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# New Mainstream Films and Television Dramas in China: The Construction of Industrial Aesthetics and Consumption of Youth Culture

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**Abstract:** As a significant industrial and cultural phenomenon, the rise of new mainstream films and TV dramas in China embodies the inclusion of multiple cultures (mainstream culture, grassroot culture, youth culture, etc.) and the respect for diverse audiences. In particular, such trends bring into focus the youth market and explore the image-based expression of youth culture, subculture and fashion culture. However, this author argues that the production of such films and TV dramas also needs to further pursue market-orientated strategies, sustainable development, and conformity to industrial standards. In short, the production of new mainstream films and TV dramas should not revert to the previous production pattern of mainstream films.

**Keywords:** new mainstream films, new mainstream films and TV dramas, industrial aesthetics of films, industrial aesthetics of TV dramas, consumption of youth culture

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**Translated by:** Bitong Jiang, Communication University of China.

In recent years, the rise of (Chen 2021a) “new mainstream films and TV dramas” has been prominent in the film and television industry.

## 1 A General Overview of the Origin of New Mainstream Films and TV Dramas

The new mainstream film and television drama is a generalization of the current production trend in film and television industry, which comes from the so-called

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“New Mainstream Film”. According to Ma Ning, the term refers to “an attempt to explore a suitable evolutionary path between films in the central position, films served as public interests for the government, mainstream commercial films, films in marginal positions, films aimed at film festivals, and films diverted by individual reasons.” (Ma 1999) This author argues that the definition of new mainstream film transcends the boundaries of the typical trichotomy of films, which divides films into main melody film, art film and commercial film. That is because such films have achieved the commercial success of main melody films by putting emphasis on market and audience, and adopting commercialization strategies, like engaging big investment, famous movie stars, dramatic conflicts, overwhelming marketing, etc. As a result of such commercialization, favorable box office results and marketing, these films promote mainstream ideology as a function undertaken by the main melody film, which is beneficial to the commercial achievement and publicity of ideology through main melody films representing the popular culture with Chinese characteristics. Therefore, since the beginning of this century, the “new mainstream blockbuster film” has received considerable recognition and was characterized by the blurring of boundaries between the “trichotomy” (Chen 2017).

Apart from some successful films which have been previously analyzed by this author (Chen 2021b), like *My People, My Country* (Wo he wode zuguo, 2019), *My People, My Homeland* (Wo he wode jiaxiang, 2020), *The Sacrifice* (Jingangchuan, 2020), *Coffee or Tea* (Yidian jiu dao jia, 2020), recent years also witnessed a surge of new mainstream TV dramas, especially main melody dramas of major themes, such as *Minning Town* (Shanhaiqing, 2021), *Crossing the Yalu River* (Kuaguo Yalujiang, 2020), *The Age of Awakening* (Juexing niandai, 2021), etc. All those products have scored high in quality and audience rating, with some topics even gaining attention outside of the fixed circle and becoming important cultural phenomena in the broader film and television industry.

In summary, we may name the current production trend in the film and television industry as the production of “new mainstream film and television drama” based on the combination of both film and television dramas, and the theoretical thought on “new mainstream film”, “new mainstream blockbuster film” in recent years.

Undoubtedly, these films and TV dramas share certain similarities in their pursuit of major national themes, positive energy, “red” themes and positive drama style. They often use Chinese stories and red classics as the prototypes or IPs, with the grand purpose of projecting a national image and expressing the national ideology of collectivism, or using current political themes such as National Day and poverty alleviation as the premise creating Chinese stories

and characters that move people's hearts, unite the national consciousness, or positively promote core socialist values. Besides, with a relatively broad vision or even a "macro panoramic framework," these films and TV dramas also highlight the Chinese style, Chinese manners and Chinese image. At the level of industrial operation, such production is often led by the national department in planning, integrating resources and public-private cooperation, with the aim of promoting the main theme while taking into account market principles, striving for the largest possible audience market and commercial revenue.

As we can see, the current phenomenon of new mainstream film and television drama as a fruitful and sustainable industrial practice in the industry has also aroused strong concern in academia. Culturally speaking, it demonstrates the inclusion of multiple cultures (mainstream culture, grassroots culture, youth culture, etc.) and the respect for complex and diverse audiences composed of both mainstream and demassified viewers. This pursuit of open-mindedness in production reflects a pluralistic, tolerant and broad artistic spirit. It also suggests the development strategy of film and television in the post-pandemic era, which is first based on internal circulation and then committed to dual circulation by exploring the resources and potential of local culture and the domestic market.

