

## AN AESTHETIC STUDY OF TRADITIONAL CULTURE IN *NEZHA: BIRTH OF THE DEMON CHILD*

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**Abstract:** *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child* is an animated film that has attracted the attention of a large audience. Through its unique aesthetic features, the film successfully integrates excellent traditional Chinese culture into the context of modern cinema. This study conducted an in-depth aesthetic study on the traditional culture in the Chinese animated film "Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child". Through innovative character design, Chinese style scenes, costumes, music usage, and the construction of the "growth" theme, the film presented the absorption and integration of excellent traditional Chinese culture, and incorporated it into modern film narratives. It introduced a new perspective that integrates modern emotions and cultural heritage, successfully completing the revival and reshaping of traditional images and themes. This study emphasizes that this film has successfully participated in and promoted the discussion of traditional culture in the field of contemporary animation, marking a significant contribution to the global appreciation of Chinese cultural heritage. Through the examination of these elements, this study believes that "Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child" represents a critical period in Chinese animation. At this time, the integration of traditional themes with innovative storytelling and aesthetic practices can bring widespread cultural and commercial success, paving the way for future works seeking a balance between tradition and modernity. In order to delve deeper into the traditional cultural elements and their applications in the context of modern cinema in "Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child", this study first uses text analysis to systematically analyze the narrative structure and visual symbols in the film, in order to reveal its inherent cultural connotations and aesthetic characteristics. Secondly, using a comparative research method, this film will be compared with other animated works to highlight the uniqueness and innovation of "Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child" in traditional cultural expression.

**Keywords:** traditional role, Traditional image, Nezha, Culture, aesthetic

## Introduction

Animated films are part of the whole film industry. In recent years, China's animated films are booming. With *Monkey King: Hero Is Back*, released in July 2015 as a watershed, China's animated films began to show signs of life. People also began to realize that animation is not just a cartoon for children, but also a form of artistic expression, which can realize the picture that can not be done in real shooting, and adults can also watch animation. With the injection of capital, there are more and more excellent works in the animation film industry, which are not only animation works for children, but also more and more animated films for the audience of all ages. And the box office of *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*, released in 2019, exceeded 5 billion yuan, ranking second only to *Wolf Warrior 2*. In the film, it absorbed and integrated a large number of excellent traditional Chinese culture.

## Literature Review

This study mainly conducts a literature review from three aspects: the integration of traditional elements and modern narrative techniques, the revitalization and dissemination of Chinese cultural images, and innovative methods for the development of characters and themes in the context of contemporary animation.

### The Fusion of Traditional Elements and Modern Narrative Techniques

With the development of the times, the integration of traditional Chinese culture and modern film stories has become the focus of contemporary Chinese animation creation. Both Bo Tan and Wenting Yang's "Inheritance and Innovation: A Qualitative Comparative Study of the Value Generation Path of Domestic Animation Movies" and Mengya Wang's "Exploration of the Nationalization of Domestic Animation Movies in Cultural Image Era" emphasize in the text how Chinese animation films can attract audience attention while retaining their cultural identity in contemporary contexts. This balance is also reflected in "Nezha's Demon Child Descends" through its innovative character design and plot adjustments. Jichun Huang also emphasized the importance of character modeling in resonating with traditional characters and modern audiences in his master's thesis, which is crucial for the nationalization and global appeal of Chinese animation.

### The Revitalization and Dissemination of Chinese Cultural Image

In their papers "The Image of China and the Construction of Chinese Stories from the Perspective of International Cultural Communication" and "A Study of the Multicultural Image of Zhongshan West in Film and Television Works from the Perspective of Art Folklore", Zhonglei Zhang and Yu Yang both discussed the construction of Chinese images in films, which not only revitalizes traditional narratives but also enhances the international image of Chinese culture worldwide. It can be seen that cultural products can influence and shape the global perception of a country. As discussed by Paul Connorton in "How Society Memories", collective memory and identity are strengthened and disseminated through animation media, further promoting global appreciation and understanding of Chinese mythology and aesthetics.

