

Research on Chinese Hero Films from the Perspective of Film Narratology

Jinyi Zhao ^{1, a}, Lim Chsing Chsing ^{2, *}

¹ PhD Candidate, Faculty of Languages and Communication, Sultan Idris Education University, Perak, 35900, Malaysia

² Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Languages and Communication, Sultan Idris Education University, Perak, 35900, Malaysia

* **Corresponding author:** Lim Chsing Chsing (Email: limchsing@fbk.upsi.edu.my), ^a zjy7628@163.com

Abstract: From the perspective of film narratology, a comparative analysis of Chinese hero films reveals how many films use narrative techniques to construct heroic phenomena. Based on Chinese history, mythology, legends, or modern backgrounds, they shape heroic images with national characteristics and the spirit of the times, better disseminate culture and inherit spirit, and play a positive role in shaping national identity and cultural confidence. Based on this, this article mainly focuses on the research content of Chinese hero films from the perspective of film narratology, briefly describing the historical development, narrative structure, narrative themes and symbols of Chinese hero films, and comparing and analyzing the narrative structures, themes and techniques in different hero films, in order to provide corresponding reference for relevant personnel.

Keywords: Film Narratology; Chinese Hero Movies; Film Studies.

1. Introduction

Film narratology is a discipline that studies how movies tell stories through storytelling, with a focus on aspects such as the structure, narrative style, temporal processing, perspective, symbols, and themes of the story in the movie. In the vast starry sky of Chinese film art, hero movies are like brilliant stars, illuminating the hearts of audiences with their unique narrative charm and profound cultural heritage. It is an important component of China's film industry and a vivid demonstration of the spirit and cultural confidence of the Chinese nation. Based on this, from the perspective of film narratology, studying the narrative art of Chinese hero films has certain practical significance.

2. The Historical Development of Chinese Hero Films

2.1. The Narrative Characteristics of Early Chinese Heroic Films

Early Chinese hero films often drew inspiration from historical allusions, folklore, or revolutionary struggles, and their narrative characteristics vividly reflected the values and aesthetic orientations of the society at that time. Most of the films during this period adopt a grand narrative strategy, with the rise and fall of the country and the survival of the nation as the background, placing the heroic image in the current of history, and inspiring the audience's patriotism and national pride through strong dramatic conflicts and tragic sacrifice spirit. In terms of narrative structure, early hero films tended to develop linearly, with tight plots and frequent climaxes, conveying the nobility and greatness of heroism in an intuitive and powerful way. Films such as "Lin Zexu" and "The Storm of Jiawu" showcase the indomitable spirit of the Chinese nation in resisting foreign aggression through real historical events and characters.

2.2. The transformation of Hero Movies after the Reform and Opening up

With the deepening of reform and opening up, Chinese hero films have also entered a period of transformation. At this stage, the narrative perspective of the film is broader, focusing on the grand historical narrative and beginning to touch upon the subtle aspects of real life. The hero image gradually breaks away from a singular and perfect setting, becoming more complex, three-dimensional, and multi-layered. The film portrays the joys, sorrows, and inner struggles of heroes as ordinary people through delicate emotional portrayal and profound psychological description, making the hero image more relatable to the audience, more resonant, and the narrative techniques more diverse and modern. Like "Wreath Under the Mountain", while depicting military life and battle scenes, it delves into the complex emotions of soldiers towards family, love, and friendship, as well as their inner struggles and growth when facing life and death decisions.

2.3. Narrative Innovation in Contemporary Chinese Hero Films

In the new era, Chinese hero films present more distinctive innovative features in narrative. The film has a more diversified selection of themes, including in-depth exploration of traditional historical themes, as well as attempts to integrate modern science fiction, action, and other genres. During this period, films constantly explored and innovated in narrative techniques, such as using cutting-edge techniques such as cross media storytelling and interactive storytelling, breaking the traditional narrative boundaries of films and bringing audiences a more immersive and interactive viewing experience. Like "The Wandering Earth", this film combines science fiction elements with traditional Chinese culture, and through delicate character portrayal and tense plot progression, successfully takes the audience into a future world full of unknowns and challenges [1].