However, it goes without saying that there are some obvious problems with the creation of such films and dramas, and we should not be afraid to speak out because reflection is necessary. Some films and dramas have exposed obvious flaws in both playwriting and production, which could be avoided if more time is given in the production. The production cycle is quite tight for some films closely related to current political affairs. For example, from the acceptance of the task to the completion through cooperation of three directors, the production of *The Sacrifice* just took three months. Due to the limits imposed by "tight schedule and urgent need", "short, adaptable and fast" and "dancing in shackles", this film features many rough edges and shortcomings, despite its merits.

Further questions need to be answered. Can such a film production method be sustainable? The high speed of industrialization of "short, adaptable and quick" has been achieved, but have the requirements of industrialization in terms of gradual, strict and orderly, precise and exquisite been achieved? What about the indispensable aesthetic style and artistic taste? What about the combination of industry and aesthetics? How can production conform to the industrial standards of the new mainstream cinema, instead of reverting to previous standards of main melody films?

These are all issues that we should undoubtedly focus on, reflect on, and summarize.

## 2 Convection and Fusion: The “Domestic-Orientation” of New Mainstream Blockbuster Films and the Rise of New Mainstream TV Dramas

In fact, in the field of cinema, the “new mainstream blockbuster films” in recent years have shown a trend of “domestic-orientation” and “livelihood-orientation” (Chen 2021b). Viewed in the historical context of new mainstream film production, such a trend should be described as the “third turn” or the “third climax”.

The first climax comes with the familiar *Three Founding* series (i.e. *The Founding of a Republic* (Jianguo daye, 2009), *The Founding of a Party* (Jiandang weiye, 2011) and *The Founding of an Army* (Jianjun daye, 2017)). All these films are themed with major political or historical events and featured by a host of movie stars, huge-budget production and favorable commercial effects. For example, *The Founding of a Republic* was the first to pioneer the commercialization of mainstream films themed with major political events, and has achieved multiple wins at the box office and acclaim amongst the public, critics and national leaders. This author believes that “the extraordinary use of stars returns the film to its most fundamental nature of visual spectacle, advances the ‘landscape film’ that began with blockbuster films such as *Hero* (Yingxiong, 2002) and *House of Flying Daggers* (Shimian maifu, 2004) to a new extreme, satisfies the visual pleasure of the public and potentially attracts a large number of young viewers who are the driving force of the box office” (Chen 2017). While *The Founding of an Army* also made some attempts to integrate “youthful” expression and a variety of genres: “with history and war themes as the base, it integrates elements like youth, police, gangsters, etc., under the premise of ideological correctness, greatly enhancing the watchability of the film”, thus the national image projected in this film is “young, vivid and substantial, passionate, spirited, fresh and bright, portraying a group of energetic and positive youth who shoulder the national responsibility in the chaotic world” (Chen 2017).

The second climax focuses on international communication and projection of the national image. Films like *Wolf Warriors* series (Zhanlang, 2015 and Zhanlang 2, 2017), *Operation Mekong* (Meigonghe Xingdong, 2016), *Operation Red Sea* (Honghai Xingdong, 2018), etc., tell stories of Chinese special forces raising our country’s international prestige by accomplishing legendary missions, with the genre integrating heroic growth, action, military war and other types or forms.

Starting from 2019, the third climax has demonstrated the “domestic-oriented” and “livelihood-oriented” trend featured by *Chinese Captain* (Zhongguo jizhang,

2019), *My People, My Country, My People, My Homeland, Coffee or Tea, Leap* (Duoguan, 2020), etc.

Specifically, the film *The Sacrifice*, which meets the need to memorialize the war to resist U.S. aggression and aid Korea, is produced in the efficient mode of “short, adaptable and fast”, overcoming difficulties to create realistic war scenes. In addition to the war, the film also focuses on the personalities and relationships of the characters and expresses delicate emotions.

*Leap* represents a new development for the sports-themed mainstream film. The film’s artistic expression mixes fiction and documentary, straddles history and the present, and expresses thematic meaning through a subtle approach. By shaping the image of female subjects and focusing on their resilient character and tenacious sportsmanship, the film expresses the dignity of human beings in athletics, evokes the memories of generations of Chinese female volleyball players, and promotes the concept of keeping up with the times. These films also represent some of the new pioneering and tendencies of the new mainstream cinema.

