

A Comparative Study of Shanhaijing and Modern Science Fiction Stories in Film and Video Animation

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Abstract: The Classic of Mountains and Seas is an ancient Chinese text, which is regarded as a treasure trove of ancient Chinese fantasy literature. Modern science fiction stories, on the other hand, have gradually emerged under the progress of science and technology and have been widely used in the field of film and animation. In this paper, we compare the presentation form, narrative structure and thematic content of the Classic of Mountains and Seas and modern science fiction stories in film and animation. It is found that although the time background and cultural origins of the two are different, there are certain commonalities in the creation of the fantasy world, characterisation, and exploration of the relationship between man and nature, man and science and technology. At the same time, it also highlights the differences in cultural inheritance and innovation between the two. Through the comparative study, the value and significance of the Classic of Mountains and Seas and modern science fiction stories in film and animation can be better understood and appreciated.

Keywords: Classic of Mountains and Seas; Modern Science Fiction Stories; Film and Television Animation; Comparative Study; Narrative Structure.

1. Introduction

The Classic of Mountains and Seas is an ancient Chinese text, which is regarded as a treasure trove of ancient Chinese fantasy literature. In foreign countries, it is also known as "the Oriental Grimm's Fairy Tales" and "the Oriental Chronicles of Narnia". In addition, it has been translated into English, French and many other languages, and has been widely circulated all over the world. Therefore, The Classic of Mountains and Seas has played an important role in the cultural heritage of ancient China. The Shanhaijing is a bright pearl in the cultural heritage of ancient China, and its status in literature cannot be ignored. It is known as the "Book of Wonders" because it contains many records of strange creatures and geographical phenomena, as well as a large number of myths and legends. Especially during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Periods, it was frequently mentioned and quoted, and became an important source of information for the study of ancient history and myths and legends by all scholars. However, with the progress of science and technology and economic and social development, people have become more curious about the natural world and real life. Especially at the beginning of the 21st century, science and technology began to be transformed from scientific theories to practical applications. In this context, people have developed new knowledge and thinking about the natural world, human society and modern science and technology. The fantasy stories told in The Classic of Mountains and Seas have gradually transitioned to modern science fiction stories and become one of the more important subjects in film and animation creation. In this paper, we will study the expression and theme content of "Classic of Mountains and Seas" and modern science fiction stories in film and television animation from the following aspects.

2. Comparative Study of Ancient Myths and Modern Science Fiction Stories

The Classic of Mountains and Seas records many strange stories as well as ancient myths and legends from ancient China. In it, the world, the origin of mankind, the migration of peoples, and natural phenomena such as animals and plants are depicted very vividly. At the same time, in the description of various phenomena in the natural world, it also shows the ancient people's understanding of life and the living environment, and in all these descriptions, it is full of curiosity and imagination about the unknown world, and many of these myths and stories are centred on characters. Therefore, The Classic of Mountains and Seas is also known as a treasure trove of ancient Chinese mythological stories. With the continuous development of social economy and the progress of science and technology, modern technology has been gradually applied to film and television animation, which makes the Shanhaijing have a broader development space in film and television animation.¹ Similar story background. Both "Classic of Mountains and Seas" and modern science fiction stories are based on ancient mythological stories, depicting people's life scenes in the ancient times through imagination and interpretation, and showing various explorations and imaginations of human beings to the world of the universe. Therefore, both the Classic of Mountains and Seas and modern science fiction stories are based on the images of human beings, gods, beasts and so on, and their depictions. For example, the "Four Images" described in the "Classic of Mountains and Seas" is the object of human worship in real life.² Similarity of theme content. Both the Classic of Mountains and Seas and modern science fiction stories reflect the exploration and imagination of human beings on nature and the universe in the ancient times, and they are also a kind of metaphor for real life. The difference is that ancient myths are mainly designed to express human exploration and imagination of nature and the

universe, while modern science fiction stories are designed to reflect real life and reflect on and criticise reality.

Mythological elements are important constituent elements of animated films. Many Chinese animated films are based on the mythological stories of *Shanhaijing*, which contain a large number of mythological elements such as heroes and divine powers, grotesque images, and man and nature, which are the basis for the connection between myths and animated films. Using mythological archetypes to interpret the Chinese animated films with mythological elements of "*Shanhaijing*", so as to analyse the cultural connotation of mythological elements in Chinese animated films and to provide new cognitive perspectives for the animated films to recognize the self-emotions and primitive psychology, so as to awaken the audience's self-concerns. [1] Throughout the description of the image modelling of gods and monsters in the *Classic of Mountains and Seas*, it reflects a strong grotesque and horrible and hideous exaggerated art style. These stories and images of gods and monsters were initially created in the ancient period under a specific time background, which was the imagination of the primitive ancestors on the universe and nature in the underdeveloped social background and living environment. In today's view, the records in *Shan Hai Jing* are often inaccurate, and modern animation films have more often combined the characteristics of the times we live in, aesthetic interests and other factors when presenting the images of gods and monsters, and reconstructed them in a way that is more in line with modern aesthetic concepts. [2]

3. The Analysis of the Film and Television Expression of *Shanhaijing* and Modern Science Fiction Stories

The myths and legends in *Shanhaijing* are an important part of its art world. And modern science fiction stories in the content compared with the "*Classic of Mountains and Seas*", has more scientific basis, and gradually from the myths and legends to science fiction. And there are differences between the two in the expression of film and animation, which is determined by its subject matter itself and audience groups. First of all, from the point of view of the subject matter, "*The Classic of Mountains and Seas*" is mostly ancient myths and legends, which contains a large number of mythological stories and exotic species. These stories have the same romantic and mysterious colours as the myths and legends, but the fantasy scenes in its stories are often based on the real society. Modern science fiction stories, on the other hand, are produced by science fiction, so they have a certain scientific nature. For example, *Wandering Earth*, a science fiction film, tells of a series of scientific exploration activities carried out by people to escape from the earth to the outer planets when the earth is about to be destroyed. Secondly, from the viewpoint of the audience group, *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* is the only work among the ancient cultural texts that is well known and sought after by the world. However, because it involves ancient myths and legends, the audience group is mainly young people with low cultural level or little understanding of ancient myths and legends, while modern science fiction stories are more suitable for the general public to understand and appreciate.

