The Intercultural Communication of Chinese Culture in Chinese and Western Films

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Abstract
Since the intensification of globalization, the media industry has been developing rapidly, with the film industry replacing traditional literary forms like novels as a medium for portraying the Western imagination of the East. Due to globalization, Hollywood movies have undergone changes in terms of subject matter and filming techniques. More and more directors are shooting movies based in China, incorporating additional Chinese elements to attract the public's attention. Examples include "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon", "Mulan", and "Kung Fu Panda". These works either explore themes from traditional Chinese literature, set their stories in China, or incorporate unique cultural symbols of China. Although many Chinese elements are used, they fail to reflect the real-life situation in China. The cultural differences between the East and the West are a key factor that influences how Chinese people react to Hollywood movies. In the process of cultural production and understanding, individuals often analyze the culture of other countries through the lens of their own culture and interpret other cultures using the characteristics of their own culture. This article mainly studies and analyzes the cross-cultural dissemination of Chinese culture in Chinese and Western films.

Keywords
Intercultural communication, Chinese cinema, Chinese culture, cultural relativism, comparison of Chinese and Western cinema

1. Background
Intercultural communication first began systematic research in theory, starting with Edward Hall, who first used the term "Intercultural Communication" in his book Silent Language. After the 1950s, the United States experienced an unprecedented influx of immigrants, further promoting the birth of Intercultural communication. In the 1960s, President Kennedy of the United States initiated the establishment of the "Peace Corps", which sparked more interest in effective communication between different cultures in various academic fields in the United States. During this period, The Struggle for Civil Rights among Ethnic Minorities in the United States and the Deepening Cultural Diversity Debate, this has made the US government realize the importance of communication between different ethnic and cultural groups.

Tannen Daborah mentioned in his 1983 speech on intercultural communication that we are exposed to different 'ways of talking', which not only depends on the country we grew up in and the language we speak, but also on the influence of region, race, class, and even gender. He believes that intercultural communication makes the basic process of all human communication clear and tense. But in fact, mastering intercultural communication skills can help people compare with different cultures, improve their self-awareness, and encourage people to re-evaluate their own culture.

Since the early 1980s, intercultural communication has gradually entered the vision of Chinese academia. Although
China's Intercultural communication practices both externally and internally are increasingly extensive, the reality of China's social and cultural rapid development and change is that under the promotion of the "Belt and Road", Chinese culture is constantly promoted, and China's influence is also constantly improving. Similarly, we are also shooting about China's excellent traditional culture, and clothing. This article mainly studies and analyzes the intercultural dissemination of Chinese culture in Chinese and Western films, including architectural and literary works.

2. Intercultural communication of Chinese and Western films

Movies play an important role in Intercultural communication. Compared to other works of art, movies are more intuitive, concrete, and vivid, and easier to break down barriers between different cultures and engage in intercultural communication (Zuo Ke et al., 2022). However, in the Intercultural dissemination of Chinese films, apart from Chinese kung fu-themed films, few films have been able to enter the international market.

In today's Generation Z, trends in social and business environments have promoted the demand for Intercultural communication skills (Denys Lifintsev & Wanja Wellbrook, 2019). Their research results indicate that the tools of the digital age simplify the process of Intercultural communication: for many people, when they are not "face-to-face", they are more likely to interact with representatives of different cultures, especially when it comes to movies, using image expression as a starting point is easy to grasp due to the concretization of their image system and its close connection with the expression system. And it is easy to touch the deep layers of culture (Chen Xiaowei, 2014).

