

# On the Narrative Strategy and Moral Value of The Main Theme Movie "Me and My Motherland"

Yan Meng

School of Hebei Normal University, Shijiazhuang, China

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**Abstract:** "My Motherland and I" is a film by Chen Kaige as the chief director, Huang Jiaxin as the chief producer, Zhang Yibai, Guan Hu, Xue Xiaolu, Xu Zheng, Ning Hao, Wen Muye co-directed, Huang Bo, Zhang Yi, Wu Jing, Du Jiang, Ge You, Liu Haoran, Chen Feiyu, Song Jia and other people co-starring in a drama film. The film depicts the experiences of seven ordinary people who are closely connected with major national events, and through the perspectives of small characters, shows the deep connection between ordinary people and the country in the 70 years since the founding of New China. Since the film itself was made to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of New China, it is of great research value. This paper aims to study two questions: one is to study the professional narrative strategies used in the film; The second is to sum up the educational significance and moral value of the film. Therefore, this thesis starts from the narrative strategy and moral value of the film, analyzes the content of the film "My Country and I", and explores the far-reaching value expressed by the whole film.

**Keywords:** Me and my country; Narrative strategy; Theme film; Function of moral education.

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## 1. The Development of The Theme Film

### 1.1. The 1930s began to appear

The Left-wing film movement of 1932. The early development of Chinese film, from the birth of the film to the rise of the left-wing film movement in 1932, the progress of the film in this stage laid a solid foundation for the growth of the subsequent theme film. During the leftist film campaign of 1932, China's film industry reached its historic peak in the five or six years before the start of the Anti-Japanese War in 1937. Because the Party organization attaches great importance to the film industry, since 1932, under the guidance of Mr. Qu Qiubai, the Party film team has been established. It changed the face of early Chinese film both in the field of ideology and politics and in the aspect of film art. At this time, Chinese film work continued to strengthen the left-wing film power from the scriptwriter, while learning from the experience of Soviet film. Later, China's mainstream film industry was able to grow because of the solid foundation it laid.

The prototype of the main theme film. After the establishment of the Northeast Film Studio, the Beijing Film Studio and Shanghai Film Studio were established successively, during which a number of early theme films were shot to praise the heroes and daughters and the founding of the nation to resist aggression. Among them, "Children of China", "White-haired Girl", "Iron Warrior", "Zhao Yiman", "New Hero Children Turn" and so on. The war theme includes "Dong Cunrui", "Plain Guerrilla", "Shanganling", "Railway Guerrilla" and so on. The shooting of these films provides references for the shaping of hero characters and plot development of the later main theme films.

### 1.2. The 1980s witnessed vigorous development

In 1987, the National Conference of directors of feature film factories was held, which was an important historical meeting for the vigorous development of theme film. The meeting pointed out that the film shooting should reflect the

realistic theme of the spirit of The Times and the revolutionary historical theme of the glorious achievements of the party and the army, and carry forward the national spirit. The central government approved the establishment of a "Revolutionary historical theme film creation Leading Group" in Beijing. During this period, a number of films reflecting the main theme were shot, including the familiar "The Bank of the Jinsha River", "Tunnel War", "Mine War", "Yan 'an Guerrilla", "Soldier Zhang Ga", "Hero Xiao Eight Road", "Liu Sanjie", "Honghu Red Guard Team" and so on. Most of these films have strong historical stories. Praise and spread the heroic deeds of the Party's revolutionary heroes and daughters in the War of Resistance against Japan and the War of Liberation. At the same time, it also shows the revolutionary spirit of the Chinese people in resisting aggression and landlord oppression and fighting against the old and evil forces.

The main theme films of this period, both in terms of plot setting and characterization, are more in line with the background of The Times, and the protagonist's lines are vivid and the characters are vivid. "Little soldier Zhang Ga" has shaped the characters of clever and brave, the Gazi who is jealous of evil, the Yingzi who is kind and meticulous, the fat and cute and the Tongle who is timid but righteous. "Little Soldier Zhang Ga" is not only a children's drama, it is full of all the characteristics of children in the war era, but it is also a serious anti-Japanese epic. It embodies the great struggle of the Communists and the people in solidarity and cooperation against aggression. It is the continuous creation of these films that made the theme films flourish at that time and laid a solid foundation for the development of later films.