### Innovative Methods for Developing Characters and Themes

To resonate with contemporary audiences, animated films require creative interpretation and innovation when adapting traditional stories. Zhikun Zhang and Zidong Qiu delved into the mythological narrative and ethical construction in Nezha themed animated films, emphasizing that the image of Nezha successfully challenged the traditional moral dichotomy and showcased the complexity of the characters. This innovative personality development echoes the emphasis on modern psychological depth and moral ambiguity, challenging traditional narratives of good

and evil through delicate depictions. In addition, incorporating modern elements and themes into the story, such as resisting predetermined fate, not only injects new vitality into the classic Nezha story, but also reflects the current values and aspirations of society, as seen by Jingge Xu in "The Construction and Reconstruction of National Style in Chinese Animation Movies". In summary, the literature review emphasizes the importance of "*Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*" in exploring the broad background of the development of Chinese animation. The film successfully combines traditional cultural elements with modern narrative techniques, not only achieving commercial success but also contributing to the protection of Chinese culture.

### ***Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child* is the Main Way to Absorb and Integrate Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture**

#### ***Innovative Transformation of Character Image***

"The shape design of the character is often the key to a work. It not only dominates the plot, style and trend of the whole animation, but also the foundation of the success of an animation work." In an animated film, the creation of characters is the soul, without which the work would lose its meaning of existence. In *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*, a bold and innovative transformation is carried out on the character image, which is mainly reflected in the following two aspects:

a. Innovative transformation of the image of the hero: As the protagonist of the film, Nezha's shape is very different from that of previous Chinese animated films, and he was even ridiculed as "ugly" upon his appearance: Head and body as big, there is no beauty at all, with exaggerated smoky eyeshadow, world-weary big white eyes, oversized mouth, scary fangs, no matter from which point of view can not let the audience feel the beauty, this will ugly the protagonist to the extreme shaping way, in the past Chinese animated films is not seen, breaking People's Daily aesthetic conventions, It gives the audience a great sense of freshness. However, such an ugly Ne Zha, in the film, and give it with neat bangs and bun head, open vest and new radish pants, both sides of the bun head tied with a traditional Chinese color of red streamers, with the development of the plot, we can feel the lovely and lovely Ne Zha, such Ne Zha, Although ugly but it is very in line with the film to set him the reincarnation of the magic pill identity, at the same time, this character's subversive innovation without losing the traditional color transformation, also highlights the character's double-sided character. Born as a magic pill, Nezha is supposed to "kill and plunder", but he also possesses the innocence and innocence of a child, eager for joy among friends, but with the mark of the magic pill, he can only grow up alone, which also makes him eccentric. Despite this, under the care and guidance of his parents and master Taiyi Zhenzhen, Nezha successfully gets rid of the characteristics of the Magic Pill. He even shoulders the mission of saving the people of Chentang Pass and eventually becomes a great hero. This innovative transformation of the character image draws on the cartoon style of Europe and the United States and integrates modern innovation, while retaining China's national style and well matching the setting of the

b. story characters, making the image and true personality of Nezha a modern and innovative explainer, and Nezha goes from "Demon soul" to "My destiny is not God by me". It shows his spirit of continuous struggle against fate and his constant exploration and rebellion to get rid of the predicament of survival and identity.

c. Innovative transformation of other characters' images: In addition to the protagonist Nezha, *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child* also carries out bold innovations in the design of other

characters. Although the story is based on "Nezha Naohai" and continues the character design of Yan Fu and loving mother, and the characters such as Taiyizhen, Dragon King, Ao Bing and Shen Gong Bao are mostly in line with traditional stories, modern innovations are made in character design: In the film, Taiyi Zhen no longer looks like a traditional Chinese man from outside the world, but is shaped into a pot-bellied, greasy fat man who speaks Sichuan-style Mandarin and is not liked by his apprentices as a master. What's more, he even uses a pig as his horse, which is completely different from the traditional image of slim figure and serious Bao. Giving the film a humorous twist. Nezha's father Li Jing, originally an austere and serious man, is also portrayed as a chivalrous and affectionate father in the film, helping to pave the way for Nezha to rid himself of his magical attributes. Some of the film's other non-characters, such as the Dragon King, the Sea Dragon and the Boundary beast, also retain a lot of traditional Chinese elements.

d.

