

Article

A Study on the Construction of Patriotism in Main Theme Film and Television Works

Qiaoyi Zhu^{1,*}¹ Geely University of China, Chengdu, Sichuan, 640400, China

* Correspondence: Qiaoyi Zhu, Geely University of China, Chengdu, Sichuan, 640400, China

Abstract: Mainstream cinematic works, with their distinctive perspectives and narrative styles, have emerged as vital vehicles for the promotion of patriotic sentiments. These productions, through their diverse and emotionally profound subject matter, not only provide audiences with visual and auditory delights but also ignite a strong sense of identity with the nation and its people. In recent years, as times evolve, the standard of creating such works has been continuously elevated, with themes becoming increasingly relatable to real life, striving to awaken dormant patriotism within viewers. Amid the global wave of cultural integration and collision, there is an ever-growing need for cinematic works to disseminate and fortify patriotic ideals. These mainstream films are not merely artistic creations but also cultural missions, employing in-depth explorations of history and modernity, individual and collective narratives, to forge novel expressions of patriotism.

Keywords: main theme film and television works; patriotic spirit; constructive research

1. Introduction

In contemporary Chinese cinematic creation, works characterized by a dominant ideological theme hold a pivotal position due to their specific artistic mission. The spirit of patriotism, serving as the core value of such works, is intricately woven into the narrative's twists and turns, permeating the destinies and decisions of each character. Within the context of a new era, patriotism transcends the mere affection for one's homeland and people; it expands into realms of technological advancement, cultural confidence, and a broadened global perspective. Investigating the spirit of patriotism in prominent ideological cinematic works is crucial for understanding their social functions and educational significance. Such works do not merely engage in didactic preaching; instead, they vividly depict patriotism through compelling stories and character development, rendering this abstract concept tangible and commonplace. This spirit not only aids viewers in comprehending the tumultuous journeys of the past, but also illuminates current aspirations and future aspirations. Consequently, exploring how to construct, express, and disseminate the spirit of patriotism within these prominent cinematic works bears profound practical significance and theoretical value.

2. Overview of Main Theme Film and TV Works

2.1. Definition and Characteristics of Main Theme Film and TV Works

As a unique cultural phenomenon, mainstream cinematic works embody profound patriotic spirit and social values. Their definition can be encapsulated as audiovisual creations centered around the promotion of core socialist values, reflecting the themes of China's societal development and nationalism. Such works typically emphasize positive energy and an uplifting value orientation, inspiring the audience's patriotic fervor through visual and auditory expressive means. In terms of characteristic analysis, three

Published: 11 October 2024



Copyright: © 2024 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

principal aspects emerge. Firstly, the nobility of thematic content is paramount; mainstream films often select significant historical events, national heroes, and societal transformations as their subjects. By delving into and presenting the core spirit within these narratives, they convey messages of national development, ethnic revitalization, and the well-being of the populace. This choice of themes aims to evoke historical resonance and emotional identification among viewers. Secondly, the typicality of character portrayals is a defining element; the creation of positive, vivid, and multifaceted heroic figures is crucial in such works. Be it the unsung heroes of wartime, the outstanding contributors during the reform and opening-up period, or the ordinary individuals selflessly devoted to society today, these character representations powerfully elucidate the values of fearless dedication, solidarity, and love for one's country and its people. These characters serve not merely as narrative catalysts but also as embodiments of idealistic personas and spiritual benchmarks. Thirdly, the uniqueness of artistic expression is evident; mainstream cinematic works often strive for excellence in production, showcasing innovations in narrative techniques while adeptly breaking new ground in visual effects and musical presentation. They endeavor to create profound emotional impact through a high level of artistic quality. The utilization of audiovisual language further integrates traditional Chinese culture with modern cinematic technology, endowing the works with distinctive cultural symbols that enhance their recognizability and allure. These characteristics collectively construct the unique connotation of mainstream films, forming a striking visual presence within the cultural product market, exerting a positive influence and resonating widely with society [1].