### 1.3. The new theme film of the 21st century

Entering the 21st century, the international situation is changing, and China's economic strength and international status have been continuously improved after the reform and opening up, especially after China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001, and its international influence has been increasing. Under the influence of Hollywood films, Chinese films at this time were constantly in line with the world. It not

only learned from the shooting techniques and plot creation in Hollywood films, but also made more innovations on the basis of the original main theme films. In 2015, *Wolf Warrior*, the first 3D action war film, surprised the audience with its actors' combat scenes and military equipment, and was referred to as the Chinese version of death squads. In 2017, *Wolf Warrior 2* topped the overall box office with 5.689 billion yuan. Since then, the founding trilogy "*The Founding of the Party*", "*The Founding of the Republic*", "*the Founding of the Army*" and "*Red Sea Action*", "*Me and My motherland*", "*Eight hundred*", "*Changjin Lake*", "*Awakening Years*" and other main theme films have been launched. These films integrate new scientific and technological creation methods, and carry out innovations in the perception of film pictures, the construction of large scenes and the application of 3D technology, so that the audience can earn enough experience and visual effects. It also means that the development of the theme film continues to absorb new factors of The Times and keep pace with The Times.

## **2. The Narrative Strategy of The Film Me and My Motherland**

### **2.1. Narrative mode ----- The plot is a delicate interpretation of the feelings of the family and the country**

The exquisite plot can enhance the audience's emotional resonance, create a more three-dimensional character image, improve the artistic value of the film, and enhance the appeal of the film. All these can make the movie more deeply rooted in people's hearts, so that the audience can get a more profound experience and feelings in the process of watching the movie. The audience can more truly feel the joy and sorrow of the characters and resonate with them, which not only allows the audience to be emotionally satisfied, but also guides them to think about the meaning and value of life.

First, a detailed story helps to show the complexity and versatility of the characters. By digging deeply into the inner world and growth process of the characters, the film can create three-dimensional, plump characters. Such characters are not only more authentic and believable, but also allow the audience to produce more thinking and understanding during the process of watching the movie. "*My Motherland and I*" the first story "*Eve*" is about the eve of the founding of New China, the founding ceremony in the automatic flag-raising ceremony of the preparation process. In order to ensure that the chairman pressed the flag button on October 1, the electric flag raising team represented by Lin Zhiyuan began the final work. The flag is not enough, the people come to support the red silk, there is no accurate national anthem music, other units lend suona players, the most important blocking ball failed, the people support the tube radio. Where there are people, there is hope. Women's silver jewelry, children's locks, old people's dry tobacco bags, as long as they have want to take out to help. Finally, Tsinghua University chemistry professor sent out the laboratory's only remaining sample blocking ball recovery finally has hope. The country is a collection of families, but also a collection of people, just like Lin Zhiyuan said, "eight years of revolution 20 million people sacrificed for the national flag, we can ensure that nothing is wrong, the national event, Zhi yuan will do his utmost." In the face of national affairs, every family is not stingy. The whole play reflects the responsibility of the country and the

seriousness of the revolutionary work, and thousands of experiments can finally ensure that the moment is not wrong.

Secondly, the delicate plot can also enhance the artistic value and cultural connotation of the film. When a film is very delicate in terms of plot, characters, emotions, etc., its overall artistic quality and cultural connotation will also be improved. Such films can not only bring visual and auditory enjoyment to the audience, but also allow them to get more nourishment and enlightenment on the spiritual level. In "*My Motherland and Me*", Gao Yuan is one of the unsung heroes who silently contribute to the research of atomic bombs. In the process of participating in the atomic bomb research, he was injured by radiation and was hospitalized. In order to keep the secret of the atomic bomb research, he had to cut off contact with his lover Fang Min. Later, when I met Fang Min on the bus, I only said that I had the wrong person, until Fang Min saw Gao Yuan's black and white photos on TV many years later, I knew what he had done for the development of the motherland. The story of Gao Yuan reflects that generation of scientific researchers resolutely gave up the love of lovers in front of the great love of the country, putting personal emotions and interests in a secondary position, and this spirit is worth our learning and inheritance.