Through innovative role remodeling, the film breaks people's stereotype of "either good or bad" and fully demonstrates the complexity and richness of human nature. The film features Ne Zha on the outside as a rebellious figure, but inside he refuses to submit to his fate and longs for love and recognition. The dragon prince Aobing, on the other hand, is gentle on the outside and kind on the inside, carrying the expectations of his entire family. With such a character setting, the film is no longer a cliché storyline, where the good guys beat the bad guys and finally get out of trouble, but a completely new story. Nezha and Ao Bing are both burdened with the oppression of fate, but in the face of misunderstanding and prejudice, Nezha and Ao Bing refuse to bow to fate and still choose kindness, join hands to resist the fate and finally get rid of the danger.

The theme of the film also fully reflects modern thought, emphasizing the theme of "my life is by me, not by heaven", getting rid of feudal obedience and struggle, and abandoning the pure opposition of good and evil. At the same time, it also reflects the traditional Chinese culture of "everything depends on man" and "God decides things, man proposes things".

### **The Use of Traditional Chinese Cultural Elements**

a. Chinese style scene design: Scene is the most important scene and space modeling elements in film and television creation, and also the presentation of the space environment in the film, is the era, social background and natural environment involved in the script, mainly serves the space place of role performance, is the foil of the character's thoughts and feelings, and is the environment that accentuates the theme and characteristics. On the film set, Chinese traditional aesthetics can be presented, and the scene construction of traditional cultural elements can be supplemented to guide the audience to interpret the film. Ne Zha pays attention to the design of scenes with Chinese cultural characteristics. The scene "Chentang Pass", for example, is derived from place names that appear in Chinese mythology. Legend has it that in the late Shang Dynasty, Chentang Pass was owned by King Zhou, a subsidiary merchant, and was located at a certain pass that entered Longmen Mountain and rivers. Li Jing was the general of this pass. The "Chentang Pass" building is the most common form of ancient Chinese architecture. The design of Li Fu, where Nezha lived as a child, was deeply influenced by the Confucian idea of "the mean of the mean". It adopts the technique of raising the roof to blur the inner and outer space. The raised roof and outer wall work together to create a space that is neither outside nor inside, but at the same time expands the inner and outer space. And the house is symmetrical and neat, and the courtyard design is enclosed, sitting in the north and south, symmetrical left and right. The enclosed courtyard is like the Chinese Siheyuan, which is in a relatively closed state. People in the enclosed state can gain more sense of security and belonging.

b. Chinese-style clothing design :Costume design is the artistic effect created by costume design elements in the film, and is the overall presentation of clothing and other accessories in the film. Costume design in animated films includes the design of characters' costumes, hairstyles and props. Before the design of the animated role, it is necessary to consider the identity of the role in the film, and then design the costume of the role according to the corresponding story, background and plot trend. Therefore, the style of clothing is closely combined with the characteristics of the animated role, and even the costume can reflect the character's personality characteristics and the atmosphere and development of the plot.

In the animated film *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*, not only the scene design is full of Chinese style, but also the Chinese elements in the costumes are everywhere. For example, a belly wrap is one of the traditional Chinese costumes, and Nezha wears a red belly wrap with lotus flowers and butterflies embroidered on it when he is a child. As he grows up, Nezha still wears red, but with a red vest with lotus flowers and lotus leaves printed on the front and back, all details that illustrate the unique charm of Chinese culture: Nezha, whether he is a child or an adult, wears clothes with the traditional Chinese color red and the traditional style "lotus". Red means happiness in Chinese color, while the lotus is beautiful and auspicious, symbolizing the endless growth of life. The lotus should be white, but it is combined with red, and even appears in the film many times. On a closer look, we will find that the red of the lotus here is not the traditional Chinese positive red, but the orange-red with orange. Therefore, in the film, the red lotus is no longer a symbol of beauty and purity, but a prop of Nezha's "demonic" character, set against Nezha's identity as a "evil" magic pill. As the reincarnation of Nezha, Ao Ping's clothes are printed with dragon patterns and water ripples, representing both his dragon identity and the magical power of Nezha.

