

The Narrative of Miao Film from 1950-2024 in Guizhou, China

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ABSTRACT

The study of Miao narrative film objective uses qualitative research to divide 17 Miao films from 1950 to 2024 into three sections: Miao struggle, Miao custom and Miao change. Combined with the theoretical framework of narratology, mythology, the three tools of investigation, interview and observation are used. Interviews with 30 experts, directors and audiences are conducted to comprehensively analyze the narrative themes and narrative strategies of Miao films. The results show that Miao films show the characteristics of Miao culture through two narrative themes: belief and legend, and two narrative strategies: story construction and audio-visual language. This research aims to fill in the research gaps in Miao film, ethnic film narrative, and provide new perspectives and ideas for Miao cultural inheritance and film art development.

Keyword: Miao, Film, Narrative

INTRODUCTION

Miao, as a cosmopolitan ethnic group with a large population and wide distribution, is deeply rooted in China and is one of the oldest indigenous ethnic groups in China (Shi, 2006). Policy documents, such as the Opinions on Further Strengthening the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage, clearly point out that Miao culture is an important intangible cultural heritage in China. Miao culture has various forms, among which film, as a powerful medium of cultural communication, is not only an important way to express and reflect Miao culture, but also actively participates in the construction and inheritance of Miao culture (Zheng, 2020).

Miao films, in particular, refer to 17 films filmed in areas inhabited by the Miao in China between 1950 and 2024, performed by the Miao and with the core of Miao culture as the narrative content, covering three major themes: Miao struggle, Miao customs, and Miao changes. Its development can be traced back to the 1950s, and the early works were mostly shot under the guidance of Chinese policies, reflecting the life and struggles of the Miao, with distinct political overtones (Wang, 2009), such as *Children of the Miao Family* (1958). Since the new century, Miao films have gradually diversified, and a large number of works featuring original ecology have emerged (Chen, 2023), focusing on the intangible cultural heritage of Miao people, such as totem worship, clothing, folk houses, dances and folk customs.

Narrative, as the cornerstone of the success of film and television works (Song, 2007), embodies the unique artistic value and attraction in Miao films, which makes Miao films have a unique charm in displaying Miao culture, local customs and social changes. On the one hand, excellent ethnic minority films in Chinese film history have made important contributions to the construction and transmission of national spirit and culture through vivid artistic images and aesthetic spirit (Wang, 2018); On the

other hand, movies can also promote tourism and economic development (Bao, 2018). The "14th Five-Year Plan for the Development of Chinese Films" has formulated a number of support measures to help the high-quality development of the film and television industry.

However, the development of Miao films still faces challenges. Under the impact of market economy and mass culture, national films and cultural inheritance are difficult to occupy a place in the mainstream market (Ding & Xiong, 2022). In recent years, although there have been more and more researches on the narrative of Miao films and ethnic films, there are still some shortcomings, such as insufficient case studies on Miao films, and insufficient comprehensive discussions on their narrative characteristics and cultural values.

Therefore, this paper adopts the qualitative research method, takes 17 Miao films as cases, and makes an in-depth analysis from the narrative perspective through investigation, observation, interview and other tools, combined with narrate theory and mythological theoretical framework. It aims to fill the research gap in Miao film and ethnic film narrative, and provide new perspectives and ideas for Miao culture inheritance and film art development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Through the relevant studies in Thailand and other countries, it is found that most scholars focus on the two core areas of Miao culture and Miao film aesthetic characteristics:

Miao cultural field:

Ding Zhulan & Xiong Wei (2022), in an Analysis of the Multi-ethnic cultural Implications of Miao Films -- Taking The Gun of Rolling Lala as an Example, deeply discussed the multi-ethnic cultural implications of Miao films. Zheng Shuyu (2020) analyzed how Miao films construct and present Miao culture in Miao Films and Miao Cultural Image Construction. Wu Zhisong & Su Xiaohong (2017) took the Sun Over the Clouds as an example to discuss the representation of Miao culture in Qiongzhusi in Original ecological films. Li Yuanlan & Chen Junjun (2016) studied the cultural communication characteristics of Dong and Miao themed films in A Study on the Cultural communication characteristics of Dong and Miao themed films: A Case Study of Ou Chouchou's Great Song of Dong Nationality and other films. Liu Congwei & Meng Juanjuan (2014) analyzed the Miao folk culture of Guizhou shown in the film The Sun on the Clouds in their article Analysis of the Miao Folk Culture in Guizhou.

