

On the “Zombie Culture” in Hong Kong Zombie Films in the 1980s

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Abstract: In the 1930s, zombie films appeared in Hong Kong, but the zombie image was not dressed in Qing Dynasty clothes, pasted with yellow paper, with straight feet and jumping. In the 1980s, zombie films in Hong Kong, China did not blindly imitate the production mode of Western vampire films. Innovatively opened up a new situation of combining with Chinese traditional culture. Therefore, zombie films are also divided into two periods: before the 1980s (1936-1980) and after the 1980s (1985-1986). In the early stage, it mostly imitated Hollywood vampire films to explore its own ideological expression. In the later stage, it focuses on seeking the recognition of its own “cultural identity”, so as to create the type of zombie film and reach its peak. From the perspective of Hong Kong zombie types in the 1980s, this paper studies the “zombie culture” in zombie films by using ideological theory. On this basis, it analyzes the zombie cultural foundation after the cultural identity of zombie films under the ideology of Hong Kong in the late 1980s. Finally, it analyzes the core basis for the development of zombie films in Hong Kong, China under the core values of Chinese socialism.

1. Introduction

After the release of zombie, a film honoring Hong Kong zombies made by Mai Junlong in 2013, there was another wave of “zombie fever” in China. The box office also went on to peak after the glorious Hongkong zombie movie in 80s. China's Hongkong box office reached 11 million 160 thousand Hong Kong dollars, and the Chinese mainland box office was 15 million yuan. Therefore, “zombie” and “zombie” films have once again attracted attention in the industry. Zombie films in Hong Kong, China are divided into two times. That is, the early 1980s (1936-1980) and the late 1980s (1985-1986). Zombie films in the early 1980s mostly imitated American vampire films. Therefore, it is also called “vampire zombie”. In the simple imitation, the lack of values expressed in the film makes it become an imitation that only cares about the outside. In the late 1980s, the Hong family class led by Hong Jinbao organically integrated the elements of “Kung Fu Comedy” unique to Hong Kong with Chinese traditional Taoist culture. The <Encounter of the Spooky Kind> was successfully welcomed by the audience with comedy and mysterious Taoist culture. Therefore, it has established the basic production mode of Hong Kong zombie film. Therefore, the research on the narrative structure and development analysis of Chinese zombie films in Hong Kong has been successful and fruitful.

However, in its “zombie culture”, there is a problem of exploring cultural identity under ideology. It did not take into account the ideology of Hong Kong at that time and ignored the deep collective psychology desired by people. Based on this, this paper studies the “zombie culture” in zombie films from the perspective of zombie types in Hong Kong in the 1980s. This paper extends the research framework in theory. In practice, it provides a reference for the development of zombie films in Hong Kong, China.

2. The Origin of Hong Kong Zombie Films and the Awakening of Cultural Identity

2.1 The Origin and Evolution of Hong Kong Zombie Films

The origin of zombies can be traced back to China's pre-Qin period. At most, it exists in folklore and literary works. Poetry, Elegance. Yunhan: "drought is cruel, like fire." With the passage of time, the folklore of the dry cat has increased. In the Qing Dynasty, the image of dryland is more specific and clear. Therefore, people call it "zombie". But also because it has no materialized image, the image of zombies is still not fixed. In people's cognition, but all terror, disasters and unknown things can be called zombies. Zombie films in Hong Kong, China were first influenced by Western vampire films. <Dracula>, produced by Universal Pictures in 1931, set off a small climax of vampire films in the history of western films. Under the influence of Hong Kong's ideology and social background at that time, the film attracted the attention of the Hong Kong film market, and imitated the production method to produce the first vampire zombie theme film <midnight zombie> (1936). For the first time, the zombie image is intuitively displayed in front of the audience. At the same time, films such as <haunted house zombies> and <thousand-year-old Vampire> were launched one after another, indicating that Hong Kong began to explore zombie films as a film type for the first time.

Table 1 Overview of Hong Kong Zombie Films in the 1930s

Particular Year	Film name	Director	Production company
1939	haunted house zombies	Liang Weimin	Hong Kong big star film company
1939	thousand-year-old Vampire		HongKong Shanchuan company
1957	Xiangxi chasing corpses	Tian Lin Wang	Hong Kong Xinhua film company
1958	Necropsy	Zhu Shilin	Hong Kong Phoenix film company
1959	New Zombie Revenge	Zhou Shilu	Shaw Studios Hong Kong

From the 1930s, Hong Kong zombie film was in its infancy and exploration period. Learn from the production mode of American Hollywood vampire films and imitate production. From the production level, zombie movies copy the Golden Book settings in vampire movies in plot and background. Such as churches, castles, medieval costumes. In terms of the character image setting in the play, the characters of doctor, doctor and detective are set respectively, and the confrontation between the three is described as the content structure. In terms of plot content, the way to subdue the zombie is the same as that of the vampire zombie by British director Rence Filch. They all stab the zombie in the heart with an iron nail to destroy it. Therefore, the zombie film in the early 1980s is a complete replica of the Western vampire film, inheriting all its characteristics. It is more rational and has a certain meaning of anti-feudal superstition. But it lacks the development of self-originality.