In the film, the dress worn by the adult is the right skirt, which is one of the symbols of Han clothing, symbolizing the culture of the Han nationality. At the same time, this intersecting dress style is also very in line with the Taoist concept of Yin and Yang. At the same time, the costumes of other characters are also decorated with traditional Chinese elements. Such as the animal face motif on the belt and wrist guard of Nezha's father Li Jing and the simplified dragon motif on his chest, both of which are commonly used on ancient Chinese bronzes, also reveal the social setting of the story. Nezha's mother, Lady Yin, is a female warrior with the love of her son, as can be seen in the beast face and eye decorations on her armor. The design of different characters' costumes makes the characters more vivid and allows the audience to better understand them; At the same time, this kind of "Chinese" characterization not only brings a deep impression to the audience, but also attracts the audience's interest in watching further.

c. The use of Chinese classical music :The film *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child* is based on Chinese classic mythology. The setting of characters, the construction of scene design and the use of film music in the film all reflect the unique characteristics of Chinese traditional ethnic elements. A lot of traditional folk music is used in the film. In the appearance of Taiyi, a pipe is used for the soundtrack, and the stability of the pipe reflects the characteristics of Taiyi, who is honest, honest and funny. The appearance of Li Jing and his wife uses pipa, erhu, guzheng and other Musical Instruments, while Nezha is often accompanied by the suona, because the suona sound is loud and clear, reflecting Nezha's character that he does not compromise with fate since birth. All these are traditional Chinese Musical Instruments. The appearance of different Musical Instruments with different characters can better echo the characters' personality characteristics and make the portrayal of the characters more vivid.



In addition, in the presentation of the film, traditional Chinese music will be used to set off the atmosphere. For example, the classic picture of Jiangshan and Xiangji in the film draws on the Chinese bonsai art to show the audience the picturesque Chinese landscape. Moreover, the brush can paint at will, which is similar to the story of the magic brush Ma Liang. Ne Zha poses a Chinese martial art posture after eliminating the demon, and proudly says: "Doing for heaven is the mission, I am best at killing demons", at this time with Chinese-style percussion music, not only enhances the dramatic effect, but also highlights the unique atmosphere of Chinese classical art.

In the film, a large number of traditional Chinese folk music elements are used, which can achieve the purpose of accentuating the atmosphere of the film and further expressing the theme of the work. At the same time, the use of alternative folk music for the soundtrack can also promote the plot of the film and better bring the audience to the context of the film. For example, the birth and growth of Nezha, the conflicts between Nezha and the people, and Nezha's defense of his homeland and his stubborn struggle against the fate after his transformation all use a large number of traditional folk music. And sometimes it even incorporates elements of traditional Chinese Peking Opera to better show the characters' refusal to yield to their destiny.

### ***The construction of the theme of "growth"***

In the creation process of many animated films, the theme of "growth" is often chosen. The "growth" here is not only limited to the process from childish to mature, but more concerned about the spiritual growth and transformation of people in difficult circumstances. In *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*, Nezha has many immature behaviors due to his boredom in life: He purposely plays tricks on children and scares villagers. This behavior is similar to the way children in our daily life try to get attention from adults through mischief, and stems from a deep desire for love and security. As the story progresses, after Nezha successfully rescues the little girl and wins her trust in the later stage, he finally can't help crying. This not only echoes Nezha's strong pursuit of love, warmth and trust in the previous setting, but in the process Nezha also completes his own "growth", from mischief to saving others, from longing for love to giving love. The theme of growth continues to evolve over the course of the film.

In addition, growth also runs through dramatic conflicts throughout the film's narrative, with Nezha's personality combining good and evil. In the initial stages of the film, conflict breaks out between him and the people of Chantangguan due to various misunderstandings and opinions, but the love of his parents and the trust of his friends releases the "good" in Nezha. When Nezha sees his father trying to exchange his life for his life, he is strongly stimulated. He angrily tears and changes the name symbol, Shouting: "My life is by me, not heaven, demons or fairies, I tell it myself". In the end, Nezha beats Ao Bing and realizes self-growth. As the film continues to advance, Nezha is also growing up. Through his growth process, we see understanding, relief and redemption, which is also the process of Nezha's value transformation to the core values of justice and freedom. In this transformation process, there are themes of self-struggle and self-redemption, as well as the themes of love, healing and heroism. Making the film cater to the preferences of all age groups. Through watching the film, children can see growth, friendship and family affection, and adults can see the inner struggle and continuous growth of Nezha and Aoping. It integrates the traditional Chinese culture of benevolence, righteousness, filial piety and fellowship, and unremitting self-improvement into the film, reflecting the spiritual attitude of contemporary young people who do not concede defeat and do not accept fate, realizing the perfect fusion of classical and modern concepts. It is a successful exploration and application of traditional culture.