Miao film aesthetic characteristics:

Chen Yulu & Tang Ju & Xu Minghui (2021) conducted an in-depth study on the aesthetic characteristics of Guizhou Miao films in their Research on the aesthetics of Guizhou Miao films: A Case Study of the film "The Sun on the Clouds". Yu Gang (2016) discussed the aesthetic characteristics of Guizhou Miao films since the new century in his article Aesthetic Characteristics of Guizhou Miao films. Shi Jian (2019) analyzed the cultural implication and aesthetic value of Miao folk songs in ethnic films in his Research on the Cultural implication and aesthetic value of Miao folk songs in ethnic films: Taking The Gun of Rolling Lala as an Example. Zhang Zao (2012) made an in-depth study of Ning Jingwu's original Miao film style in his Research on his original Miao film style.

However, it is worth noting that from 1950 to 2024, the narrative research on Miao films is almost in a gap state. In this field, more scholars need to dig deeply and discuss in order to enrich and perfect the research system of Miao film.

OBJECTIVE

To study the narrative of Miao film.

METHODOLOGY

This research use qualitative research method, takes 17 films as the research object, combines the theoretical framework of narratology and mythology. and use of survey, interview and observation. Specific research steps are as follows:

1. Combine the relevant literature of Miao film works, narration and cultural reflection, and investigate the film shooting area on the spot to provide sufficient evidence support for the research.

2. Key Informants (KI) : Five Miao culture scholars, film industry manager and government staffs; Casual Informants (CI) Ten directors, actors, ethnic advisor:

General Informants (GI) : Fifteen general audiences and college students studying film.

3. Research tools include observation and interview. By referring to the film text, this research sorts out the narrative characteristics of Miao films and provides more explicit research ideas and theoretical support. Through KI, CI, GI observation and interview, to obtain first-hand narrative data.

4. Data collection is divided into two stages:

4.1 Study and collect secondary data from relevant literature, articles, studies, and other sources to establish a framework.

4.2 Non-participant observation will be used to collect data from Film works, Interview will be used to collect data from KI, CI and GI.

This research will extract and analyze key information from primary and secondary data, identify internal characteristics of the research subjects, and draw conclusions.

RESULTS

Miao films, as an important carrier of Miao culture, history and social changes, produced a number of far-reaching works from 1949 to 2024, which can be roughly divided into three sections according to their themes and contents: Miao struggles, Miao customs and Miao changes. The Miao struggle section, Such as "Children of Miao People""Manluo Flowers""Miaoling Wind and Thunder""The Fire Boy""Ma Hongjun""The Flower of Revenge", It mainly focuses on the struggle and struggle of the Miao people in the course of history. the Miao customs section, such as "Anayi", "I Want to Dance", "Aou Song", "Close to the Sun", "Hero of the River", focuses on displaying Miao's unique cultural traditions and folk customs. The Miao change section, such as "Lala's Gun", "Bird's Nest", "Miao Village", "Sweet Journey", "Miao Child", "Love of Miao Village", It focuses on the changes and development of Miao society in the process of modernization.

