and transmit the ideology and spirit through film and television works has become a major challenge for the development of new mainstream films.

Secondly, with the development of new media technology, a large number of online film and television works have formed a huge impact on traditional films with their strong audience advantages. Their novel and jumping editing methods, fast-paced narrative strategies and exaggerated portrayal of characters meet the needs of more online groups. However, the creation of new mainstream films presents problems such as single content and formulaic plot, such as "Operation Red Sea" and "Sky Hunt" and other films have similar narrative modes and plot designs, which make the audience aesthetic fatigue.

Finally, with the change of social culture, the audience's aesthetic needs are also changing, which puts forward higher requirements for the development of new mainstream films. The audience no longer just pays attention to the story of the film, but also puts forward higher requirements for the depth and connotation of the ideas expressed in the film. At the same time, with the deepening of globalization, cross-cultural and cross-regional exchanges are more frequent, and the differences in film production styles, aesthetics and cultural backgrounds of different countries and regions also promote the change of audience's aesthetic concepts. The changes in the aesthetic needs of the audience have further prompted producers to think about how to better create films that are popular with the public.

3. The realistic construction of new mainstream films

In view of the concept of realism, some scholars believe that "realism is the method of understanding objective reality in art and describing objective reality in art." Realism has guiding significance to literary and artistic creation, which belongs to the real life, but is not limited to the real life. Art can fly the wings of imagination, but it must be grounded on solid ground... We must go into the depths of life, understand the essence of life among the people, and understand the connotation of life. Only when life is chewed through and digested completely, can it become a profound plot and moving image, and the works created can refresh the heart." From the theoretical perspective of realism, we can see that the new mainstream films reflect the new characteristics of The Times in the aspects of film theme, content narrative and character image. On the theme of the film, the new mainstream films show multi-level characteristics in the expression of the theme; In terms of content narrative, it breaks through the original grand theme and begins to depict contemporary life and characters from multiple angles, and highlights the significance of The Times and ideological guidance of the film through specific events to meet the needs of the audience. At the same time, the shaping of characters is no longer limited to showing the perfect protagonist image, but more to show the group image.

3.1. Film theme: multi-level theme ideas

Film theme mainly refers to the central idea of film and television works, generally refers to the main content. The new mainstream films show multi-level characteristics in theme expression. The first level is embodied in the relationship between individual value and collective value. In the traditional theme film, the theme of the film separates the individual value from the collective value, and emphasizes the collectivist thought of "sacrificing the ego to fulfill the ego". With the development of society, the new mainstream film will be the individual value and collective value of the suture again, more performance of "everyone" and "small family" common prosperity theme.

The second level is embodied in the dissemination of the national spirit and the relations with the international world. Since the implementation of the strategy of "coming out", the pattern of Chinese films has been opened up. The theme expression not only shows the national spirit, but also re-examines the relationship between the national spirit and the world from a broader international perspective, and looks at the relationship between the national spirit and the world from a more objective perspective. For example, the movie "Champion" reflects the growth of the women's volleyball team by adding the perspective of foreign players. Highlight

the spirit of Chinese Women's volleyball team; Wolf Warrior 2 showcases the power of China and its soldiers with the recognition and appreciation of foreign friends. Nowadays, new mainstream films should not only tell Chinese stories, show the world Chinese style and cultural confidence, but also integrate the common values of mankind into them.

The third level is embodied in the discussion of the theme of human nature. For a long time, theme movies have been used to express grand themes with big heroes and big events, and flat methods fail to resonate with audiences. However, new mainstream movies break through this limitation in the performance of grand themes and show individual values through a more micro perspective. For example, the film Dying to Survive explores the theme of human nature, sees the big from the small, reflects the living conditions of the people at the bottom, and expresses the thinking and concern about human nature in the film.

3.2. Character image: diversified image writing

In the early theme films, the character image design has the characteristics of characterisation, flatness and stylization, and the protagonist image is too "perfect", which leads to the stereotyped situation in the films of this period. Nowadays, the new mainstream films break through the stereotypical image design of the traditional theme films, adhere to the diversified presentation of character images, no longer grasp the individual heroism, but based on real life, to create flesh-and-blood character images to meet the diversified orientation of the public. Such as "Changjin Lake" and "Changjin Lake Watergate Bridge", the film shows the Chinese revolutionary soldiers are not afraid of sacrifice and brave and tenacious through the design of a huge group of characters. Based on the evacuation of overseas Chinese from Libya, "Journey Home" records the whole process of the evacuation of overseas Chinese from the perspective of diplomats, depicting different characters, such as the brave and fearless Cheng Lang, the calm and calm Zong Dawei, and the diplomats struggling in the front line. It vividly depicts the diversity of Chinese diplomats and shows the spirit of Chinese diplomats. It has achieved a new breakthrough in films about the evacuation of overseas Chinese.

4. The development path of new mainstream films

The sustainable development of film cannot be separated from the support of policy, the development of technology, the renewal of ideas and the guarantee of theory. Based on the realistic perspective, this paper discusses the development path of new mainstream films from the aspects of topic selection innovation, narrative innovation and aesthetic innovation.

4.1. Focus on realistic topics and discuss global issues

Film and television works are important channels to tell Chinese stories well and spread the image of China. How to develop the new mainstream films with Chinese characteristics, excavate the mainstream values and explore the world issues has important practical significance. At present, the new mainstream films in China take national identity and national identity as their main topics, which still have certain limitations. On the one hand, the topic can pay more attention to the realistic issues in the current social development of China, narrow the distance with the audience, and further arouse the resonance of the audience; On the other hand, we can learn from the content of some high-quality foreign films, such as the positive energy films such as Forrest Gump and Happiness in the United States, and analyze how these films tell stories from a micro perspective and convey the cultural values of freedom, equality, fairness and justice through the dramatization of realistic conflicts. At the same time, we can also effectively stitch the film theme with China's socialist core value system, which not only helps to arouse the national and ethnic identity of the people, but also helps to enhance the influence of China's international discourse.