## Analysis of The Aesthetic Characteristics of *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*

### Arousing the Collective Memory of Traditional Culture

American social psychologist Paul Connerton pointed out that collective memory is mainly constructed through two ways: memorial ceremony and physical practice. The former focuses on the construction and transmission of rituals at the social collective level, and the latter focuses on the words and deeds of social individuals and cultural inheritance (Paul Connerton: *How Society Remembers*, translation by Najbligo, 2000). Image is an excellent medium for constructing collective memory. the release of *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child* integrates a large number of traditional cultural elements into it and selects the classic image of Nezha in traditional Chinese mythology to awaken and strengthen people's "collective memory" of traditional culture by image.

The film has won a good reputation before its release, and jointly launched a linkage video with *Monkey King: Hero Is Back*. In the video, Nezha has an interaction with "Monkey King" and "Jiang Liuer". Around the plot of *Monkey King: Hero Is Back*, Jiang Liuer asks the Monkey King "is Nezha a man?" the two major Chinese animated film IP character interaction, using the early success of *Monkey King: Hero Is Back* to the West to attract a large number of fans for the release of "*Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*" expectations, has received a good response. At the same time, the two official micro also continue to interact, celebrate and bless each other, and the caption: "The road of animation, it is not easy to move forward, this summer, I am happy to accompany you to light this wind and fire, girl, rush forward." The two films are based on ancient Chinese mythology as the theme of creation, and the protagonists are well-known mythical characters. When the two sides are linked to attract the audience to create topics, they also lead to a boom in classical Chinese culture books. The audience has a strong interest in Chinese classics. At the same time, after years of precipitation, they are still loved by people today. They are very valuable traditional culture in China, worth inheriting.

### The Identity of Chinese Elements

The Chinese elements in *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child* are presented through the adaptation of mythic stories, the shaping of characters, the design of scenes, and the use of traditional music. The film is adapted from traditional Chinese mythology and innovates the story in a modern way. The protagonist of the story is Nezha. The Buddhist classic Buddha Shaisheng Zhan of the Jin Dynasty records Nezha as the "Prince of the Heavenly King Vishamen"; In the Song Dynasty's *Taiping Guang Ji*, Nezha becomes a disciple of the Buddha; In Yuan Dynasty Drama on *Journey to the West*, Nezha transforms into three heads and six arms; In *Triangle Search of Gods*, Nezha begins to change from Buddhism to Taoism, giving him archetypes for his past and present lives; In *Journey to the West* of the Ming Dynasty, the image of Nezha becomes fuller and begins to be portrayed emotionally; In *The Romance of the Gods*, Nezha's personality is more prominent, with a rebellious, righteous and evil character that has become the inspiration for many modern films and TV adaptations. In *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child* not only retains the feature of Nezha, but also adds modern quadratic elements to shape it, which not only meets the aesthetic needs of the current audience, but also reflects a strong Chinese color. Through the image of Nezha in the film, people have a further understanding of Nezha in the traditional story. In addition, Chinese elements can be seen everywhere in the film through the use of scene design and traditional music. Such performance not only increases the aesthetic value of the work, but also deepens the audience's sense of identity with traditional Chinese culture, which is conducive to the inheritance of excellent traditional Chinese culture.