Section 1: Miao Struggle

1.1 Narrative theme

1.1.1 Belief

The film of Miao struggle is rooted in the soil of Chinese national culture, especially highlighting the unique charm of Miao spirit. Myth is not only a reflection of the ethnic group's cognition of itself, but also a bridge between other cultural people's cognition of other ethnic groups, and ultimately constitutes a part of the overall cognition of human culture (Jin, 2022). Through these films, the audience can glimpse Miao people's living state, cultural tradition and spiritual outlook, and deeply feel their profound cognition and proud expression of their own culture. For example, "Children of Miao People" vividly shows Miao people's bravery, tenacity and infinite desire for freedom through the delicate depiction of Shanmei's love story and ethnic struggle. The "Manluo Flowers", through the rough fate of Miao girl's vine flowers, deeply reveals the heavy oppression of feudal ethics on women and Miao

people's yearning for a better life.

The Miao struggle film skillfully integrates the spirit of Miao and the spirit of the Red Army, inspiring the audience's deep thinking and recognition of the national spirit and revolutionary tradition. Levi-strauss (2006) points out that in the deepest part of the human mind, it is the unconscious that plays a key role. In "Miaoling Wind and Thunder" and "Ma Hongjun", the story of Miao people's heroic resistance to oppression under the guidance of the Red Army is vividly presented. These stories not only show the unique charm of Miao culture, such as Miao customs, national costumes, music and dance, but also deeply reflect the far-reaching influence of the Red Army spirit on Miao people. This kind of influence is unconscious, which quietly penetrates into Miao People's Daily life and becomes the spiritual pillar for them to resist oppression and pursue freedom. Similarly, in The film "The Fire Boy", the growth course of Miao orphan Fire Boy is not only a track record of individual life, but also a vivid epitome of the inheritance and development of the Red Army spirit among Miao people. Under the care and careful education of the Red Army soldiers, Fire baby gradually grew into a brave and tough soldier, and his growth process unconsciously integrated into the Red Army spirit, becoming an indispensable part of his life.

1.1.2 Legends

The legend of heroes is an important carrier of Miao people's collective unconsciousness and values, which are deeply rooted in the blood of Miao culture and passed down from generation to generation. Levi-strauss (2006) once pointed out that the unconscious exists a priori, it is the inherent rational ability of human beings, and plays a profound role in restricting human rational thinking. Take The legend of King Yaru in "The Flower of Revenge" as an example, this legend is not only a miniature of Miao's history, but also a vivid portrayal of Miao's spirit. As a representative of Miao heroes, she is brave and tenacious, and her desire for freedom is like a burning flame, illuminating the fearless road of Miao people in the face of oppression and difficulties. Her personal struggle and sacrifice not only demonstrated Miao people's indomitable fighting spirit, but also led them step by step to the dawn of victory. The legend of King Yaru deeply reveals the collective unconscious in Miao culture, which is an eternal pursuit of freedom and dignity. This pursuit, in the heroic behavior of Shanmei has been incisively and vividly reflected, she has become the Miao people's heart that never fall flag, inspiring future generations to continue to move forward.

Similarly, "Manluo Flowers" is derived from the legend of the heroine Miao Miao flower. She represents Miao women's resistance and struggle under the oppression of feudal ethics, and is a symbol of Miao women's bravery, tenacity and pursuit of freedom. According to Jingrui Guo (2011), heroes in myths are often portrayed as having extraordinary abilities and high moral character, and their behaviors and choices reflect the core values and ideals of a specific culture. The vine flower is just like this, her struggle reflects women's desire for freedom, equality and dignity, and her sacrifice is regarded as a sacred act, representing the hero's pursuit and dedication to higher ideals. The sacrifice of vine flower is not only a struggle against personal fate, but also a brave attempt to change the overall fate of Miao women. Her heroic deeds inspired Miao people's longing for a harmonious society, and also promoted the re-examination and thinking of women's status in Miao culture. The legend of the vine flower, like a mirror, reflects Miao people's unity, tenacity and infinite yearning for freedom in the face of foreign oppression and feudal moral bondage.