2.1 Cultural Differences between China and the West

Cultural differences are a prerequisite for intercultural communication, and a correct understanding of culture and cultural differences is the guarantee for successful intercultural communication. And movies are a unique cultural form. By using language and discourse as expressions, although movies are a global language, the cultural discourse they present is different. The essence of intercultural communication in movies is the dissemination of culture. No matter how intuitive and international the film language itself may be, its content cannot be separated from the cultural composition of the creators. For a long time, Chinese films have been plagued by inequality in cultural dissemination, while the global expansion of American films has further exacerbated cultural inequality. Undoubtedly, the entertainment model developed by Hollywood in response to coping with capitalist modernity, through by bright, vibrant, seemingly rich, and popular forms—has expanded globally. It has penetrated into other cultural industries, as well as into other cultural spaces and practices, and even the standards of world culture are being attached to Western values. A research viewpoint suggests that: In the postmodern postcolonial era, economic dependence emerged in the form of cultural dependence. The Third World, due to its relatively backward economy, was also in a noncentral position in terms of culture, while the First World, due to its strong economic and technological strength, held the dominant position in cultural output and could forcefully instill its own values and ideologies into the Third World through mass media. The marginalized Third World could only be coerced into accepting that their cultural traditions are under threat, their mother tongue is being lost, their culture is deprecating, and their values are being impacted.

2.2 Differences in intercultural expression between Chinese and Western films

In the research process of intercultural communication in Chinese films, it is also essential to draw on and use intercultural communication theories, although intercultural communication theories are based on interpersonal communication groups or individuals. John R. Eperjesi (2004) commented in her cultural research on the Chinese film Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon that Chinese culture and the Chinese dream not only need to correspond to the political subconscious, but more importantly, to achieve it on the ground. She believes that China's openness is not yet balanced, and there are still limitations to spreading Chinese culture through movies, which was indeed the case at that time. For Chinese films, Opening up the Western and even global markets is still a long process, but what is meaningful is the Wandering Earth series of films released in 2019 and 2022. In intercultural communication, Western countries and audiences have begun to accept and appreciate the collective and family concepts in Chinese culture.

However, the expression of Chinese culture in the United States is quite complicated, and the Disney film Mulan has a polarized reputation in both foreign and Chinese countries. The goal of filmmakers is to integrate traditional Chinese culture into their films. And effectively using intercultural communication strategies to improve the acceptance of movies, but in specific applications, the opposite situation has emerged. Their understanding of Chinese culture only stays on the surface, so they only filmed the outer shell of Chinese culture. The martial arts culture that
is intended to be reflected in the film also does not conform to the connotations and characteristics of martial arts in Chinese culture. In addition, they want to show Chinese traditional costumes and makeup and even come to China's Earthen Building in Fujian Province to take pictures. The main color of the costumes is red, and the main color of the buildings is gold, but it is far from the reality of the Southern and Northern Dynasties era in the film story, which leads to the film in the eyes of Chinese audiences, which is a chaotic mixture of various elements, but satisfies the Western audience's imagination of China.

2.3 Relativism in Chinese and Western culture

Boas pointed out that each culture has its own unique history of long-term formation, and there is no distinction between high and low forms. The terms the barbaric era, barbaric era, and civilized era only reflect some people's ethnocentric views. Any ethnic group or tribe has its own logic, social ideology, worldview, and moral values, and people should not use their own set of standards to measure the culture of other ethnic groups. Jack Donnelly (1984) analyzed two factions in relative culturalism, radical universalism and relative universalism. He proposed recognizing that limited cultural differences may be necessary based on the fundamental universality of basic human rights.

Although cultural relativism breaks through the Western-centric model, some Western scholars and the masses still blindly reject or even suppress other cultures, leading to cultural isolation. Like the values that Hollywood science fiction films have always conveyed, promoting personal heroism, such as the superheroes in Marvel movies, showcasing a personally centered American culture where these heroic images typically have strong personalities and expressive power; However, China advocates collectivism, and the image of heroes is more restrained and implicit, presenting the characteristic of silent heroes in Chinese culture (Giovanni B. Andornino, 2020).

For the dual meanings of cultural relativism, firstly, different civilizations have chosen different development paths in history, and there is no single absolute standard, let alone imposing it on people; The second is that only by sitting opposite each other and walking towards each other can we solve the common difficulties we face. It breaks through numerous obstacles in politics and ideology, starts from cultural roots, promotes deep mutual understanding and equal dialogue between China and the West, and makes the world hear rational and diverse voices. The biggest contribution of ‘Wandering Earth 2’ is not the film technology that rivals Hollywood, nor the perfect promotion of Chinese-made, but rather providing the world with a romantic and localized spiritual expression that is different from the West. Of course, movies like Kung Fu Panda and Mulan that integrate Chinese elements, although they have a one-sided understanding and are full of Western imagination, are correct and advisable for cultural relativism.