### **2.2. Narrative perspective ----- The value identification of the civilian minority**

Taking the common people as the narrative perspective makes the film more popular and easier to be accepted, because the little people living in this era are the portrayal of the majority of ordinary people. With ordinary characters as the main body, the film can make more people find value recognition and emotional support. In today's social and cultural atmosphere, the "tall and full" character shaping mode in traditional theme movies seems to lose some new ideas. Today's new mainstream films have broken away from the stereotyped image shaping of "either good or evil" and "either black or white", replacing it with a more diverse character setting. Populist niche narratives help to show the diversity and complexity of society. By focusing on the civilian minority groups of different social classes, cultural backgrounds and identities, films can present the diversified face of society and reveal the commonalities and differences between different groups. This display of diversity helps the audience to have a more comprehensive understanding of society and enhance their understanding and respect for diverse cultures. In addition, the civilian minority narrative also has a unique artistic charm. Such stories often show the inner world and life of the characters in a real, delicate and in-depth way, so that the audience can have a deeper understanding of the growth, struggle and pursuit of the characters. This deeply rooted narrative can not only move the hearts of the audience, but also trigger their profound thinking about life, human nature and society.

Finally, the choice of civilian minority narrative is also an attempt of film innovation. In today's increasingly diversified public aesthetic, film creators need to constantly explore new narrative methods and angles in order to attract the audience's eye and meet their needs. As a novel and unique way of narration, civilian minority narration can inject new vitality and creativity into film creation.

In the way of narration, it shows that small people can live a different life under the influence of the big background. In the story of "*Winning the Title*", Chen Dongdong as a witness to focus on the Chinese women's volleyball team's winning

course. It follows Dongdong's conflict between his friendship for Xiao Mei and his sense of responsibility for his neighbors. The plot is light and full of details. Tapes of my Chinese heart, table tennis training, watching the women's volleyball match..... All reflect the importance of the development of national sports. The three antenna failures in the film make the plot more compact, although in the end, Dongdong does not have time to give Xiaomi the tape, Xiaomi only left the ping pong ball printed with the national flag. But the Chinese women's volleyball team has coach Chen Dongdong, and the physics field has an overseas physicist Xiao Mei. The content is simple but the tension is strong, the little boy's grievance is eager, and the neighbor's hope is eager to perform incisively and vividly.

### **2.3. Narrative structure ----- multi-line narrative highlights the mainstream value**

The advantage of film multi-line narration is that it can enrich the story content, create dramatic conflicts, broaden the audience's horizon, and improve the narrative efficiency. Multi-line narration can show multiple perspectives: through different clues and angles, different aspects of the same event or theme are presented, so that the audience can have a more comprehensive understanding of the story background and character relationships. It can enhance the artistic value and enjoyment of the film. This narrative method can bring the audience more in-depth thinking and digging fun, but also provides more possibilities and innovation space for film creation. Bai Juyi, a famous poet in the Tang Dynasty, once wrote that "articles are written for The Times, and songs and poems are written for things", which means that excellent literary and artistic works shoulder the social obligation to voice The Times and spread excellent culture. The "empathy" between the works and the audience is an important means to achieve the communication effect.

The film presents the story of different historical periods through several short films, each of which takes a specific historical event as the background, making the story more rich and complex. "Eve", "Encounter", "Champion", "Return", "Beijing Hello", "Day Meteor", "Escort" seven plate stories, each has its own focus, but there is a main line throughout the full text that is to show the development of new China. Whether it is the development of atomic bombs or the return of Hong Kong, the National Day parade means that China is gradually becoming stronger. The film chooses the Angle of the civilian minority to narrate, which is closer to the life experience and emotional experience of ordinary people, so that the audience can more easily resonate with it and enhance the movie-watching experience. In the "Day Meteor", retired Uncle Li's redemption of two lost young people, so that they had the honor to witness the safe landing of Shenzhou XI, the two young men picked up the chair that passed the astronauts, and also took on the unfinished work of Uncle Li. The day meteor, is the navigator of the heart; In the short film "Encounter", Gao Yuan is one of countless scientific researchers on the front of national defense science and technology. Sacrifice yourself in order to solve the problem. It wasn't until the first atomic bomb was dropped that his girlfriend saw him on TV years later. Gao Yuan sang his own song of youth with life, downstairs a batch of parade students are the new builders of the motherland. "Day Meteor" shows more responsibility and contributes to the development of hometown. "Encounter" shows the sense of mission as a revolutionary worker, and there is no end to life. Both are the

epitome of mainstream values.