1.2 Narrative strategy

1.2.1 Story construction

Miao struggle film embodies the role of binary opposition as a decisive factor in the story construction. Dualistic opposition is the decisive factor in the development of folk stories. When there

is a violent conflict between two opposing forces in the story, the plot will move forward and the story will extend. Once the contradiction is resolved, unless a new dualistic opposition rises to the main line of contradiction, the story will come to an end. (Liu & Chen, 2002), this construction mode deeply reveals Miao people's spiritual outlook and revolutionary spirit. For example, in "Manluo Flowers", the main story line is the love story of Manluo and A Fu Yo and their struggle against the bully landlord Hei Da Guai. The duality is clearly visible here, that is, between the good, industrious vine and the side represented by the Atrojo, and the side represented by the evil, oppressive black crutch." In Miaoling Wind and Thunder, Long Yansong's struggle against Kuomintang agents and bandits is the core of the plot development. As the struggle deepens, the story gradually reaches its climax until it is finally resolved. The Flower of Revenge interspersed in the plot development of Miao intangible cultural heritage, such as Miao dress, embroidery, batik, etc., not only enriches the story content, but also deepens the theme, showing the unique charm of Miao culture.

The story simply tells us what happened, and the plot makes us aware of it (Frerich, 1979). Miao Struggle film cleverly integrates rich folk cultural elements into the plot setting, deepening the theme and character image shaping of the film through the embedment of folk time and the connection between folk belief and characters' fate. At the same time, Miao struggle film also emphasizes the importance of national identity, cultural inheritance, resistance to oppression and the pursuit of freedom. For example, The marriage custom, sacrifice ceremony and legend of King Yaru in "The Flower of Revenge", Miao belt, Miao headdress and dress reflected in "The Fire Boy", etc. Miao Lu Sheng dance and courtship ceremony in "Children of Miao People".

1.2.2 Audiovisual language

Through lens modeling, Miao music and Miao language, the film vividly shows the living environment, struggle scenes and heroic images of Miao people, and deeply conveys the unique charm and struggle spirit of Miao culture. As Jialing Song (2007) argues, the lyrical freehand approach in film and television narration is generally reflected in three elements: lens modeling, music and language.

In terms of lens modeling, in Miao struggle movies, lens modeling is often used to show Miao people's living environment, struggle scenes and heroic images. For example, The long and close-up shots in "The Flower of Revenge" show Shan Mei's determination to destroy the enemy and her love for Yang Shuqing. At the end of the film, memories and reality are interspersed. The romantic scenes of Shan Mei and Yang Shuqing in childhood are interspersed with the tragic scenes of Shan Mei picking up a long gun and aiming at Yang Shuqing in reality. The two sets of paintings have a strong visual impact.

In music, for example, in "Children of Miao People", Miao children play the Lusheng, March three lusheng dance, wedding toast, these elements show the joy and unity of Miao people. In addition, the struggle song tells about Miao people's heroic deeds of resisting oppression and fighting for freedom, which can stimulate the audience's resonance and emotional identification. In terms of language, the film can better show Miao people's living state and ethnic characteristics through the use of Miao language dialogues and Miao language songs. At the same time, the use of Miao language can also make the audience closer to the characters and feel the true emotions and fighting spirit of Miao people.

Section 2: Miao Custom

2.1 Narrative theme

2.1.1 Belief

In The Voyages and Journeys of an Indian Interpreter and Merchant, John Long mentions that they assumed the totem to take the form of a beast of one kind or another, and therefore never killed,

hunted, or ate the animal which they thought the totem took. (Sharp, 1988). This description reveals the deep roots of totemism in primitive society. For example, in "Aou Song" and "I Want to Dance", the cow is used as a symbol of totemic belief. The frequent appearance of bullfighting scenes is not only an entertainment or competitive activity, but also a profound reflection of the worship and awe of the totem power of the cow. Miao people demonstrate their close connection with the bull totem through bullfighting. At the same time, through this ritualized behavior, they pray for the protection of the totem and the transmission of power, which strengthens the cohesion and sense of identity within the ethnic group. In "Anayi", "Close to the Sun", and "Hero of the River", the butterfly and Jinji are animated symbols of totems. The butterflies and Jinji, as beautiful and dynamic creatures in nature, are endowed with profound symbolism of freedom, rebirth and spirituality.