As different melodies or voices of the chorus for contemporary trends, there seems to be a connection between TV dramas and movies: The production of new mainstream movies is transforming from large investment to small and medium budget, while the themes and expressions are more “livelihood-oriented” and “civilianized”, and even “youthful and fashionable”. The production of TV series, on the other hand, begins to pursue a grandiose and serious style, starting with *The Founding of a Nation*, and distancing itself from more popular themes in the field of TV and online series, such as costume drama, metaphysical fantasy, “tomb raiding” etc., and crime-solving dramas. Such convection undoubtedly reflects a diversified development of healthy media ecology.

This author believes that from the perspective of the sustainable development strategy of cultural and creative industries, the new mainstream film and TV dramas still need to pay attention to two important issues. One is conformity with industrial standards of film and TV drama production, and the other is response to the increasingly young audience courted by film and TV drama works in the Internet era.

### **3 Stratification and “Knowledge Reproduction”: “Industrial Aesthetics” in the New Mainstream Film and TV Drama**

The theory of film industry aesthetics advocates that film production should adhere to the principles of genre production, adopting a rational, standardized and

regulated workflow that de-emphasizes individual and emotional expression. It means to practice the “producer-centered system” with Chinese characteristics under the film production system, to balance the relationship between artistry and commercialism, as well as institutional regulation and individual creation, to realize both film aesthetics and economic benefit. In addition, film industry aesthetics advocates that different types of film production should adhere to “stratified”<sup>1</sup> industry aesthetics, respectively. That is to say, blockbusters with large investment, high concept and mega marketing should adhere to “heavy industry aesthetics of films”, while small and medium budget films should also have their own “mid-level” or “light” film industry aesthetics. A reasonable and healthy ecology of Chinese film should be composed of blockbusters featuring “heavy industry style” and a large number of genre films with small- and medium-budgets. In this regard, such an ecology not only allows films with large investment to achieve existence by technology, industry and network, but also provides for the possibility of film festival<sup>2</sup> participation for small-budget art film.

Unlike the new mainstream movies which are gaudy, overseas-oriented, and preoccupied with the national image, some new mainstream films in recent years, like *My People, My Homeland* and *Coffee or Tea* are the “upgraded” and “domestic-oriented” expressions of the “rural theme” in Chinese movies. As the artistic expression of the national theme of “poverty alleviation” and “running for prosperity”, new mainstream films embody the aesthetic tendency of “livelihood-focused”, “domestic-oriented” and “small in production”. Industrially speaking, this trend represents a shift from the blockbuster with large investment to the small- and medium-cost film, which is in line with the reality of the industry that has been experiencing a cold spell and capital constraint for some time after the pandemic. Indeed, in response to the pandemic, film production should not concentrate on few films and dramas with “heavy investment”, but pay more attention to small and medium-sized films which are “short, adaptable and fast” in production with diverse distribution channels and rapid capital returns, and in compliance with the “medium level of industrial aesthetics”.

In recent years, the small and medium-sized new mainstream films, focusing on the relationship between individual, hometown and the country, have satisfied the consumption demand by diverse audiences such as national mainstream

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<sup>1</sup> Li has proposed that the “industrial aesthetics of films” should be divided into three types: “heavy”, “medium” and “light-level”. For more details, see Li (2019).

<sup>2</sup> This author has proposed the viewpoint of “existence by technology, industry and Internet”, see more details in Chen (2021c). Then, this author has proposed “existence in film festival”, for more details, see Li and Chen (2020).

culture, civic culture, youth culture, etc., through elements including “spatial production” of rural areas, aesthetic style of youth comedy and youth fashion, and the expression of youth subculture of cultural consumption and reproduction of youth aesthetics. Under the “community-type” cooperation between national authorities and industrial bodies, such films are suitable for audiences to pursue enjoyment-oriented consumption and can satisfy modern consumers’ demand for artistic and aesthetic consumption of “rural landscapes”. The satisfaction of such enjoyment-oriented and service-oriented consumption also leads to economic benefits of films such as high box office returns. In this regard, such films have also facilitated economic consumption. Undoubtedly, in today’s market economy, even a film produced as a political project by the state, has to meet the demand of market and consumer, because it is impossible for the state to subsidize the production costs.

