

The Application of Traditional Chinese Cultural Elements in Fantasy Costume Drama - A Case Study of "Love Between Fairy and Devil"

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ABSTRACT: The spread of Chinese TV dramas cannot be separated from the strong underpinnings of Chinese stories. Strengthening the multifaceted presentation of traditional culture is an indispensable element in creating quality TV dramas with culture, connotation and Chinese characteristics. With a unique oriental narrative and a unique oriental romantic audio-visual language, the fantasy ancient idol drama "Love Between Fairy and Devil" restores a beautiful oriental fantasy world, which helps to reshape the audience's visual imagination of Chinese classical mythology, conveys the unique charm of Chinese traditional culture to the audience, and promotes the further "going out" of traditional culture.

1. INTRODUCTION

Chinese civilization has a long history and traditional Chinese culture has given constant inspiration to the creation of contemporary film and television dramas. The domestic ancient costume idol drama (hereinafter referred to as the ancient idol drama) has transformed and applied a large number of Chinese traditional cultural resources in production, and has spread the essence of Chinese culture in multiple dimensions in its consumption process. [1]. Through the creation of the genre of fantasy costume dramas, which is popular among young people, excellent traditional culture has been further inherited and promoted, and has been taken to the international stage.

Fantasy ancient drama "Love Between Fairy and Devil" started broadcasting on August 7, 2022, which tells the story of a sweet and sadistic love story between the fairy Little Orchid and the Moon Devil Dong Fang Qing Cang, who swap bodies by accident. As of September 7, 2022, the show won the heat of iQIYI station in 2022 first, douban recent popular mainland drama list first grade; [2] meanwhile, the drama was launched on Netflix overseas, and logged into six overseas countries (Malaysia / Thailand / Singapore / Indonesia / Vietnam / Philippines) Twitter trend TOP10 during the broadcast [3]. This study will take the mysterious ancient drama "Love Between Fairy and Devil" as an example and analyze how it expresses the connotation of traditional culture from two perspectives: the performance of oriental narrative and the unique oriental romantic audio-visual language, to explore how the mysterious ancient drama can further promote Chinese traditional culture

and highlights the beauty of traditional culture.

2. PERFORMANCE OF ORIENTAL NARRATIVE STYLE

2.1. Role setting is based on the traditional Southern Chu mythology system

The role setting of "Love Between Fairy and Devil" is based on Chinese traditional culture, which shows the charm of the traditional Southern Chu mythology system. According to the concept of "archetype" proposed by Jung, archetypes and the collective unconscious are the inexhaustible source of creation that makes a literary work great and classic [4]. In Chinese traditional culture, the numerous myths and legends with rich themes have provided rich inspiration for the creation of film and television dramas, making the costume dramas full of ancient Chinese mythological archetypes, and due to the influence of the collective unconscious, these archetypes can be understood and accepted by the audience without obstacles, and achieve emotional resonance.

As the first drama in China with the mythological system of Southern Chu, the system of gods and goddesses in "Love Between Fairy and Devil" refers to "The Nine Songs of ChuCi". The individual images of gods are mostly functional gods in the "Nine Songs", taking on a certain responsibility. Donghuang Taiyi is the most honored god [5]. In the drama, "Tai Yi Sheng Shui, Hong Meng Chu Kai", the "Taiyi" here refers to the creator god who created the whole world, which corresponds to the supreme celestial god of the

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Chu mythological system, namely Donghuang Taiyi. Regarding the division of the duties of the Great and Small Siming, the Great Siming is in charge of longevity and has a serious and mysterious image; the young Si is in charge of the fate of children, solemn and dignified, and is loved by the people [5]. In the drama, Siming incarnates the goddess of beauty who is in charge of the development of the life pattern of all people, i.e., birth and death.

In ancient times, the basic purpose of worshipping ghosts and gods was to pray for blessings and avert disasters [6], "Mountain ghosts" originated from "Nine Songs". Scholars who hold the view of "Wushan Goddess" discuss mountain ghosts as Wushan Goddess from many aspects such as literary image. In the play, Little Orchid has another identity as the Goddess of Xishan, and her image is borrowed from the Goddess of Wushan, who is a representative of the purest and most virtuous, and finally gives up her life to exchange for peace and happiness of the living beings.

2.2. Heavenly Causation Cycle and Traditional Five Elements Concept

2.2.1. The Cycle of Heavenly Causation

The concept of the heavenly cycle in China has a long history. Lao Zhuang and his disciples believed that the Heavenly Way is a divine existence that nurtures all things and blesses human beings, and that it can create the cycle of heaven and earth with the changing of seasons and the movement of the stars [7]. The first episode of "Love Between Fairy and Devil" mentioned: "Destiny begins with the Heavenly Way and gives birth to the cycle of cause and effect of all things." It is because of the cycle of cause and effect of the heavenly path that the world of this drama was born from water. And the first drop of water in the sky fell to form Wangchuan, the place where Wangchuan flows, gave birth to Shuiyuntian, Cangyan Sea, Yunmengze, and Xilan Holy Land outside the Three Realms. Therefore, all living beings in the world are in the cycle of cause and effect, and they are born endlessly.