There are often inextricable links between ritual and myth. Ritual needs the proof and support of myth, and myth is passed on, strengthened and sanctified by ritual (Yang, 2005). The Guzang Festival is an important ceremony in Miao culture, in which the drum is a model of the sacrificial ceremony and mythology. In this solemn and solemn cultural ceremony, drums are used many times as a central element in wedding ceremonies, sacrificial ceremonies and harvest ceremonies. "Aou Song", "Close to the Sun" and "I Want to Dance" all reflect this cultural phenomenon. The sound of drums is not only a warm foil to the festival atmosphere, but also a deep call and representation of mythic stories. In mythology, drums are often endowed with divine origin and infinite power, and are regarded as the abode of ancestral spirits. At the same time, the drum in the ritual also greatly strengthened the sanctity and authority of the myth.

2.1.2 Legend

Myth can be passed on from generation to generation because it contains unique structural characteristics. A myth can never be reduced to its surface phenomena, which can vary greatly and mask undoubtedly fewer and more substantial structures (Levi-Strauss, 2007).

As an important role in Miao mythology, butterfly mother's legend has been passed down from generation to generation in Miao culture, which contains profound structural characteristics. First of all, the Mother butterfly story has a universal motif, namely birth and creation, which forms the core structure of the Mother Butterfly legend and is repeated in the film. Secondly, the story of a butterfly mother shows various transformations in Miao film. While the basic motif remains the same, the specific story lines, characters, and symbolism may vary from place to place, time to time, and creator to creator. For example, in "Anayi", the butterfly mother is depicted as a gentle and loving mother; In "Hero of the River", "she has mysterious powers.

The legend of the Sister Festival takes on a variety of genres in Miao films, but all revolve around its core structure. For example, "Close to the Sun" conveys the spirit of perseverance, solidarity and friendship of Miao women through showing the profound friendship between sisters and their joint work and mutual support. And "Anayi" focuses on the marriage and love customs on the Sister Festival, and shows the passionate emotion of Miao people's free love and pursuit of happiness through the interactive scenes of young men and women's singing and dancing. Although the surface phenomena of these films are very different, through delicate emotional depiction and vivid scene reproduction, the audience can deeply feel the unique charm and profound heritage of Miao culture. Whether it is showing sisterhood or marriage customs, the film successfully captures the core spirit of the sister festival legend, that is, the importance of family, friendship and love.

2.2 Narrative Strategy

2.2.1 Story construction

In Miao Transition film, binary opposition elements form the cornerstone of story construction.

According to the theory of duality, these elements not only promote the plot, but also reflect the impact of modern society on traditional culture. In "Anayi", the opposing elements of tradition and modernity, nature and artificial are interwoven, which promotes the growth of the protagonist and highlights the tenacity of Miao culture. "I Want to Dance" reflects the tension between traditional culture and modern education through the opposition between physical beauty and practical beauty. "Aou Song" takes marriage ceremony as the core, showing the challenge and reform of Miao marriage custom in modern society. "Close to the Sun" Through the opposition between foreign culture and local culture, it shows Pauline's exploration of Miao culture. "Hero of the River" takes the opposition between village and village as the main line, integrates the opposition between justice and evil, and shows the conflict and harmony in Miao culture. Through the clever use of opposing elements, these films deeply reveal the connotation of Miao culture and the interaction between modern society.