## **3. Overview of Moral Education Function of The Film "Me and My Motherland"**

### **3.1. The moral function of "My Country and I" is a paean to heroism**

According to Foster, we can divide character categories into two main categories: round characters and flat characters. Circular characters refer to characters with complex personality traits in literary creation. Such characters usually show diversified and changing characteristics in movies. Their characters have gone through stages of shaping and development, usually have a relatively stable personality core, and also show a variety of different character characteristics and levels, which are intertwined. An independent and rich "world" is formed. Usually, it can leave the audience with a multi-angle, three-dimensional feeling, which often causes their soul shock. The main theme films in the past mostly depict flat heroes, who share a single or similar characteristic, such as strong, commanding, brave, and so on. As a mass cultural product, film really needs to conform to the aesthetic taste of modern audiences. With the changes of The Times and the progress of society, the audience's aesthetic concept is also constantly developing and changing. Therefore, the film needs to keep pace with The Times in the aspects of narrative, content, picture and sound effect to meet the aesthetic needs of modern audiences.

First, they want to see more new, interesting and creative storylines that will arouse their curiosity and interest. At the same time, they also like to experience more emotional resonance and thinking during the viewing process. In addition, modern audiences pay more attention to the values and cultural connotations conveyed by films. They hope that the film can reflect the real face of society and the multi-faceted nature of humanity, and at the same time convey positive values and cultural spirit. Such films can not only resonate with audiences, but also have a positive impact on them.

The hero in the movie is not only the hero in the movie but also the model in life. Full, flesh-and-blood "down-to-earth" characters are more relatable. It is not difficult to see that there are many heroes in each of the seven sections of the film. The characters in the drama are fresh, in "Escort", the quality and outstanding female pilots, in the execution of the task, in the face of the upcoming opportunity, or resolutely help teammates troubleshoot, and finally successfully completed the flight task, but also won the respect of the team members. The role of the captain here is very full, there is the struggle in the face of being arranged as a substitute, there is the usual training hard, and the most important is the help to the teammates in the end. Sometimes, a person is not a hero, but a person who can sacrifice himself and take care of the overall situation is a hero.

### **3.2. The moral function of "Me and My Motherland" praises the noble personality**

The main theme film vividly presents those characters with noble quality and spirit in front of the audience through delicate characterization and plot design, so that we can feel their power and charm. These characters often possess qualities such as bravery, tenacity, integrity and kindness, and

their actions and choices are full of positive energy, which can inspire our empathy and admiration. Through their stories, we can be inspired and inspired by seeing the power and value of noble character. At the same time, some movie characters embody their social responsibility and responsibility through their actions and choices. In the process of watching the film, the audience can feel the power of this sense of responsibility, and then enhance their own sense of social responsibility, and are willing to contribute their own strength to the development and progress of society. When shaping characters, the theme film pays attention to finding the connection point between the spirit of the characters and the life of the current era, so that the audience can immerse themselves in the ordinary and extraordinary characters.

Film creation is not only a form of entertainment, but also a kind of cultural inheritance and spirit promotion. It uses the way of images, those worthy of our study and pursuit of quality to the audience, so that we can enjoy the film at the same time, but also can feel the brilliance and beauty of humanity. Mr. Zhong Chengxiang once said: "Art can develop people's imagination, not only that, people have to rely on art to cultivate a kind of human nature and good feelings." ② The main line of the segment of "Day Meteor" is to praise the success of China's space industry, and the hero astronauts successfully returned to the earth after space exploration. The dark line is a tribute to the noble personality of every village cadre, especially those who bury their roots in their hometown and dedicate their lives. From the moral function point of view, Uncle Li is only the representative of tens of thousands of village cadres, they are not only the guardian of society, but also the guide of young people's hearts.