3. Understanding and expression of Chinese culture in Chinese and Western films

3.1 Differences in the expression of China in Chinese and Western films

Compared to the story of saving the Earth with one person's power in Hollywood science fiction movies in the United States, the Wandering Earth series of movies provides foolishness moves mountains style rescue model that never abandons one's home (Giovanni B. Andornino, 2020), which clearly shows that the cultural prototype and thinking mode of China are different from those of the United States.

Michael Ignatieff’s (2000) speech is included in Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry: Indigenous peoples who have their own culture may not necessarily agree with other Western values, they use the form of defending the entire culture to oppose the invasion of Western imperialist culture. The value of American movies is that no matter what, in the face of the end, only a superhero or someone with a pure inner self can definitely save the world. The values reflected in the Wandering Earth series of movies are to save the world or rely on the unity of the people of the world. This value system will certainly have a certain impact on the Western concept of relying on heroes to save the world. Just as Meg Mclagan (2002) argues that in intercultural relativism, “image politics” cleverly utilizes the interests of celebrities and Western media towards different cultures, some critics have been at the forefront of creating a new type of media radicalism. Behind the New York Times’ painful criticism of Wandering Earth 2”, it is clear that the West is resisting and suppressing the rise of Chinese culture. They are naturally very afraid of the impact of the 5000 year cultural heritage of Eastern Chinese culture on its value.

Compared to the 2020 release of Mulan, although all starring Chinese celebrities, it is essentially to adapt to the rigid perception and psychological expectations of North American and European audiences of Chinese-style legends. Setting aside the impact of the epidemic on domestic box office sales, the United States still has a significant deviation in its understanding of Chinese culture, and it is still a manifestation of personal heroism, a Chinese heroine story.
that has been demonized for "political correctness, this has led to a decline in the reputation of Mulan in China. On the one hand, Hua Mulan breaks through the plot setting that Mulan can only show her personal value under the male identity of Big Brother Hua in the traditional narrative, and tells the innovative story of Mulan's battle against the battlefield as a woman. However, the visual presentation and historical overhead of Chinese traditional culture, such as the Earthen Building in Fujian Province, still do not break the stereotype of media orientalism shaping the oriental wonders. In this sense, although Mulan breaks the mindset of defining women's achievements with male authority and reflects the cultural thickening and discourse innovation of the traditional narrative of gender equality, there is still room for strengthening in the cultural expression of East-West dualism.

In fact, the animated film Mulan released by Disney in 1998 was similar in situation. Ink and wash painting, landscape architecture, dragon and lion dance, lantern decorations, palaces, ancestral halls, Eight Trigrams, Ruyi patterns, auspicious clouds, and so on also mixed Chinese elements together, as if as long as they existed, they became a representative of China. So neither of Disney's two versions of Mulan was filmed in China, it was the Western imagination of China. Obviously, the intercultural dissemination of Chinese culture has not been successful in American movies.

3.2 Chinese collectivism and Western individualism

The film and television works about individualism and collectivism in intercultural communication are both impressive and uneven. In Daphna Oyserman and Spike W. S. Lee's (2008) cross-border research, it was found that there are significant differences in values between individualism and collectivism, which can have psychological effects on individuals, strongly suggesting the impact of culture on cognition, and once a specific cultural focus is raised, it is likely to take more extreme actions.

In the trend of globalization, the analysis of localized contradictions and cultural diversity has become one of the focuses of exploration, and the intercultural contradictions and conflicts between China and the West in the field of art are also constantly being explored in depth. In the Peace Review in 2007, there was still a critical exploration of intercultural communication theory. Western countries focused more on the application of intercultural communication to serve the phenomenon of decolonization, but they still did not fully agree with some psychological and cultural concepts in society: China placed more emphasis on collectivism and advocated sacrificing personal interests for the collective (Zhao Yi, 2020). Therefore, when there is a conflict between personal and collective interests, collective interests should always be given priority. However, the West emphasizes individualism and self-centeredness, so personal affairs should be given priority, and individual freedom and rights should not be sacrificed for collective interests. This will give rise to personal heroism, which is vividly reflected in the expression of American movies. There are too many Hollywood science fiction films like Galactic Guard, Star Trek, Sea King, and so on. It will make the vast majority of the audience subconsciously believe that the personal heroism conveyed in the movie is absolutely correct. And Chinese movies are all showing collectivism and family values. In the Wandering Earth series of movies, the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind displayed by China is clearly not accepted or even criticized by Western countries led by the United States.