Folklore narrative is a research field that folklore and narratology blend and explore together. The academic community generally defines it as the use of narrative techniques to integrate folklore life events or folklore images into the whole narrative, making it an indispensable part of the narrative (Mei, 2016). This definition deeply reveals the essential characteristics of folklore narrative, that is, the mutual integration and symbiosis of folklore and narrative. For example, "Anayi" depicts the grand occasion and folk elements of Miao Sister Festival through narrative techniques, allowing readers to feel Miao culture personally. "Boiling Water to hot a girl to strong" describes the flower belt, Miao dance and other folk events, showing the industrious and beautiful woman. "Aou Song" takes marriage ceremony, dress and Lusheng dance as clues to construct Miao style narrative space and convey the importance of love, marriage and family. "Close to the Sun" Through paper making, Miao medicine and other folk customs, showing the profound heritage of Miao culture. "Hero of the River" takes Lusheng dance and bonfire party as the narrative core, revealing the joy, warmth and mystery of Miao culture, deepening readers' understanding of Miao culture.

2.2.2 Audiovisual language

Miao custom film combines long shots and folk elements to show its unique artistic charm. Since the emergence of film, it has a history of more than 100 years. In the beginning, long shots were mainly shot. Later, with the continuous innovation and development of film art, long shots gradually evolved into an important narrative means and artistic creation skills (Wu, 2022). In Miao custom film "Anayi", the long shot captures the life of Anayi delicately, making the audience feel as if they are in it and feel the daily life and emotional world of Miao people. At the same time, the use of long shots also enhances the narrative continuity of the film, allowing the audience to follow the development of the story more smoothly and have an in-depth understanding of Miao's culture and lifestyle. In addition, the folk elements in "Anayi" not only show the unique charm of Miao dress, but also convey the profound historical and cultural connotation of Miao culture.

Miao music is a key element to promote plot development, shape character image and convey cultural spirit. Miao custom films always emphasize the idea that music is an important crystallization of human emotions and wisdom, and an important embodiment of cultural creation (Yang, 2009). For example, Miao Fei Song, with its melodious melody and simple lyrics, shows Miao people's love for nature and longing for life. "Wedding Dress" expresses Miao bride's longing and expectation for marriage life through delicate melody and affectionate singing; "Many Blessings" conveys Miao people's prayer and hope for a better life with a cheerful rhythm and blessing lyrics; Angelica, with its deep melody and philosophical lyrics, tells Miao people's longing for their hometown and their longing for their return. With the accompaniment of Lusheng, "Lusheng Love Song" sings the pure love between young men and women.

Section 3: Miao change

3.1 Narrative theme

3.1.1 Belief

Faith in Miao Change films tends to be a profound expression of worship of nature. As Junren Wan (2001) said, faith refers to the value ideals or value commitments shared or chosen by specific social and cultural groups and individuals living under the cultural conditions of this community on the basis of a common value goal expectation. This belief is particularly evident in Miao's films, especially in such works as "Bird's Nest", "Lala's Gun" and "Miao Village", which not only show Miao's worship of natural elements such as maple fragrance tree, but also deeply reveal the cultural value concept behind it. For example, in the movie "Bird's Nest", Xiang Ma and his friends save money to go to Beijing to see the bird's Nest of the Olympic Games, which contains Miao people's awareness of respecting and protecting the natural environment. Lala's Gun closely links the tree with the cycle of life and death of Miao people, and the tree of life becomes a key symbol in the life course of Miao people, reflecting their deep belief in nature as the source of life and the destination of the soul. In "Miao Village", in order to protect the mountain forests of Miao Village, Ou Li bravely stands up and undertakes the work of mountain forest protection, which is a concrete practice of Miao nature worship belief in modern society.

Totem worship is an important tool for Miao people to maintain cultural self-confidence and identity in the process of modernization. Levi-Strauss (2007) has pointed out that the purpose of totemism is to ensure the transfer of all aspects of social facts from one to another in a linguistic way, so that people can use the same vocabulary to express important aspects of nature and social life, and constantly cross from here to there. In the integration of Miao cultural heritage and modern life, totem worship is not only a spiritual symbol, but also a cultural bond, connecting the past and present, tradition and modernity. For example, in the movie "Bird's Nest", "Lala's Gun", "Miao Child" and "Sweet Journey", search becomes the core of the theme. Through the protagonist's search for self, home and tradition, these films show the identity confusion and cultural conflict Miao people face in the tide of modernization. They either seek the destination of their soul in the hustle and bustle of the city, or seek the traces of memory in the changes of their native land. Each search is a confirmation of Miao cultural identity and an exploration of their position in modern society. In the films "Miao Village" and "Love of Miao Village" with love as the theme, love becomes a bridge connecting tradition and modernity, and Miao culture and foreign culture.