Faced with two disoriented teenagers, Uncle Li did not choose to give up, but listened and understood with patience, exhorted and guided with wisdom and courage. He knows that every teenager is the future of the society and the hope of the family, so he spares no effort to help the teenager return to the right path and find the meaning and value of life. His exhortations are not only empty preaching, but also use their own actions to influence and infect these teenagers. Lead by example, show noble character and moral style, let the young people see what is true courage, integrity and kindness. With his help, many lost teenagers have been able to embrace the future positively. Their lives were changed because of the advice of these cadres, and they became better because of the help of these cadres. Under the infection of Uncle Li, the last two teenagers are willing to stay in their hometown and contribute to the development of their hometown. They caught the seat of the astronaut at the last moment, which also means that they took over the burden of Uncle Li and committed themselves to rural poverty alleviation and development, and such an outcome is actually the sublimation of the figure of Uncle Li. Through carefully shaped characters, the film better conveys mainstream ideology and the spirit of The Times, and inspires the audience's resonance and emotional identification.

### **3.3. The moral education function of "Me and My Motherland" praises the feelings of home and country**

Under the influence of the ancient patriarchal system, the Chinese people have deep-rooted feelings of home and country, "University" has cloud "self-cultivation, family, governance, and peace of the world", Mencius said "the foundation of the world in the country, the foundation of the

country at home, the foundation of the family in the body", the spirit is the foundation of a person, but also a nation, a country's prosperity. Media spreads culture and life, reflecting educational significance in film and television works, which can better realize all-round education. Film creation can not only restore history to the greatest extent and depict a real historical image, but also add innovative elements to create educational films that conform to the trend of The Times and can be recognized by the audience. Especially as the main theme film, while depicting historical events, it can also subtly transmit educational content and spiritual advocacy. However, this does not mean that the film is generally the same as the fact, Professor Zhang Guangzhi once mentioned in the "Reappearance of history - Talk about the history of film and television" : "To make a historical film look good, it is necessary to create some stories, to refine and summarize the material, and to complete through artistic imagination and fiction. A kind of illusory beauty of artistic creation can be concretely reflected in film and television. The beauty of the theme we advocate in the film is not only due to the character character, narrative structure and other similes, but more because the behavior of the film character plays a decisive role in a specific event, thus reflecting a subtle influence in the film.

Marx once said, "Science is by no means a selfish pleasure, and those who are fortunate enough to devote themselves to scientific research should first serve mankind with their knowledge." From the moral function of film art, Encounter is a memorial to the scientists who participated in the construction of the motherland. Gao Yuan in the film is one of tens of millions of scientific research troops. The characters depicted are full of flesh and blood, first of all, an ordinary person, and then a scientist engaged in secret work. The real life experiences of small people drive the development of the story, so that the audience has a stronger sense of experience, and the heart is more respectful of the anonymous staff. But nameless is not equal to never be known, his girlfriend saw his black and white photos on TV this paragraph can be described as enough to earn the tears of the audience, in the parade street of the success of the atomic bomb explosion, two people were rushed further and further away, at this time has implied to the high end. As an ordinary person, the family is the best home in the heart, but there are always some people for the motherland's national defense construction far away from their parents and relatives, they incognito, day after day to do great things.

## **4. In General**

The development of theme films is a process of continuous innovation and development, which constantly tries new themes, types and techniques to adapt to the development of The Times and the needs of the audience. The theme film has always adhered to the creative direction of carrying forward the mainstream values and eulogizing the power of humanity, providing the audience with a richer and more diversified film experience. The film "My Motherland and I" has become a strong mark in the history of Chinese film because of its unique narrative mode and unique moral value. The theme film of the new era will face greater opportunities and challenges in the continuous development of the future. This puts higher demands on film creators. With the progress of The Times, the theme film will certainly have more development possibilities, telling a good story is the eternal pursuit of filmmakers, we also look forward to seeing more

excellent Chinese stories in the future.

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