However, on the basis of traditional Chinese folk stories, Mulan uses a large number of Chinese elements and hopes to achieve cultural integration by combining Chinese culture and American values. However, there are significant gaps in the integration, leading to a rapid decline in the film's reputation. Intercultural communication can create dialogue and continuous information transmission (Matthews et al., 2012). However, the expression of Chinese culture and American values presented in Mulan in Intercultural Communication lacks the localization transformation of Chinese culture, and some scholars even believe that this is a theft of cultural concepts. This film seems to integrate Chinese culture and American values, but the core culture it expresses is still the knight culture of the Western Middle Ages.

4. The limitations of Chinese culture in the intercultural communication of Chinese and Western films

The films Kung Fu Panda and Mulan draw on Chinese characteristic elements but are created by foreign screenwriters and directors. This use of Chinese cultural symbols seems to have been widely disseminated internationally, but still in the phenomenon of cultural hybridity not being able to achieve good local cultural adaptation and transformation (Liu Ying et al., 2021). Xiao Jun, a researcher and professor at the Media Development Research Center of Wuhan
University, said in an interview: The core of Intercultural communication is anyone's culture, and whether it is cultural dilution or cultural thickening is within the scope of controversy. The Wandering Earth series of movies reflects the Chinese concept of valuing family and having blood thicker than water, which is not a common theme in Western culture. Western culture places greater emphasis on personal choice and self-actualization, while in Chinese culture, family and interpersonal relationships are more important.

4.1 The Integration of culture and film in the era of new globalization

The cultural heterogeneity emphasized in intercultural communication in the era of new globalization has been repeatedly transformed and redistributed in different cultural circles and is no longer adapted to the changes in the global cultural landscape under the current rise of other countries' environments. In the dialogue and communication between stable cultures, differences are more emphasized than similarities, and existing intercultural communication emphasizes cultural stability more than cultural change (Liu Ying et al., 2021). At this point, new systems and technologies are needed to promote Intercultural communication.

The cross-regional, cross-system, and cross-subject integration of technology in movies not only achieves qualitative upgrades in visuals and visual effects but also promotes deep mutual understanding and equal dialogue between China and the West from a cultural perspective, allowing the world to hear rational and diverse voices. The Wandering Earth series of movies is an imagination that has never been imagined in Western science fiction films. The biggest contribution of the Wandering Earth series of movies is not comparable to Hollywood's film technology, nor is it a perfect promotion of Made in China. Instead, it provides the world with a romantic and localized spiritual expression that is different from the West. However, it still has not shaken off its opposition to particularism and universalism, East and West Imagination of binary opposition between traditional and modern knowledge (Sheng Yang, 2021).

From the perspective of Intercultural communication, new globalization is a new stage of development and a new concept of cultural communication. There is still a lack of research on intercultural conflicts and the exploration of Chinese wisdom in this regard. In such an environment, the traditional pattern of Western strength and Eastern weakness in Chinese culture in the expression of Chinese and Western films is being broken, and the empowerment of the public by new media is also changing the Western-dominated production pattern of media culture (Shi Anbin, 2021). Neo-globalization is a new stage of development after British globalization and American globalization and is a new cultural exchange concept that has been expanded in the game between globalization and anti-globalization. The transformation lies in challenges, even rewriting the global cultural pattern of the McDonald's style American core. The summary of its characteristics lies in our understanding of the significant transformation of human social practice itself. However, when facing the new changes of "new globalization", its shortcomings are evident, and intercultural communication theory research needs to be supplemented and revised.