3.1.2 Legend

Legend, as the crystallization of the wisdom of the people, is closely connected with specific historical figures, historical events, local monuments, natural scenery and social customs, and is a genre of stories spread through the ages (Zhong, 2010). Among them, the legend of the Tree of life deeply shaped Miao's ecological concept. In "Lala's Gun" and "Bird's Nest", the Rolling Lala and the Singing Horse adhere to the principle of not cutting down trees, demonstrating the profound influence of the Tree of life legend, that trees are regarded as the source of life and should not be easily destroyed. In "Miao Village", Ou Li defends the trees of Miao Village with her life, knowing that they are not only a natural barrier, but also a spiritual sustenance and cultural symbol of Miao people. In "Sweet Journey", the Miao family integrates forest protection into their daily lives, respects and follows nature, and demonstrates the ecological wisdom advocated by the legend of the Tree of Life. Miao people's strong awareness of protecting forest resources and the rule of prohibiting cutting down trees are deeply rooted in the legend of the tree of life passed down from generation to generation, which makes Miao culture and ecology complement each other and thrive continuously.

In primitive society, totem dancing is a ritual activity to imitate and dress up the appearance of the totem worshiped, which is called totem dress (Sun, 1966), and the dance derived from it is known as totem dance. Miao's Jinji dance and Jinji totem are derived from Miao's Jinji legend. For example, the films "Miao Child" and "Love of Miao Village" depict the changes and development of Miao society with delicate brushwork, and skillfully integrate traditional and modern Miao culture to present the audience with a picture of both traditional and modern Miao life. In these two films, the performance of Miao Jinji dance is particularly outstanding, which has become a highlight of Miao cultural charm. Jinji dance is a unique dance created by Miao people imitating Jinji's light and vigorous pace and elegant and colorful form. This dance not only reflects Miao people's respect and admiration for Jinji, an ancestral totem, but also shows Miao people's rich imagination and creativity. Every step, every movement, contains Miao people's reverence for nature, love for life and vision for the future.

3.2 Narrative Strategy

3.2.1 Story Construction

The antithetical integration of traditional culture and modern concept of Miao is vividly demonstrated in the film of Miao Change (Zongqiang Wei, Interview, 2025). For example, in "Bird's Nest", the traditional "bird's nest" of Miao Village is in sharp contrast to the "bird's nest" of Beijing Olympic Games, and the curiosity and exploration of Xiangma reflects the confusion and yearning of Miao young people in the face of modern civilization. Lala's Gun, through the friendship and choice of Rolling Lala and Jaguwang, shows the struggle between staying in the Miao village and working outside, reflecting the balance between economic development and the protection of traditional culture. "Zhongfei Li's awakening of fire awareness symbolizes the penetration of modern safety concepts into Miao Village and the possibility of integrating traditional and modern knowledge." "Sweet Journey" Zhong Laifu's longing for the cities outside the mountains reflects Miao youth's self-positioning process between the countryside and the city, as well as the impact of urbanization on rural youth. "Miao Child" deeply portrays the loneliness and longing of left-behind children in modern society, and appeals to the society to pay attention to this group. The choice of Love in "Love of Miao Village" shows vividly the difference between Miao traditional culture and Western culture in the concept of love, and probes into the influence of cultural diversity on individual emotional choice.