3. Narrative Structural Analysis

3.1. The Application of Three Act Structure in Chinese Heroic Films

The first act is usually used to introduce the main characters, set the story background and conflicts, and quickly attract the audience's attention and stimulate their curiosity through a series of carefully designed scenes and plots. The second act is the core part of the story, where the hero faces numerous challenges, undergoes growth and transformation, and engages in battles with various forces, showcasing his wisdom, courage, and spirit of sacrifice. The third act is the resolution and conclusion of the story, where the hero overcomes difficulties, achieves self transcendence, and ultimately achieves their goal or victory. The clear division of the three act structure makes the story more coherent, ensuring that the audience can smoothly follow the development of the plot and experience the joy of the hero's growth and victory.

3.2. Handling of Narrative Time

In addition to the common linear narrative, Chinese hero films also cleverly use techniques such as flashbacks and foreshadowing to break the linear flow of time and enrich the levels and depth of narrative. The flashback technique is commonly used to reveal a hero's past experiences or inner world, allowing the audience to gain a deeper understanding of the hero's personality traits and growth trajectory through recalled fragments. The foreshadowing technique, on the other hand, lays the groundwork for the development of the story through the setting of future hints or symbolic scenes, enhancing the audience's sense of anticipation and tension [2].

3.3. Construction of Narrative Space

The film provides rich visual elements and emotional carriers for the storytelling through carefully designed scenes, environments, and symbolic spaces. The choice of scene is often closely related to the plot of the story, and through different scene transitions, it showcases the heroic performance and emotional changes of the hero in different environments. Environmental description pays more attention to details and atmosphere creation, creating a unique visual style and emotional atmosphere through the use of visual elements such as light, shadow, and color. The setting of symbolic spaces is more meaningful, such as ancient temples, solemn palaces, desolate battlefields, etc. These spaces have specific symbolic meanings, carrying rich cultural connotations and historical memories, adding more weight and historical sense to the shaping of heroic images and the telling of stories.

3.4. The Choice of Narrative Perspective

Chinese hero movies often flexibly use techniques such as omniscient perspective, limited perspective, and multi perspective switching based on the needs of the story and emotional expression. The omniscient perspective can comprehensively present the full picture of the story and the inner world of the characters, allowing the audience to gain a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding. The limited perspective tells the story through the perspective of specific characters, making the narrative more authentic and credible, and also more likely to resonate with the audience. Multi perspective switching is more flexible and versatile, adding more layers and complexity to the story through the

alternating presentation of different character perspectives.

4. Narrative Themes and Symbols

4.1. The Embodiment of Traditional Chinese Culture and Values

Contemporary Chinese hero films deeply explore and showcase the essence and values of excellent traditional Chinese culture in their narrative themes. The Confucian concepts of benevolence, loyalty, and sacrifice, as well as the Taoist philosophy of nature, harmony, and transcendence, are cleverly integrated into heroic stories, becoming important forces in driving plot development and shaping character traits. The film conveys the praise of virtues such as justice, bravery, and wisdom, as well as a profound understanding and emotional identification of concepts such as family, country, and nation, through the actions and value judgments of heroes [3].

4.2. The Symbolization and Symbolic Significance of Heroic Images

The heroic images in contemporary Chinese hero films represent certain spiritual forces or values, such as perseverance, selfless dedication, and courage to explore. They have achieved the unity of personal value and social value through their own efforts and struggles, becoming role models and role models in people's hearts. These heroic images also carry the audience's longing and pursuit for a better life, becoming an important source of positive energy for society. Through the symbolization of heroic images and the exploration of symbolic meanings, the film enriches the narrative level and depth, enhances the emotional resonance and ideological enlightenment of the audience.