From the perspective of the film and TV drama industry, the new mainstream TV dramas takes shape in a new institutional production model, which is characterized by a focus on current major positive themes, government leadership, and cooperation between the competent authorities and private companies, as well as the engagement of the entire performing arts sector. Such green-light production concentrates resources and makes concerted efforts to accomplish major national tasks. This is a quite unique institutional production model merging both production and consumption, and the products demonstrate the industrial aesthetic of films and TV dramas with Chinese characteristics.

A young scholar, Qin Xinghua, has discussed the “industrial aesthetics of television drama” (Chen 2021c, 130–138) as a “knowledge reproduction for the theory of film industrial aesthetics” (Qin 2020). Extending the basic principles of film industrial aesthetics to TV dramas, she believes the theory of film industrial aesthetics “has enlightening significance on the study of TV dramas in terms of typification, technification, industrialization”. Based on the theoretical framework of film industry aesthetics, she then attempts to construct the theory of “industrial aesthetics of TV dramas” from three aspects (namely, text content, production mechanism, and dissemination acceptance), and explored the feasibility of adopting “genre fusion & IP adaptation” and “supervisor-centered system” as the mainstream production model and engaging the audience in all aspects of TV drama production, dissemination and reception.

But we also need to reflect on this unique production mode of leading TV dramas or blockbusters with institutional support and extensive mobilization of resources. Does such mode comply with the industry aesthetics principle of Chinese films and TV dramas? Can such a mode be “sustainable”? How to deal with the production costs with the engagement of so many stars? Perhaps some mainstream TV dramas with major political themes could be as attractive as the

Spring Festival Gala, where most actors are willing to work for free, but is such a model sustainable? These films or TV dramas have played a leading role in the film and television industry, but they are few in quantity. The normal ecology of film and television production, or the long-lasting and sustainable development strategy for film and television industry, should be sustained by dozens of mid-sized films or TV dramas with “mid-level industrial aesthetics” rather than only a few leading products with “upper-level industrial aesthetics”.

## 4 The Consumption, Expression and Fashion of Youth Culture

The second problem that China’s new mainstream films and TV dramas should face and solve is to enlarge the audience market, especially to attract the young audience, so that they can actively and spontaneously “consume” the new mainstream films.

Modern economics emphasizes that consumption is also a form of reproduction, and that there is no production without consumption. Karl Marx pointed out in the *Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy* that “consumption produces production in two aspects” (Marx 1979, 28), and also emphasized that production and consumption are identical, because “the needs of consumption determine production” (Marx 1979, 37). In addition, consumption isn’t about “things”, but also about symbols, as well as the consumption and reproduction of ideology. As Baudrillard puts it, “consuming is something one never does alone”, “one enters, rather, into a generalized system of exchange and production of coded values where, in spite of themselves, all consumers are involved with all others” (Baudrillard 2000, 70). “One of the basic mechanisms of consumption is this formal autonomization of groups, classes and castes (and the individual)” (Baudrillard 2000, 70). In other words, the things people consume are not simply things, but “things” used to prove themselves, or “symbols” used as identification or stratification.

In *Television Culture*, John Fiske proposes the theory of “two economies” (Fiske 2005, 447–448): cultural products circulate in different economies, namely the financial economy and the cultural economy, and the two economies carry different contents: the financial economy circulates wealth, while the cultural economy circulates meaning, pleasure and social identity.

To sum up, this author proposes that the “consumption” of new mainstream film and television works by audiences is more than the consumption of money (as a sector of film economy), and the works are more than “things” to be



consumed. More importantly, these works are artistic symbols within a system, which could generate meaning in the process of being consumed and form the youth audience's own ideology. Such reproduction of meaning and ideology can meet the demand of young audiences for the identification of youth subcultural ideology. Above all, all consumption activities are cultural activities, and the things consumed have not only use value, but also symbolic value and cultural meaning.

Nowadays, the main audience of movie and TV drama is getting increasingly younger. Materials show that the average age of movie viewers is 21–25 years old, of which 5.6% are under 17 years old and 33.1% are between 18 and 24 years old. From this point of view, film and TV dramas have reached the time when “the one who gets the youth gets all”.

However, the films and TV dramas have experienced or are experiencing serious challenges in attracting young audiences. This author has surveyed a class of 300, Film and TV Appreciation, in Peking University for the audience for *The Age of Awakening*, only five or six have raised their hands. This viewing rate is quite disheartening because this TV drama depicts part of the history of Peking University and was even labeled the “recruitment promotional drama” of Peking University.