2.2. Development History of Main Theme Film and Television Works

The development of mainstream cinematic works in China is imbued with a rich historical context and profound social influences. Since the inception of the People's Republic, such works have endeavored to express and consolidate the national spirit through artistic means, promoting the core values of socialism. In the 1950s and 60s, films such as "The Battle at Lake Changjin" and "Heroic Sons and Daughters" epitomized this genre, focusing on revolutionary warfare themes that crafted positive portrayals of heroic collectives, igniting the flames of patriotism among the populace and serving as a collective solace for the hearts of the era. As the era of reform and opening up unfolded in the 1980s, with the liberation of social thought and the clash of cultural currents, the themes of mainstream films expanded to encompass reform, construction, and contemporary issues. Movies like "The Story of Liu Ba" and "The Young Generation" not only exhibited profound reflections on the transformations of the times but also showcased the interplay and integration of individual and collective values. The 1990s marked a pivotal turning point for mainstream cinematic works; the impetus for market-oriented reforms in the film industry facilitated a more diverse expression of these creations. Masterpieces such as "The Great Decisive Battle" and "The Founding of a Republic" not only made significant advancements in artistic representation but also achieved tremendous commercial success, appealing to a wider audience. Entering the 21st century, amid China's rapid economic development and elevation on the international stage, the scope of mainstream film content widened significantly, and creative methodologies became more pluralistic. Contemporary works such as "Wolf Warrior" and "The Wandering Earth," through high-level production techniques and an international perspective, adeptly narrate Chinese stories, embodying the national confidence and cultural awareness of the new era. In this developmental trajectory, mainstream cinema has not only witnessed the social transformations and shifts in the lives of the people across different historical epochs but has also, through the narrative power of cinematic art, erected bridges that connect history with the future, subtly conveying a robust sense of patriotism.

2.3. Educational Value of Main Theme Film and Television Works

The mainstream cinematic creations hold a pivotal role within the cultural landscape of China, embodying profound and extensive educational values, particularly manifested in the permeation of moral ideals, the transmission of historical mission, and the cultivation of social responsibility. With regard to moral values, such works convey universal principles like justice, honesty, and diligence to the audience through vivid narratives and multifaceted character portrayals. In these cinematic endeavors, the heroic bravery of individuals rescuing their compatriots from peril, alongside the earnest spirit of ordinary people who sacrifice for the collective good, subtly instills moral education in viewers throughout the viewing experience. Furthermore, in terms of conveying a sense of historical mission, mainstream films often draw inspiration from significant historical events or revolutionary figures, recreating the arduous epochs and indomitable spirit of struggle, thereby granting the audience a more concrete understanding of the challenges faced and the accomplishments achieved by the nation and its people. This not only heightens the audience's sense of national pride but also ignites reverence for the endeavors and sacrifices of predecessors. Concurrently, these works prompt viewers to reflect on their own roles and sense of duty within the ongoing march of time. As for social responsibility, they awaken the viewers' awareness and enthusiasm for social welfare by portraying individuals and groups characterized by accountability and integrity. These narratives frequently encourage audience engagement in societal issues through protagonists who unveil social injustices and assist underprivileged communities, thus inspiring active participation in endeavors aimed at constructing a better society.