Miao Change films significantly reflect the modernization transformation of folklore narration (Yaheng Chang, Interview, 2025). This transformation not only retains the profound heritage of Miao culture, but also cleverly integrates traditional elements with modern concepts, giving the national story a new era significance. For example, in "Lala's Gun" and "Bird's Nest", "Miao's ancient belief in the ambrosia tree is given a modern interpretation. Originally a symbol of mystery and power, the maple fragrance tree is transformed into a strong awareness of natural environment protection in the film, which also echoes the modern society's emphasis on ecological civilization construction. In "Miao Village" and "Love of Miao Village", the love custom between traditional Miao people has been given a modern cross-cultural significance. Love is no longer limited to Miao people, but extends to the free love between Miao people and Han people. This narrative strategy not only shows the harmony and tolerance among ethnic groups, but also reflects the openness and diversity of modern love concepts. In addition, "Sweet Journey" and "Miao Child" transform the depiction of Miao children eager to walk out of the mountains into a deep concern for left-behind children.

3.2.2 Audiovisual language

The montage shows the contrast between Miao village and modern society (Xiaolang Yi, Interview, 2025). For example, in "Lala's Gun", the tranquility of Miao Village and the prosperity of Guangzhou coexist, highlighting Miao youth's dissociation and choice between tradition and modernity. At the same time, symbols and metaphorical expressions are also widely used, such as the contrast of

"Bird's Nest" in "Bird's Nest", which symbolizes the collision between Miao culture's natural harmony and modern science and technology. The interethnic Love in "Miao Village" symbolizes the exchange and integration of ethnic cultures.

The setting off of Miao music not only adds a unique artistic charm to the film of Miao change, but also confirms the change and development of Miao culture (Fei Liu, Interview, 2025). In many Miao change movies, Miao music, with its unique melody and profound cultural heritage, has become an important element to show Miao life style and cultural changes. For example, in "Sweet Journey" and "Lala's Gun", the appearance of the toast song adds a strong Miao flavor to the film, which reflects the traditional virtue of Miao people's hospitality and respect for etiquette, and also reflects the value and inheritance of family and friendship in Miao culture. In "Miao Village" and "Love of Miao Village", Miao love song, with its deep feeling and unique charm, tells the love story and inner emotion between young men and women. In the film, love songs serve as background music to set off the atmosphere and let the audience deeply feel the importance and pursuit of love and family in Miao culture.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Through an in-depth analysis of 17 Miao films from 1950 to 2024, this study finds that Miao films vividly demonstrate the uniqueness and historical changes of Miao culture through the two narrative themes of belief and legend, combined with the two narrative strategies of story construction and audiovisual language. Miao struggles, customs and changes are the three types of films that constitute a rich and diversified narrative system of Miao films.

In the narrative analysis, Levi-Strauss 'mythological theoretical framework provides a powerful tool. The unconscious structure in Miao films is embodied through cultural elements such as myth, legend and ritual. For example, the legend of King Yaru in "The Flower of Revenge" reflects the unconscious expression of Miao spirit. At the same time, Miao film skillfully uses the principle of binary opposition to deepen the theme conflict, such as tradition and modernity, individual and collective and other opposing forces to promote plot development, revealing the confusion and choice of Miao people in the process of modernization. In addition, mythological images such as heroic legends and totem worship in Miao culture become an important medium for cultural inheritance in the film. Heroic legends such as the legend of King Yaru are widely spread through films, allowing the audience to feel the bravery and tenacity of Miao people. Totemism is embodied through ritual, dance and other elements in the film, such as the bullfighting scene in "Aou Song", which strengthens the cohesion and identity within the ethnic group.

Therefore, Miao's narrative is closely connected with the theory of narratology and mythology. Mythological theory reveals the deeper meaning of beliefs and legends in film, while narratology illustrates story construction and the clever use of audiovisual language. The integration of a large number of folk elements makes the film narrative more colorful and deepens the audience's cognition and recognition of Miao culture. This not only enhanced the artistic charm of Miao films, but also injected new vitality into the inheritance and development of Miao culture, making an important contribution.

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