4.3. The Narrative Themes of Chinese Hero Films

The narrative themes of Chinese hero films include the combination of nationalism and patriotism, as well as the combination of modern social issues and hero narratives. The film that combines ethnicity and patriotism showcases the spirit of the Chinese nation's self-improvement, unity, and struggle by telling the heroic deeds of heroes in defending the country and maintaining national dignity. This type of film helps to inspire the audience's patriotism and national pride, allowing them to have a deeper understanding of their responsibilities and missions as a member of the Chinese nation. A film that combines modern social issues with heroic narratives showcases the courage and wisdom of heroes in the face of modern social problems such as environmental pollution, social injustice, and technological ethics. It conveys positive social values and attitudes towards life, providing entertainment and enjoyment for the audience during the viewing process, and making them more concerned about social reality and their own responsibilities [4].

5. Typical Case Analysis

5.1. Thoroughly Analyze the Narrative Structure, Themes, Techniques, etc. of the Movie

Wolf Warrior 2: Set against the backdrop of the evacuation operation, the film showcases the loyalty and responsibility of Chinese soldiers through the heroic performance of the

protagonist Leng Feng. The film adopts a linear narrative structure, with a compact plot and fast-paced rhythm. Through a series of tense and exciting action scenes and thrilling rescue operations, it takes the audience into a world full of crisis and challenges. In terms of theme, "Wolf Warrior 2" emphasizes the importance of national honor and national dignity, and also conveys the values of peace and justice. In terms of narrative techniques, the film cleverly employs the technique of contrast, combining Cold Feng's individual heroism with teamwork, showcasing the comprehensive qualities and combat abilities of modern soldiers.

Operation Mekong: The film is adapted from a real event and tells the story of the cooperation between Chinese and Laotian police in combating transnational crime. The film adopts a multi line narrative approach, interweaving the actions and fates of different characters to form a complex and intricate criminal network. On the theme, the Mekong Action emphasizes the power of international cooperation and justice, revealing the complexity and harmfulness of transnational crime. In terms of narrative techniques, the film creates a strong sense of tension and oppression through tense chase, intense gunfights, and tense interrogation scenes, making the audience feel as if they are in the midst of the scene.

Ne Zha: As an animated film, Ne Zha: The Birth of the Demon Child is based on traditional Chinese mythological stories and has undergone bold innovation and adaptation. The film explores the themes of fate, self-awareness, and redemption through Nezha's growth process. In terms of narrative structure, the film adopts a non-linear narrative approach, depicting Nezha's inner struggles and growth through the interweaving of memories and reality. In terms of narrative techniques, the film utilizes rich visual effects and humorous lines, making the entire story both imaginative and captivating. The film cleverly incorporates the values and attitudes of modern society, giving new vitality to traditional mythological stories.

5.2. Comparative Analysis of Narrative Differences and Commonalities between Different Films

In terms of narrative themes, the three films mentioned above all emphasize the importance of justice, courage, and responsibility, but at the same time, they also have their own unique focuses. Wolf Warrior 2 focuses on the theme of showcasing national honor and national dignity; The Mekong

Action focuses more on international cooperation and combating transnational crime; And 'Ne Zha: The Birth of the Demon Child' explores the themes of fate and self-awareness through mythological stories. In terms of narrative structure, Wolf Warrior 2 adopts a linear narrative structure; The Mekong Action uses a multi line narrative approach; And 'Ne Zha: The Birth of the Demon Child' presents Ne Zha's growth process through non-linear narrative. In terms of narrative techniques, Wolf Warrior 2 creates an atmosphere through tense and thrilling action scenes and thrilling rescue operations; The Mekong River Operation showcases the complexity and harmfulness of crime through tense chase and gunfight scenes; And 'Ne Zha: The Birth of the Demon Child' enhances the appeal of the story through rich visual effects and humorous lines [5].

6. Conclusion

In summary, from the perspective of film narratology, Chinese hero films cleverly use narrative structures, themes and symbols, narrative techniques, etc. to shape heroic images with national justice, national characteristics, and the spirit of the times. They play a very important role in inheriting Chinese culture and national spirit. This article mainly compares and analyzes the narrative structures and techniques used in the three films "Wolf Warrior 2", "Operation Mekong", and "Ne Zha: The Birth of the Demon Child", analyzes their commonalities and characteristics, and how to use narrative techniques to highlight the heroic images and themes in the films. It also provides some reference for relevant personnel and promotes the sustainable development of Chinese hero films.

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