4.2 Cultural blending in the intercultural communication of Chinese and Western films

From the perspective of international cultural dissemination, the process of cultural blending thickens some cultures and dilutes others. That is to say, the result of hybridization may make the core of one culture prominent, while also making the core of another culture hidden (Sheng Yang, 2021). Another way of expressing it is beneficial for the international dissemination of certain aspects of a certain culture, but not conducive to the international dissemination of certain aspects of another culture. Taking Kung Fu Panda and Mulan as examples, Chinese cultural symbols such as Kung Fu and Mulan seem to have been widely disseminated internationally through the popularity of these movies. However, the spirit and connotation behind these symbols are not very consistent or far from our traditional culture. On the contrary, some characteristics of Western culture are highlighted through the outer clothing of Chinese culture. If dualism is the basic framework of Western philosophy, with the deepening restructuring of cultural globalization, how to take advantage of the situation, break through cultural essentialism cognition such as East=particularism and West=universalism, and reconstruct the media expression of the subject's cultural dynamics can be expected to become a new thinking point for intercultural communication in the next stage.

5. Rethinking the intercultural communication and integration of Chinese culture

The core concept of intercultural communication no longer fully summarizes the complexity of global cultural integration in today's digital media. Defining cross as trans will take a new perspective on the new trend of cultural
communication, where you have me and I have you (Shi Anbin, 2021). The intercultural dissemination of Chinese culture in Chinese and Western films is still a long process. In the process of globalization, economic globalization is bound to drive the collision and integration of cultures. Intercultural communication better summarizes this process of cultural hybridization (Liu Ying, 2021). Western countries are always curious and imaginative about the mysterious and ancient Eastern civilization. However, in their imagination and creation of Chinese culture, Western film and television works often incorporate Western epic-style creative ideas, and the forms presented are often not recognized by Chinese audiences. When Chinese movies engage in intercultural communication, they should preserve the characteristics and core values of Chinese culture. While telling Chinese stories well, they should also allow Western audiences to accept Chinese culture, understand the concepts contained in Chinese culture, and truly achieve cultural dialogue and integration in the era of cultural blending.

The characteristic of originating from China and being used by others pursued by intercultural communication can no longer meet the actual needs of the current culture going global. Based on the concept of intercultural communication, only by deeply embedding cultural products into the context and needs of local culture can we truly achieve cultural dialogue and integration. To be sure, it is possible to form a fusion culture or a third culture that transcends boundaries. Even before internet platforms deeply intervene in human life, people can generate a Transcultural Third Space through the third language space (such as communication between native speakers of Chinese and Japanese, using English for communication), to achieve intersubjectivity dialogue and the reconstruction of local culture. As the frequency and degree of communication between different cultures increase, integrated cultures or third cultures gradually form. This type of culture is different from the adaptation and adjustment of a single culture to other cultures, but rather two or more cultures are mixed, integrated, and inseparable from each other. When we come into contact with this new culture, we feel that it is both familiar and completely different from familiar cultures. It contains multiple cultural elements and internalizes them into one. It is both national and foreign, a product of the new era of globalization, and a product of digital communication technology.

6. Conclusion

The foundation of Chinese culture is the culture created by the Chinese nation in China. We define the breadth and depth of Chinese culture from a broad cultural perspective and outline the history of Chinese culture through the stages of traditional Chinese culture, modern transitional culture, and modern culture. Professor Shan Bo from the School of Journalism and Communication at Wuhan University once revised the conclusion of "using China as a method", proposing that rational external reporting in China and the world are mutually reinforcing methods and purposes. This conclusion demonstrates the possibility of a paradigm shift in intercultural communication cognition. If the overall idea of transcultural communication is to transcend the Western centrism of American globalization, then giving full "grant rights" and "give energy" to cultural actors and promoting equal communication and balanced dissemination between them is decentralization. We not only need to pay attention to the subject construction of the target country and target group in the process of cultural development but also fully explore and reflect on our own cultural transformation and global cultural flow. By going global with Chinese culture and attempting to blend, integrate, engage in dialogue, and interact with local culture, it will make Chinese culture more approachable, approachable, and infectious. It can even creatively transform the appearance and form of Chinese culture, integrate its spiritual core into local culture, and produce integrated cultural products that are popular among local people.

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