### Visual Presentation of Spectacle Culture

Spectacle refers to a magnificent, beautiful and rare sight or something that is surprisingly rare. (Chinese dictionary), in the creation of animated films, visual spectacle refers to "the creation of visual illusions and the presentation of classic scenes", that is, the use of pictures to show the background story compiled through rich imagination with wonderful visual images. This kind of visual spectacle can be presented through the display of the backstory, or only through the visual display, but also through the display of characters, actions, etc. Compared with live-action films, animated films do not aim to record real images, so they have more imagination and freedom in creation, and pay more attention to the audience's enjoyment and entertainment. Therefore, in the design of scenes, animation films will adopt a large number of visual spectacle creation techniques. Since the first film "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs", American animation companies have paid attention to the innovation of animation technology and pursued the perfection of camera images, scene design and costume colors, bringing huge aesthetic pleasure to the audience. For example, the vast tropical ocean depicted in Finding Nemo is designed with dreamlike lighting and water waves reflecting each other, showing a magnificent and magical underwater world; The breathtaking scenes of broken glaciers in Ice Age; And the magnificent scenes of fighting fire dragons in Shrek the First, all of which reflect exquisite technology and magical ideas, bring wonderful visual enjoyment to the audience. In *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*, there are classic Chinese elements in the scene design, and at the same time, a large number of visual spectacle techniques are used to create, presenting many amazing cultural scenes of wonders. For example, the most classic scene in the film -- the design of Jiangshan and Shiji Map. In the film, "Jiangshan and Shiji Map", as the place where Nezha learns art, is a fairyland created by Taiyi real people and the most creative scene design in the whole film. When the scroll is opened, it gives people the artistic conception of a Chinese idyllic paradise. The creation of this wonderland is the shaping of typical Chinese elements in the film, which brings a strong visual wonder to the audience and has a very shocking visual impact. The audience can see a huge lotus leaf floating in front of their eyes, and on each lotus leaf, there are similar landscape palaces, and at the edge of the lotus leaf, water pours down to form waterfalls. The design concept, in the words of the director Jiao Zi: "His design concept is that every lotus leaf has a small world, which is inspired by the Chinese bonsai art." In the process of watching the film, the audience could not help but praise the beautiful visual presentation of the film.

In addition to the "Jiangshan country map", there are some scenes in the film is also breathtaking, such as the design of the lotus lamp, the lotus lamp is the master reincarnation of the millennium magic lamp, its presentation is very magnificent. In the film, the Lotus lamp is displayed with a huge light and colorful halo, which brings shock and beauty to the audience; There is also Fire Cloud Cave, Nezha's residence where he becomes an immortal, which is depicted as a cliff cave filled with red smoke and magma, giving a sense of mystery and danger; The Peach Feast, where Nezha communes with other gods, is a feast of the immortal world. In the film, the peach Feast presents an atmosphere of joy and splendor, with a table full of delicious food and splendid peaches; And the Dragon Palace, where Nezha is sworn to Aoping, home to the aquarium tribe. Also in the film, the Dragon Palace is depicted as a solemn underwater palace with an ornate interior filled with colorful coral and sea life. In addition to the use of visual wonders in the design of the scene, the film also gives the audience a visual shock in the shaping of the characters, such as Nezha's transformation, which leaves the audience with a long taste. Before the transformation, Nezha, even with a fire spear in his hand, is also a bear child who refuses to listen to his master. After the change, Nezha, free of bondage, is controlled by the devil, from a child into a three-headed and six-armed god killer. He is



dressed in a mixed Tianling, steps on a hot wheel, holds a fire spear in his hand, and stands up in the "flame". This scene has been widely spread on the Internet by people making GIFs. At the same time, the presentation of this visual spectacle is in line with Nezha's character setting in the film: My life is not about heaven! Too much like a man who refuses to give in to fate and gets up again, transforming from a child to an adult, Nezha shows his uncompromising determination to his fate. And that's just *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child* is a visual presentation of part of the wonder culture. The whole film shows the beauty and mystery of Chinese traditional myth culture with exquisite animation pictures and delicate painting style. The whole film is presented with visual wonders. Even in the appearance of some characters, the creative technique of combining visual wonders with Chinese elements is adopted.

### **The Modern Construction of Traditional Culture in *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child***

At present, the main problem of Chinese animation films is whether they can create excellent works with both a sense of nationality and modernity under the impact of overseas animation market, and form a "new Chinese animation school", which requires that in the creation process of animation films, traditional modern stories should be well told, and modern construction of traditional culture in films should be completed by means of audio-visual language.