The <The Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires>(1974) in the 1970s indicates that Hong Kong zombies have come to a transitional period. The film not only abandons the intention of simply imitating vampire films in the past, but also innovatively integrates Maoshan art into Chinese traditional Taoist culture, making efforts to seek the organic integration of the two. In 1979, <The.Shadow.Boxing>incorporated the elements of "Kung Fu Comedy" with the characteristics of Hong Kong films for the first time. For the first time, let the zombies wear the clothes of the Qing Dynasty, and set the zombie action as holding hands flat and jumping. Standardized the image and behavior of zombies. It is the first time to establish a new character relationship with teachers and apprentices as the link. Let the audience feel the warmth of human nature and the Chinese traditional culture of being close as father between teachers and disciples. Comic elements have been added to the character and character

r relationship, which are branded with the unique logo of Hong Kong films.



Fig.2 Zombies in Official Clothes of the Qing Dynasty

The 1980s was also a glorious era for Hong Kong zombie films. The Hong family class led by Hong Jinbao integrates ghost elements into zombie films. Since then, the “ghost Trilogy” of <Encounter of the Spooky Kind>(1980), <The Dead and the Deadly> (1982) and <Hocus Pocus> (1984) came out. The film uses a lot of traditional Chinese cultural elements. Such as ancestral hall, paper spell, coffin, shroud, etc. In the form of expression, it is mostly in the form of Kung Fu, ghosts, Maoshan magic, opera and so on, and integrated into the plot with strong national cultural elements such as Taoist fighting, forming a unique narrative mode. Therefore, it has also established the historical position of Hong Kong zombie film in the history of film.

Table 3 Overview of Hong Kong Zombie Films in the 1980s

Particular Year	Film name	Director	Production company	box office (HKD)	Box office ranking in the same year
1985	Mr. Vampire	Liu Guanwei	golden harvest	\$20092129	7
1985	Zombie boy	Chen Junliang	Jinge Shadow Art Co., Ltd. (Taiwan)		
1986	Mr. Vampire Part 2, Mr. Vampire II	Liu Guanwei	golden harvest	\$13073563	8
1986	New Mr. Vampire	Chen Huiyi	Hong Kong New Era Film Co., Ltd	\$13073563	17
1986	MAOSHAN	Huang Ying	Hong Kong Hang Seng Film Co., Ltd	\$4328766	50
1987	Magic Story	Liu Yongji	Hong Kong Fengnian film company		
1987	Mr. Vampire 3	Liu Guanwei	Bache Film Co., Ltd	\$19460536	13
1988	Mr. Vampire 4	Liu Guanwei	golden harvest	\$14038901	20
1989	Vampire Vs Vampire. One-Eyebrow Priest	lin zhengying	golden harvest	\$11192048	22

Through the analysis, it can be concluded that Hong Kong zombie films are divided into two periods: the early 1980s and the late 1980s. The former mainly imitates Western vampire films and initially explores the framework of zombie films. In essence, it has no originality and self-values. The latter is the development and glorious period of Hong Kong zombie film. Zombie films in this period sought the development of cultural diversity, abandoned the Western model and created the Hong Kong model. Among them, it creatively integrates the elements of Chinese traditional culture and Hong Kong comedy, and successfully opens up the production mode of Hong Kong zombie film under the organic action of the two.

At the same time, it standardizes the image and behavior of zombies; Film character relationship; Narrative mechanism, etc. So as to lay a solid foundation for the generation of Hong Kong zombie film types.

2.2 Cultural Identity Awakening of Hong Kong Zombie Films

The film has the function of education, which not only shows the story narrative plot, but also contains the ideology reflected in the social background at that time. Therefore, it can also be said that the film itself is regarded as an ideology. In a broad sense, film is a commodity and film industry is an industry, with exclusive operation rules and systems; However, in a narrow sense, the image, intuition and popularity of the film can control the audience's consciousness to a wide extent. On the surface, the film is only a mechanical copy of the current social situation, but in fact, it makes up the reality according to the rules of national ideology. Comori's reactionary theory mentions that not according to the true face of those things is copy of the face reflected through ideology. Including, theme, style, form, meaning, narrative tradition. To show their society and life.