The stories in *Shanhaijing* are full of mysterious colours, and since it belongs to the ancient canon, its contents are mostly based on the real society. Therefore, the presentation of *Shanhaijing* is usually based on narration, with a large

number of mythological stories and exotic species mixed in the narration. At the same time, since the stories often involve many myths and legends, the storyline is also very twisted and complicated. In terms of characterisation, most of the characters in *Shanhaijing* are "non-traditional" with distinctive features, such as the "Queen Mother of the West" and the "Nine-tailed Fox". In these images, there are often distinctive features. For example, Queen Mother of the West's "human face and animal body" and "green fox" are typical representatives. The characters in modern science fiction stories pay more attention to the character image.

4. The Inspiration and Thinking of Film and Television Animation Creation

The application of *Shanhaijing* and modern science fiction stories in the field of film and television animation is conducive to digging out the essence of Chinese culture, reflecting the values and aesthetic interests of Chinese culture, so that the spirit of the Chinese nation can be inherited and carried forward. At the same time, in the creation of film and television animation, it is also possible to integrate China's traditional culture and modern science and technology, so that it has more contemporary characteristics and innovative significance. In recent years, in China's film and television animation creation, there are some works based on ancient Chinese myths as material. These works are widely used in film and television animation and have achieved certain success. For example, the Chinese animation film "*The Descent of Nezha*" not only has strong Chinese characteristics, but also has a distinctive modern atmosphere. The worldview of "*God-feuding Universe*" and traditional Chinese mythological elements presented in the film are refreshing to the audience. The traditional cultural connotations and modern spiritual kernel contained in the film not only meet the contemporary audience's aesthetic demand for traditional culture, but also reflect people's recognition and love of traditional culture. In addition, there are still some shortcomings in the creation of film and television animation in China. For example, traditional culture cannot be well expressed in film and television animation. Although some works have traditional cultural elements as background or subject matter, there are certain limitations in the form of expression. In the presentation of traditional culture, there is often an over-reliance on technical means and post-effects, which makes the works lack innovative and cultural expression of traditional culture.

Therefore, in order to make the creation of film and television animation better reflect the values and aesthetic interests of traditional Chinese culture, film and television animation creators should dig deep into the connotation and essence of traditional Chinese culture and apply them to the creation of works. At the same time, they also need to pay more attention to the influence and impact of the development of the times on traditional culture. In this way, they can better express the ideological connotation and aesthetic value of Chinese outstanding culture in film and television animation creation.

In the mythological story of Xiwangmu, there are stories about emperors in the Central Plains visiting Xiwangmu or Xiwangmu visiting emperors in the Central Plains. It can be seen in many documents that a good tradition of interaction is preserved between the Queen Mother of the West and many

emperors. For example, it is recorded in the Biography of Mu Tianzi that "on the auspicious day of Azi, the Son of Heaven was binging on the Queen Mother of the West. He was holding a white kuai and xuanbi in order to meet the Queen Mother of the West." It is also recorded in the Bamboo Book Chronicles, "In the ninth year, the Queen Mother of the West came to the court. The Queen Mother of the West came to the court and offered white rings and jade penannular rings." From this, we can see that the Queen Mother of the West was an advocate of the concept of symbiosis, and a messenger of peace in the early history of mankind. [3] The Master of the Mountains and the Sea takes the resolution of current life's dilemmas as its theme, and likens the big and small things in life nowadays to "demonic beasts", and through resolving them one by one, it makes people think about the dilemmas that they often encounter nowadays. The story of "The Little Door God" is based on the theme of changing times, and aims to tell people that although technology is advancing and the times are developing, we should not forget our customs and traditions.[4] Myths are a part of the past. [4] Myth is the science fiction of the past, and science fiction is the myth of the future. The recent book "Gods and Robots" which is a big hit in the international science fiction community is a groundbreaking work. [5] Author Andrin Meier argues that the contemporary world's most advanced innovations in the fields of robotics and artificial intelligence were in fact foreshadowed and preceded by ancient myths; that scientific and technological advances are often driven by man's wildest reveries, and that this is as true in antiquity as it is today. Not surprisingly, the study of myths with an eye to the imagination continues to inspire us to think about mythic stories in the age of AI. [6]

5. Conclusion

In the development of film and animation, the Shanhaijing, as an ancient literary art, is an important part of our mythological system. Modern science fiction story, on the

other hand, is a story type that has gradually emerged and been widely used in the context of the continuous development of science and technology. In film and television animation, both the Classic of Mountains and Seas and modern science fiction stories are adaptations of ancient myths and legends, and both have rich cultural connotations and artistic value. At the same time, both of them have certain commonalities in the form of expression, narrative structure and thematic content. And their different applications in film and television animation also show the inheritance and innovation of traditional culture in China's film and television animation. Although there is a difference between the application of "The Classic of Mountains and Seas" and modern science fiction stories in film and television animation, the two different cultures can learn from each other and learn from each other, so as to promote the better development of China's film and television animation art.

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