2.2.2. Traditional concept of five elements

In addition, the doctrine of the five elements is an ancient and long-standing philosophy that has influenced every aspect of Chinese life; the world view of "all things are one" considers the world as an organic whole composed of many things that are interrelated, interdependent and mutually influential [8]. In the play, Shuiyuntian and Cangyanhai are powerful and long-lived, but they are each other's arch-enemies. Yunmengze has no magic with a short life span, but a large number of strong reproductive power, reproduction power is strong, and the immortal clan of Shuiyuntian and the moon clan of Cangyanhai

come here must comply with the rules. Each of the three worlds has its own world order, reaching a balance of interdependence and mutual influence.

2.3. Traditional oriental emotional expression emphasizing freehand brushwork and pursuing great love

In 'Love of Immortals and Magic', the emotional development of the two main characters is full of implicit beauty. In film and television works, the proper use of "implicit" beauty is to use the relationship between objects, scenery, and people to outline the deep and implicit inner world of the characters and show their introverted and soothing emotions [9]. The images related to flowers in the play, such as petal rain, flower houses and flower cakes, create a vague romantic atmosphere. Although love is not directly expressed, the audience can understand the feelings of both parties through this sentiment. In the creation of Chinese painting, the author is used to creating a more remote artistic conception for the viewer by using the technique of leaving blank, which can stimulate the imagination of the viewer when appreciating the painting [10]. In the play, when Little Orchid first falls into the sea of Dong Fang Qing Cang's heart, there is only a bare tree in the snow and ice, and this lonely environment highlights the lack of Dong Fang's emotions; more and later he fell in love with Little Orchid, heart of the tree continues to sprout and grow eventually blossomed branches in stark contrast, this blank highlights the emotional changes of the characters, more enriched the expression of love.

In Chinese traditional culture, the love of family and country is full of the love of mountains and rivers, the love of homeland and care for the people of the world [11]. As the goddess of Xishan, Little Orchid was born with the ability to support all living creatures, as well as the mind of loving all living creatures. In her eyes, all things are spiritual and deserve to be taken care of; even if the beginning in the Shuiyuntian is not good, after being evicted, she didn't allow Dong Fang Qing Cang to harm her former home; there is no inferiority difference between immortals, moon clan and mortals in her heart. Everyone around Little Orchid was touched and changed because of this sincerity. Finally, Little Orchid chose to sacrifice herself because of her great love for the world, and due to this love, she and her lover were redeemed. This great love shows the grand and abundant life pattern and the endless inheritance strength [12].

3. UNIQUE ORIENTAL ROMANTIC AUDIO-VISUAL LANGUAGE

The establishment of the unique artistic style of film and television works largely depends on the audio-visual art of the works. Pictures and sounds are indispensable components of film and television

language[12]. "Love Between Fairy and Devil" with full of Chinese characteristics of the scene, costumes, artifacts and traditional festivals, and then with Chinese traditional musical instruments chi-ba, suona and other elements with the plot to promote, creating a unique oriental romantic audio-visual art.

3.1. Scene setting draws from traditional culture

Based on Chu culture, the drama takes the oriental water element as the base to create a scene of water and cloudy sky. Shuiyuntian is composed of water and cloud elements. The architectural structure and style bring a light and soft visual style. The color matching is pink and purple, which is very beautiful and romantic, and conforms to the artistic image created by Chu people. Most of the shapes they create are unrestrained and colorful, the cloud pattern swirls back and curls, giving people a dynamic aesthetic [13]. Yunmengze, which represents the human scene, whose name corresponds to the South Sea in the "Shanhajing" [14]. It has been recorded since ancient times. The scene in the play is based on the open and inclusive flourishing Tang Dynasty, showing the prosperity of ancient Chinese cities. In addition, when Ronghao immortal and Changheng immortal went into the ancient scroll and sat in the boat, drinking and chatting, the simple lines and single colors mainly showed the characteristics of Chinese traditional elaborate-style painting. Among the main elements of Chinese traditional painting, "color" and "line" are important elements [15]. The literati painting is also a unique cultural heritage in the treasure house of Chinese art. The natural mountains, rivers, bamboo forests, boating and other images displayed in the ancient paintings fully show the artistic conception of the literati's sentimental landscape.