3. Expression of Patriotism in Main Theme Film and Television Works

3.1. Patriotism in Revolutionary History

Revolutionary historical films, in their portrayal of patriotism, uniquely unveil profound national sentiments and a sense of historical responsibility through their distinctive narrative styles and contextual backgrounds. These works typically center around national liberation and ethnic independence, intricately linking personal destinies with the fate of the nation, thereby illuminating the immense spirit of sacrifice individuals exhibit in their struggles for their country and people. Within these pieces, patriotism transcends mere emotional expression, emerging as a practice of action that underscores the determination and resilience displayed by individuals during moments of national peril. Revolutionary history profoundly captures the complexities and nobility of human nature, crafting an ethos of selfless dedication and bravery in service to the nation. Through the documentary depiction of historical events, these narratives resonate with audiences, evoking a sense of historical obligation and igniting contemporary viewers' national pride and patriotic fervor. The characters within these dramas often draw inspiration from unwavering ideals, demonstrating indomitable spirit amid arduous revolutionary struggles, and becoming symbols of the enduring national spirit. Furthermore, revolutionary historical works are not merely reflections on the past; they intertwine historical reflection with contemporary realities, reminding audiences to heed the lessons of history and cherish the hard-won happiness of the present. This reconstruction and reinterpretation of historical themes fundamentally represents a profound reimagining of the spirit of patriotism, articulating core values through unique perspectives and artistic expressions. Thus, they convey the essence of patriotism to every viewer, establishing it as a vital component of social consensus and collective memory [2].

3.2. Patriotism of Heroic Figures

The genre of heroic models has consistently served as a significant vehicle for expressing patriotism in mainstream film and television productions. Through meticulous depictions and profound explorations of these heroic figures, such works not only showcase the magnificent lives of individuals against specific historical backdrops but also

deepen the audience's contemplation of national and ethnic destinies. Heroes and models often embody fearless courage and a profound sense of mission. They relentlessly strive for the interests of their country and people, epitomizing the spirit of sacrificing oneself for righteousness and unyielding perseverance. In these characters, one can witness profound love for the motherland and selfless dedication. On the screen, these individuals are not merely lifelike personal portraits but collective embodiments of national spirit. By deeply portraying the stories of these heroic models and the eras they inhabit, film and television works awaken a deep sense of national pride and historical responsibility within the audience, subtly propagating and enhancing patriotism. The sacrifices and glories, bravery and resilience depicted on screen reflect a nation's arduous journey through history. At the same time, these stories serve as inspirational forces driving audiences to actively strive and courageously take on responsibilities in their daily lives. These heroic models have penned heart-stirring patriotic chapters through their actions, transforming patriotism from abstract slogans into a palpable and comprehensible spiritual force with the ebb and flow of audience emotions. It is through such nuanced details and emotional resonance that mainstream works successfully transform the legendary experiences of these models into symbols of national spirit, becoming an inexhaustible source of patriotic inspiration.

3.3. Patriotism in Contemporary Life

Contemporary cinematic works that revolve around themes of daily life intricately unfold layers of narrative, vividly and authentically portraying the multifaceted essence of patriotic spirit. In these creations, patriotism transcends the mere emblem of a flag waving high; it embodies a sentiment and responsibility deeply embedded in the minutiae of everyday existence. The swiftly evolving urban landscapes, the bustling throngs of people, and the vibrant essence of ordinary alleys collectively serve as a vivid backdrop for the expression of patriotism. The characters depicted are often not lofty heroes but rather the quintessential commoners—perhaps modest office workers, diligent laborers, or entrepreneurs with a heartfelt connection to their hometowns. It is through these diverse figures, in the nuances of life, that a spiritual blueprint of the modern Chinese identity is vividly illustrated. Their professional spirit and sense of duty in the face of work challenges stand as the finest testament to the nation's vigorous development; the warmth and resilience they exhibit in familial relationships signify both the continuation and evolution of traditional culture; their kindness and mutual support in community life reflect a profound practice of the core socialist values. Behind the perseverance and struggles of each everyday individual, the spirit of patriotism evolves from being merely part of a grand narrative into an intrinsic aspect of the yearning for and pursuit of a fulfilling life. This close-knit integration ensures that patriotism not only becomes a torch igniting passion but also a soothing warmth for the soul, interweaving individual destinies with the nation's future, inspiring every ordinary person to fulfill their commitments and responsibilities to their homeland in their own unique way.