From 1930s to 1940s, Hong Kong Society was in a state of colonial occupation. People suffer both materially and mentally. After Hong Kong was influenced by American vampire films in 1936, the <midnight zombie> was shot by pure imitation. In response to its call not to shoot works for invaders, the Hong Kong film industry did not have any works in the 1940s. Then in the 1960s, under the influence of the "cleaning movement" advocating rationality and opposing feudal superstition, the output of zombie films was only 20. Therefore, we can see that the instability of Hong Kong society at that time reflects the fear of the people. There are gaps in self-awareness, self-expression and self communication. Due to the long-term colonization, the people have been instilled with foreign ideas and culture for a long time, which raises questions about the ownership of their own cultural identity. So, "who am I? Where do I come from? The problem of "zombie" has become the core issue to be recognized by Hong Kong zombie films at that time. In the mid-1970s, a new generation of Hong Kong people grew up and began to further explore the attribution of cultural identity. In 1974, the launch of <The Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires> marked the transition of Hong Kong zombie films from the embryonic stage. The production mode abandons the simple imitation of Western vampire films, and innovatively integrates the unique Kung Fu Comedy elements of Chinese traditional culture Maoshan art and Hong Kong films. So as to explore cultural identity in the integration of Chinese and Western cultures.

The 1980s is the most prosperous period of zombie film, which occupies a certain position in the history of film, and it is also the core period of this paper. During this period, the Hong family class led by Hong Jinbao integrated ghost elements into traditional zombie films. So as to create three films: <Encounter of the Spooky Kind> (1980), <The Dead and the Deadly> (1982) and <Hocus Pocus> (1984) That is, "ghost Trilogy". The film uses a lot of traditional cultural elements. Such as ancestral hall, yellow paper, shroud, etc. And use Kung Fu, Taoist magic, opera and other means of expression. It has been launched and has been welcomed by the public. After the colonial return to the motherland, the people of Hong Kong have integrated nationality into their exploration of their own cultural identity, and their understanding of national traditional culture has risen to a higher level. Therefore, from the initial confusion to the final awakening of cultural consciousness, the ideology shown in Hong Kong zombie films is more three-dimensional, showing the trend of tolerance and innovation in combination with national culture.

3. The Peak of Zombie Film and the "Rootless" Fear of Zombie Culture

3.1 Hong Jinbao Style Zombie Film

Hong Jinbao style zombie film refers to the zombie film produced by Hong Jinbao and integrated with Kung Fu Comedy and ghost elements. Its status is also the highest in Hong

Kong zombie films. Therefore, Hong Jinbao's zombie films are also known as the golden age of Hong Kong zombie films. Its production mode, narrative structure, character image and other elements have been widely studied by the industry. This paper focuses on the analysis and demonstration from the level of ideological attribution.

Hong Jinbao's "ghost Trilogy" is a powerful work to show Chinese traditional culture to the public. In the film scene, ancestral halls, coffins, shroud and other props are widely used. This will replace all churches and castles in western culture. It indicates that we should weaken the sense of existence of western culture and let the oriental cultural consciousness take the lead, so as to further deepen the awakening of cultural consciousness. It emphasizes the relationship between teachers and apprentices for the first time. In oriental culture, the core idea of "teacher is like father" is applied. When watching the film, the audience will feel the warmth of blood between teachers and disciples. It emphasizes the Oriental family culture. In the performance art, traditional Chinese culture and art forms such as corpse removal, Taoist fighting, opera and so on are used. The integration of Western Hunan's "corpse removal culture" has enabled Hong Kong and the mainland to achieve cultural integration for the first time. Let the audience have a strong national cultural resonance. Therefore, Hong Kong zombie films have formed the cultural identity of "double other". That is, integrate western culture and tilt the perspective of mainland culture. Hong Kong zombie film has a foreign culture adapted to local conditions, but the ideological foundation it shows is a localized and national Chinese culture.

3.2 "Zombie Culture" Derived from "Rootless" Fear

Hong Kong zombie films are actually looking for their own cultural identity from germination to transition and then to brilliance. After a long period of foreign culture, the people are afraid of the lack of national culture. Therefore, while using zombie films to express their cultural fear, they are also seeking the recognition of cultural identity. All films use a character to metaphor the deep collective psychology of a class of characters, or the ideology reflected by the society at that time. In particular, with the increasing expression of national culture and traditional theories in zombie films after "1997", the people of Hong Kong are seeking to build their own cultural identity. It also reflects Hong Kong people's fear of "rootless" culture under the discourse of "1997". Therefore, in order to find cultural identity, zombie films are widely used as a medium. Thus, in order to awaken Hong Kong's cultural awareness and face the "rootless" culture of collective fear in Hong Kong society, a "zombie culture" has been derived. That is, seeking one's own cultural identity under the protection of traditional culture is the expression of Chinese traditional theoretical posture and friendship spirit.

4. Acknowledgments

Through the above analysis, it can be concluded that the so-called "zombie culture" is the exploration of Hong Kong people's own cultural identity. Zombie movies are the carrier of this feeling. Due to the complex types of film market, the development of zombie films has also been unsalable and entered a period of decline. Driven by the success of <zombie> (2013), zombie films have returned to public attention. As long as we are based on local cultural innovation and develop cultural characteristics from multiple angles; Control the plot to reflect the humanistic feelings; Find the right position and break the combination of traditional elements. Zombie films with strong cultural background will return to an important position in the film market again.

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