Undoubtedly, in the current era of Internet and multimedia, many new media are constantly emerging to compete with film and television for audiences and “territory”. With Internet-media, short video and multimedia “survival of the fittest”, the audience for film and television dramas has inevitably reduced. Today's TV drama market is highly competitive: viral online dramas have diverted a large number of young viewers. The number of users for Douyin, short videos and games is huge: short video has been regarded as the leading media and favorable “guest” in cultural industry, and the number of game users is increasing day by day.

To some extent, the market and the box office are absolute principles. In recent years, most new mainstream films dealing with war or historical events have indeed made commendable attempts to present a new style of film production, though they have failed to capture young audiences. The production of new mainstream film like *My People, My Country, My People, My Homeland* and TV dramas like *Minning Town*, *The Age of Awakening*, *Crossing the Yalu River*, all display an important characteristic of “dancing in shackles”, which means to express the greatest respect for the audience market during their production. Their cultural orientation is undoubtedly diverse and rich, covering from the main theme culture to the youth fashion culture and “fandom culture”. In *Mining Town*, a host of actors and actresses playing “down-to-earth” and “even ugly” roles, can also be understood as a strategy to capture the audience and expand the market.

*My People, My Homeland* is a brand extension of *My People, My Country*, both are composed of several short stories with similar themes. However, *My People, My Homeland* differs in its focus on the homeland rather than the nation, and in its amplified comedic elements, shifting the grand narrative of the “new mainstream” to the livelihood of ordinary people. Therefore, to some extent, movies like *My People, My Homeland* and *Coffee or Tea* are the upgrade of the rural theme film and an artistic expression of the national theme of poverty alleviation; while on the other hand, they can be also called the scaled-down version of new mainstream blockbusters which focus on domestic livelihood and development.

*My People, My Homeland* integrates the poverty alleviation of mainstream culture, the creativity of youth culture, and the simplicity of vernacular culture. For example, the characters in the episode *A Mystery of UFO* can be roughly divided into several categories, representing different groups and cultures:

The first group is the “active rural builders” represented by the village chiefs. They are familiar with the new business trends and market “rules” of modern society (marketing needs stunt, media and fresh ideas), and actively build the economy and culture of the countryside.

The second group is the “rural inventors” and “rural creators” represented by Huang Dabao. They are good at seizing social opportunities, actively approaching the new commercial trends (like live streaming), and creating their own commercial labels and “business cards”. This fusion of live broadcast culture and rural culture is not only a true reflection of the current society, but also expresses a kind of cultural intermingling and convergence.

Reflecting the social and contemporary themes of “mass entrepreneurship” and “youth returning to their hometowns”, *Coffee or Tea* also portrays three types of representative youths: Li Shaoqun, a rural youth; Wei Jinbei, an urban youth; and Peng Xiubing, a young man returning to his hometown. They have become “leaders” in the construction of the new countryside by working in solidarity with their hometown and driving poverty alleviation in the countryside. The author once argued that “Wei Jinbei, an urbanite, is an ‘outsider’ intellectual to this country, a symbolic figure of “modern civilization” which brings enlightenment to the countryside. He is physically and mentally fatigued by his urban business venture and needs the healing of rural civilization. Wei’s knowledge and wisdom makes him a critical figure in the revitalization of the countryside as force of enlightenment. Li Shaoqun is familiar with the countryside and knows its treasures, but he needs Peng Xiubing to encourage and promote the villagers; while Peng needs Wei’s intellectual guidance in capital investment, marketing and entrepreneurship. Meanwhile, Wei needs the countryside and Peng to revitalize his spirit and restore his confidence in life. They complement each other and open

up a happy avenue in the countryside that connects to the international market” (Chen 2021b).

In other words, *My People, My Hometown* and *Coffee or Tea* has broken the stereotypical impression of rural films in the history of Chinese cinema. As consumer products, their artistic appearance is fresh, bright and light. Obviously, this kind of young, comedic and fashionable visual expression has achieved its effect, which is in line with the principle of “symbolic space” production in film, and is a kind of production and consumption that focuses on the expression of space.