4. Strategies for Constructing the Spirit of Patriotism in Main Theme Film and Television Works

4.1. Combination of History and Reality

In mainstream cinematic works, the integration of history and contemporary reality transcends mere replication of historical events; it reinterprets the past through the lens of modern perspectives and values, thus blending the weight of history with the urgency of the present, in turn stirring the viewers' patriotic sentiments. Films set against the backdrop of the War of Resistance against Japan vividly recreate the tumultuous era, transporting audiences back to those harrowing days filled with gunfire and chaos. The television series "Bright Sword" and the film "Assembly" not only portray the heroes' valiant battles but also elucidate the intricate relationships among characters and their personal

growth, showcasing the profound connections between individuals and collectives, as well as between history and contemporaneity, at a time of existential crisis for the nation. This narrative approach prompts viewers to grasp the spirit of heroism while contemplating how contemporary society and individuals can embody patriotism in peacetime. The strategy of intertwining history and reality is further manifested in the reinterpretation of specific historical events. For instance, the film "The Founding of a Republic," which reflects the early years of nation-building, artfully depicts historical figures such as Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, infusing artistic creation with an examination of the era. This enables the audience not only to witness the grand sweeps of history but also to appreciate the significance of leadership, unity, and a sense of mission in modern society. Such resonance between history and reality allows viewers to achieve a deeper understanding and internalization of the essence of patriotism [3]. When addressing historical themes, these works frequently employ modern narrative techniques and cinematic technologies, such as non-linear storytelling, parallel montage, and computer-generated effects to recreate historical scenes. On one hand, this technological modernization bridges the gap between the audience and history; on the other hand, the contemporary expression of historical figures' dialogue and actions renders them vividly "alive," facilitating a connection between historical contexts and the sense of duty in real life. The film "Wolf Warriors 2" deeply interweaves personal destinies, national interests, and a global sense of responsibility, enveloping viewers in a thrilling narrative that not only instills pride in being Chinese but also ignites a fervent desire to contribute to the nation and its people. This amalgamation of "history and reality" extends beyond domestic historical events, reaching into the contemporary international milieu within a globalized context, fostering in the audience an education and call to patriotic spirit. These works tirelessly strive to awaken viewers from the mundanity of daily life through the authentic reenactment of history combined with modern concepts, guiding them to reevaluate the responsibilities and inspirations that history imparts and to grasp the power driving societal advancement. Such artistic endeavors plant the seeds of patriotism in the hearts of audiences, igniting their enthusiasm through contemplation and reflection, ultimately translating into tangible actions. This encapsulates the relentless efforts and unique contributions of mainstream cinematic works in constructing the spirit of patriotism through the fusion of history and reality.

4.2. Unity of Individual and Collective

In the realm of mainstream cinematic works, the unification of the individual and the collective serves as one of the central strategies in shaping the spirit of patriotism, reflecting the profound interconnectedness between individual destinies and the fate of the nation. This strategy intricately weaves narratives of personal growth with collective fate, tightly linking the struggles of individuals with the flourishing prosperity of the state. The protagonists are often ordinary individuals who, when confronted with the destiny of their nation and ethnicity, exhibit selfless dedication and unwavering determination. By embedding personal fates within the grand narrative of national development, these works skillfully illustrate the harmony between the 'small self' and the 'greater self.' For instance, the film "The Five Heroes of Wolf Tooth Mountain" depicts several ordinary soldiers during the wartime, who choose to sacrifice themselves for the greater good of the collective. The audience is able to perceive the heroism exhibited by individuals in moments of collective peril, a valor that transcends mere personal choice and embodies the spirit of an entire era. The television drama "Soldier Assault" showcases the harmonious unity between individual aspirations and collective honor through the journey of Xu Sanduo. His perseverance and effort are not solely aimed at realizing personal value but at striving for the team and the nation as a whole. This narrative approach subtly intertwines personal growth with the destiny of the state, evoking emotional resonance and

reflection among viewers. In contemporary times, this construct of individual and collective unity is particularly pronounced against the backdrop of the Chinese Dream and national rejuvenation. The film "Wolf Warrior 2," with its tension-filled plot and tightly knit action sequences, allows audiences to viscerally experience the fusion of individual heroism and national strength. The protagonist's adventures not only signify personal redemption but also symbolize the nation's rescue and its international responsibilities. This technique merges an individual's choices during crises with the image and sense of responsibility of the nation, crafting a shared sense of duty and mission among contemporary Chinese people [4].