With the development of China's economy, people have more demands for spiritual life. While conveying mainstream national values such as national identity and national identity, new mainstream films need to explore more themes such as people's yearning for a better life, pursuit of moral ideals, and struggle for self-reliance in real life, focus on topics of concern in real society, use audio-visual art to show different living conditions in society, and trigger people's reflection on a certain social phenomenon. And then raise the social attention of the film. For example, the realistic-themed film *Dying to Survive*, adapted from real events, skillfully integrates realism and black humor to show the inner world of the little people at the bottom of society in a dramatic way, close to the lives of the people, and trigger the audience to think more deeply.

The foreign film *Forrest Gump*, with the theme of personal dream realization, tells the inspirational story of a small town boy with congenital intellectual disability who keeps striving and finally creates miracles in many fields. The topic of "Happiness Comes to the door" is also an inspirational film with the theme of pursuing dreams, which contains profound cultural significance. These excellent films, even after many years, are still celebrated, which is an important reason for their excellent topics, which convey positive energy and values across cultural differences. Some scholars have pointed out that China has excellent traditional culture and deep and thoughtful stories, but the current Chinese stories are still lacking systematic discourse support, and the urgent task is to explore global issues. As an important channel to spread Chinese discourse, new mainstream films can seek themes related to China from the issues of globalization and present them in new perspectives and ways. To deepen the excellent traditional and contemporary cultural elements of China, and enhance the influence of China's international discourse by exporting Chinese culture; Explore resonant topics such as family, friendship, love, and inspiration, and integrate them with the Chinese context to present common human emotions and values.

4.2. Integration with new media technology to enhance the youth of narrative style

With the development of Internet technology, the "network movie" model was officially launched in 2014. Compared with traditional cinema films, network films target audiences at young network groups who are good at accepting new things, with more diversified subject matter types and more emphasis on visual experience. In recent years, the creation of network films has gradually turned to quality, specialization and standardization, and the quality and connotation of films have been improved to a certain extent. Many high-quality theme network movies flooded the market, such as "Life and Death" and "The Most beautiful Retrograde", these films in the promotion of mainstream values at the same time to gain the audience's praise. In the face of the rise of online movies, new mainstream movies of traditional theaters should continue to innovate in order to adapt to market changes, cooperate with new media platforms in content creation, channel communication, industrial interconnection and other levels, and jointly build a film industry community to meet the diverse needs of audiences.

In order to better meet the market demand of young audiences, who are the main force of the box office, the current new mainstream films also try to integrate the creative elements of youth fashion in content creation, further expand narrative innovation, pay attention to the value of individual life, and achieve the unity of the national mainstream culture, civilian culture and youth culture multicultural consumer needs. Take the film "My Hometown and Me" as an example, the whole film uses multiple units of stories to start. Through five ironic stories, it shows the rapid development of China's social hometown in recent years in miniature. Its strong cast, the integration of family and love emotional elements, and the story of characters' growth have enhanced the film's communication among young audiences. The film "China Captain" tells the story of a group of civilian heroes who make efforts to save lives and ensure

the safety of passengers during disasters through compact plot design, sophisticated production technology and distinct character design. The application of modern elements such as star cast, modern technology and audio-visual effects has won the favor of young people.

4.3. Film and television aesthetic innovation to meet the diverse needs of audiences

With the continuous development of globalization, the audience's aesthetic concept is also changing. The new mainstream film carries the important function of disseminating the mainstream values, and satisfies the diversified needs of the audience by strengthening the aesthetic innovation of the film in narrative, technology and type. At the level of narrative aesthetics, through the innovation of narrative discourse system, the politicized and abstract values are displayed through vivid and specific characters, and the feelings of family and country are linked with the lives of ordinary people, so as to arouse greater emotional resonance among ordinary people. This paper explores the art of telling Chinese stories well in new mainstream films from the aspects of topic selection, role shaping, narrative structure and plot rhythm. At the level of technical aesthetics, cutting-edge shooting and production techniques such as special effects are deeply integrated with the film content to further enhance the audio-visual quality and user experience of the film, and enhance the sense of science and technology and modernity of the film. In addition, we can further enhance the personality and characteristics of the film through the integration of different types of elements, and enrich the new mainstream film types through cross-field cooperation.

The film works of the 2023 Spring Festival show diversified types and professional creation, which greatly meet the aesthetic needs of the audience, and the overall satisfaction of the audience is improved. Among them, the film "Jiang Jiang Hong" cleverly integrates suspense, thriller, comedy and other elements, conveys the mainstream values of sacrificing life for justice, evicting evil and feelings of family and country in the fast-paced and strong reversal of the plot design, and better balances the main theme, commercial and artistic expression, which is highly recognized by the Spring Festival audience. In the film connotation, dialogue design, actor performance, type creation and other aspects are well received by the audience. The film "Wandering Earth 2" uses more than 7,000 team members from different countries to cooperate, and the outer space scenes generated by computer CG technology also fit the creative background of the film as much as possible, realizing the effective integration of art and technology, taking into account the audience's aesthetic needs and audio-visual preferences while spreading mainstream values, and achieving a double harvest of reputation and box office.

5. Conclusion

In recent years, in order to better meet the cultural needs of the audience, the new mainstream films have continuously innovated in the aspects of theme selection, narrative mode and character image shaping, and there have also been a number of phenomenal-level works. With the development of culture, to achieve high-quality development of new mainstream films, it is necessary to further integrate mainstream culture and commercial market, pay attention to real life, and explore a road of film and television creation with Chinese characteristics.

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