In the arena of television dramas, *The Age of Awakening* evokes the vigorous, youthful and enthusiastic spirit and cultural atmosphere during the May Fourth Movement, and has created a large number of vivid and lifelike images of young pioneers: the old generation of “new youth” such as Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao are respectable and lovable, and the youthful group of Chen Yannian, Chen Qiaonian and “Peking University” students exudes the dynamics of youth, eliciting identification with some young viewers.

As for *Mining Town*, its realistic theme does not avoid the backwardness and poverty of the rural areas of the northwest villages. In addition, a large number of stars admired by youth have played “down-to-earth” and “even dumb” roles, which can also be understood as a strategy to capture the youth audience and expand the market.

There is no doubt that today’s movie and TV drama markets are highly competitive, with online dramas, movies and various short videos emerging aggressively, diverting a large number of young viewers. The “battle” between new mainstream TV dramas and other media and entertainment such as games and short videos for audiences is fierce, even horrifying.

Compared with the previous new mainstream movies with historical or military themes, the “new mainstream movies and TV dramas” have obviously incorporated “down-to-earth” fashions and social phenomena from contemporary life, demonstrating the youth culture and civilian style of healthy and pleasant entertainment and secularity. To a certain extent, the “novelty” of the new mainstream film and television drama lies in the beauty of the “rural” space, the narrowing gap between urban and rural space through spatial inclusion and easy connection of network, transportation and information. Such films often use bright colors to bring to life the harmony, warmth and beauty of the countryside.

For example, many films have shown concern for the phenomenon of e-commerce and express delivery to reflect the popularity of livestreaming e-commerce as a novel economic phenomenon. In *Coffee or Tea*, the “home-returner” Peng Xiubing, wants to start a rural e-commerce business and a courier station. Some films engage in direct expression of social issues and current affairs, presenting a “close to livelihood” and “grassroots” image. In *My People, My*

*Homeland*, the episode *The Good People of Beijing* shows current social issues such as social security and medical care, while *The Magical Touches* focuses on “construction of a new socialist countryside”, and *Road Back to Hometown* shows the integration of rural transformation and urbanization.

The cinematic language of these films is also quite youthful and fashionable through the application of fast-paced, multimedia collage, and a large number of nonrealistic shots. Some films also include direct collages of live sales. Some cinematic language includes collage of livestreaming ecommerce footage.

*My People, My Country* turns short video images and live broadcast images directly into movie footage, changing the frame of the movie and challenging the audience’s viewing habits and aesthetic acceptance, but also satisfying the audiovisual consumption of the teenage net generation. In *Coffee or Tea*, several scenes in which the Peng, Wei and Li “form a group” and start a beautiful reverie in the picturesque countryside were presented through “nonrealistic” scenes that resembled a dream, or through the switch from “realistic” scenes to “nonrealistic” scenes. In short, the cinematic language of this kind of film is fast-paced and fluent, utilizing multimedia collage, expressive language, nonrealistic shots, and a dreamy and youthful atmosphere. *My People, My Homeland* “actively incorporates the short videos that have become popular in recent years and their new aesthetic sense in the age of interconnectivity, in a new attempt to create a film aesthetic form and image space” (Ding 2020). Those films frequently turn the new media of short video and live broadcast directly into screen images, challenging the audience’s visual imagination. Therefore, based on mainstream culture, the new mainstream film integrates youth culture and vernacular culture, with particular attention paid to youth fashion.

## 5 Conclusions

In general, the current new mainstream film and television dramas have lived up to expectations, but there still face many objective difficulties. The theme of such films and dramas is often grand and “eventful”, requiring many characters and clues to support the plot. But such organization also incurs many problems, such as unfocused and inconspicuous protagonists, unexceptional characterization, weak dramatic conflict, and unimaginative plots. Coupled with a broad perspective and multiple spatial juxtapositions, such films tend to fall into a set formula of fragmentation and vignettes, especially as the “continuity” advantage of television serials is greatly reduced.

Additionally, if we strictly measure these films and dramas by the standards of realism, we will also find that some films and dramas are remote from reality:

idealized and exaggerated scenes of the countryside, narrowed gap between urban and rural areas, fast spreading ecommerce, live streaming, easy completion of network connection, road access and poverty alleviation. We must bear in mind that all film and TV works need to reflect the real situation of China by telling “down-to-earth” stories, as well expressing the Chinese dream and spreading the spirit and culture of China.

China’s new mainstream film and television drama has a promising future, but there is a long road ahead, with much difficulty to be overcome.

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