4.3. Integration of Emotion and Reason

In the face of the intricate and multifaceted modern world, mainstream cinematic works transport audiences into a realm where reason and emotion intertwine through narratives that resonate with reality, authentically crafted characters, and evocative historical reenactments. For instance, the film "Operation Mekong" narrates the story of Chinese police combating drug trafficking on an international scale. The film captivates its viewers with a tense plot and striking visual impact, evoking a profound emotional response that conjures feelings of urgency and peril, while simultaneously imparting a deep rational reflection on the significance of national security and international responsibility through the sacrifices of its characters and the resolute decisions of the state. The interplay of emotional turbulence and rational contemplation fosters a psychological sense of identification with the nation and its people. Similarly, "The Captain," a film based on true events, meticulously recreates the calm and resolute actions of crew members during an aviation crisis, illuminating their ability to overcome extreme adversity. Throughout the viewing experience, audiences find themselves taken on an emotional roller coaster, feeling the courage and perseverance exhibited by the crew members in the face of life-and-death trials, which in turn highlight the nation's commitment to cultivating aviation talent and demonstrate its technological prowess. Through such emotional resonance and rational analysis, the work subtly ignites a sense of pride in the nation's aviation endeavors and confidence in its prosperity. In the television drama "The Great River," the confluence of emotion and reason is vividly illustrated through the portrayal of societal changes during the early reform and opening-up period in China. The drama reveals the struggles of several protagonists and their personal choices amidst the torrents of the era, allowing viewers to appreciate the narrative while deeply experiencing the far-reaching impacts of this monumental historical transformation on individuals, families, and the national destiny. Audiences are moved by the aspirations of these ordinary individuals while gaining a more profound understanding of the implications of national development policies.

5. Conclusion

Patriotic-themed audiovisual works play an indispensable role in fostering a spirit of patriotism. They not only depict Chinese stories through the integration of history and reality, the unity of the individual and the collective, and the fusion of emotion and reason, but also successfully ignite the patriotic sentiments within the audience. In the context of globalization, film and television creation should continue to focus on patriotic themes closely related to social development, and through innovative narrative techniques and vivid character portrayal, help viewers establish a deeper sense of national identity. Enhancing the artistic quality and appeal of these works will allow audiences to subtly receive patriotic education while enjoying the stories, marking a crucial direction for the sustained development of patriotic-themed audiovisual works in the future. This not only holds educational significance for cultivating a new generation's spirit of patriotism but also has profound strategic implications for enhancing the cultural soft power of the entire

society. By continuously enriching the content and expression of patriotic-themed audio-visual works, it is believed that future creations will continue to inherit and promote the spirit of patriotism, injecting more positive energy into social development.

References

1. CHENG C .Analysis on the Way of Integrating Educational Drama into Patriotism Education for Primary School Students[J].Asian Agricultural Research,2024,16(8):42-46.
2. Gudeleva E .HISTORY, PATRIOTISM AND MAN: A CASE STUDY OF THE ONE-SHOT FILM BY B. LIZNEV "POLK, SMIRNO!"[J].Language, Individual & Society,2016,10(1):156-163.
3. Yilei W (William) D F .Infusing patriotism in popular culture: the multimodal construction of patriotic values in a Chinese main melody film[J].Critical Studies in Media Communication,2024,41(1):68-83.
4. Graefer A .No place like home : Patriotism and femininity in German reality television[J].Critical Studies in Television: The International Journal of Television Studies,2018,13(1):24-41.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of SOAP and/or the editor(s). SOAP and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.