3.2. Analysis of Traditional Cultural Elements of Costumes and Artifacts

3.2.1. Costume analysis

The costumes of men and women in Shuiyuntian are close to the Wei-Jin period, men mostly love the wide clothes, by the impact of metaphysics formed the "Wei-Jin style" with large sleeves and wide shirts [16]. In the play, immortal men wear wide-sleeved, floating sense of overcoat, showing a free and elegant immortal image. Women's clothing also conforms to the characteristics of the Wei-Jin period, usually with large and opposite flaps, as well as with ribbons tied around the outside [16]. The costumes of the moon clan are very characteristic of the ethnic minorities, and the character of Jie Li often has a very obvious Hu costume: the costume is tight in the middle and waist, with the belt exposed, with narrow sleeves and long pants, and exotic flowers. Women also tend to use more hair forms, embellished with gemstones, metal

chains and other elements. Human daily dress basically restore the Tang Dynasty style, women wear skirts, The style is a short skirt or shirt, wearing a long skirt, wearing silk, skirt waist chest or armpit, tied with ribbon[17]. Men wear round or folded-collared robes with narrow sleeves, a belt around their waist, and black leather boots on their feet[18].

3.2.2. Chinese intangible cultural heritage skills

In the production process of "Love Between Fairy and Devil", there are 27 intangible cultural heritage craftsmen, 32 intangible cultural heritage traditional crafts, and the participation of 6 major Chinese intangible cultural heritage arts. The following focuses on the analysis of the six major Chinese arts displayed in the play. First of all, the brocade box in the Siming Palace where the Little orchid lives adopts the traditional lacquer painting process. China, as the cradle of the world lacquer culture, has been recorded eight thousand years ago[19]. Lacquer art covers painting, and other traditional gold lacquer painting process [19]. It is both a work of art, and also practical decorations, can be used as wall decorations, screens and murals. Secondly, the headwear of Little Orchid and Xie Wanqing is dotted with many velvet flowers. The hand-woven knitting technique is an intangible cultural heritage of China. According to historical records, the production of velvet flowers was already very exquisite during the Tang Dynasty (618-907). Velvet flowers not only look elegant and gorgeous, but they also sounded like "Rong Hua", meaning good luck and wealth [20]. In addition, the orchid handkerchiefs carried by Changheng is beautiful in pattern, elegant in color and exquisite in appearance. The play invited Suzhou embroidery artist and Jiangsu Province arts and crafts celebrity Lu Jianying to use Suzhou embroidery technology for production, which has a history of more than 2000 years[21]. Xiao Run's hand-held sandalwood fan is also a representative of intangible cultural heritage crafts. Suzhou sandalwood fan was originated in the in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties. It has the characteristics of exquisite materials and fine craftsmanship. And when the fan is opened, the fragrance is fresh [22]. The round silk fan used by women in the play is also worth studying. The fan is based on bamboo and wood as the skeleton, and silk fabrics such as silk are used as the fan. The fan pattern has a good auspicious meaning. The round silk fan culture originated in China and first appeared in the Western Han Dynasty[23]. The clothing of Xiao Run is made from hand-woven Xia cloth. Xia cloth has the reputation of ancient Chinese textile "living fossil" [24]; has a high aesthetic appreciation value.

3.3. Analysis of cultural elements of traditional festivals

The plot of the protagonist in Yunmengze in "Love Between Fairy and Devil" shows two traditional Chinese festivals: the Lantern Festival and the Flower

Festival. The 15th day of the first month of the lunar calendar is the traditional Lantern Festival, and by the Tang Dynasty, the festival had become an important festival of imperial and public concern. The most important activity of the festival is lantern watching [25]. In the festival presented in the play, it can be seen that the streets are decorated with lanterns, and the atmosphere is very lively, which makes the audience feel the unique charm of the festival. The Flower Festival is a traditional festival in early spring in China, which is enjoyed by both refined and popular individuals. Most of the clearly recorded Flower Festival are from Song literature. Outing to enjoy flowers, butterfly meetings, sacrifice to flower goddess [26] and so on are all important customs of the Flower Festival. This romantic festival is also used as a good day for weddings in the drama.

4. CONCLUSION

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, President Xi Jinping has repeatedly talked about telling the Chinese story well to the outside world [27]. Domestic TV dramas are driven by huge traditional cultural resources in the production process. "Love Between Fairy and Devil" uses traditional cultural resources in terms of narrative and audio-visual language to show the audience the beauty of Chinese stories. It gives Chinese story a new way of display and connotation expression from a different perspective, which stimulates the audience's enthusiasm for binge-watching. At the same time, it stimulated the secondary dissemination of the play on the short video platform, allowing more audiences to take the initiative to learn about the magnificent and mysterious oriental fantasy world, which in turn will help promote traditional culture abroad and further enhance its international influence. However, the broadcast of the drama also showed some content with controversial origins from the East and the West, which aroused questions from the audience, and reminded the majority of film and television drama creators to rationally develop traditional cultural resources and explore the connotation of traditional culture with a more rigorous attitude.

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