#### **Modern Adaptations of Traditional Stories**

In the adaptation of traditional stories, the most important thing is the setting of the theme of the film. As the box office champion of Chinese animated films that year, *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child* 's great popularity is inseparable from the modern reconstruction of the film's theme. In the fairy tales, Nezha also possesses a rebellious spirit and fights against feudal laws and regulations, going so far as to "restore his father and his mother by cutting off his flesh and bones", but Nezha obeys the destiny of heaven even though he chops his flesh and bones against his father's power. When Nezha accidentally wounds someone to rescue him, Master Taiyi Zha says: "Although Nezha is ignorant and accidentally wounds Ao Bing, it is the number of days" and "The number of days has been set, how can we avoid it". It can be seen that in the fairy tale, it is based on the fatalism of "days", the mainstream value of feudal rites and laws. In the film *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*, Nezha's rebellion is that he "does not accept destiny and does not believe in destiny", and then sends out the anti-fatalism of "my destiny is not by me but by heaven", which is what modern people believe in and conforms to the current aesthetic view of people. In the setting of the theme, *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child* is mainly carried out through the protagonist Nezha, which emphasizes the modern value concept of the character's subjectivity with the characteristics of rebellion.

In the fairy tales, Nezha refuses to submit to the oppression of his father, but he is finally oppressed because he is defeated. In *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*, Nezha's greatest oppression comes from himself, the spirit pearl or the demon pearl, and whether he is resigned to his fate or fights for his life depends on himself. In the end, Nezha completes his self-sublimation: "Fuck the fate of the bird, I don't accept the fate is the fate of Nezha, this is what dad taught me." Here, too, is the film's modern twist on traditional notions of patriarchy. Nezha's spirit of struggle against fate can set a benchmark for today's young people. They can't give up their dreams or pursue them, no matter how difficult it is, giving them spiritual inspiration and strength. In the film, Nezha is no longer a god in a traditional story, but a flesh-and-blood person, or even an image portrayal of a group of people today. Like Malinowski's attitude toward myth, myth becomes a phenomenal reaction and proof of an established social fact, and comes into play when rituals, rituals, social or moral rules need to be justified and

ancient, revealed and sacred evidence is needed. In modern society, myth is no longer needed as proof, but when it is reinterpreted and constructed in the image, it will play a new role.

### **The Modern Shaping of Character Relations**

In the film, in addition to the modern portrayal of the protagonist Nezha, who plays an important role in the theme, other characters have also undergone modern reconstruction, been given new meanings and produced different character entanglements. The film focuses on the reconstruction of family and friendship. Nezha's father is no longer a stubborn tormentor in the film, as he constantly finds a balance between the governor and his father, especially when Nezha faces a life-threatening situation in which he changes from a serious general to a loving father, a portrayal that breaks down the patriarchal nobility of the traditional story and eases the problem between Nezha and his father. In the fairy tales, the relationship between Nezha and Li Jing can be described as the "problem father and son". Nezha is a trouble-maker every day, and Li Jing hates his ignorance just to solve Nezha's troubles, regardless of the relationship between father and son. The film's character reconstruction of Li Jing solves this problem and deals with the "problem father and son" relationship with warmth, which further helps Nezha's character growth. In addition to the father-son relationship, the film also reconstructs the mother-son relationship between Nezha and his wife Yin. In the fairy tale, Lady Yin is a typical feudal woman who is gentle, obedient and obedient to her husband. Even when she misses her son, she stops crying because she cares about her husband. She can only keep her missing son in her heart. In the film, Lady Yin subverts the image of a small woman in traditional stories. She not only calls herself "Niang", but also claims to smash the ruined temple when she enters the ancestral temple. Such an unrestrained female general, when accompanying the "rebellious" son, the mother and son enjoy kicking the shuttlecock with abandon, but also knows to comfort the son when he is in low mood, preserving an original heart for Ne Zha under the influence of magic pills. Completing the transformation from magic pill to spirit ball. The portrayal of Lady Yin in the film is not only a female general, but also a good mother who loves her son, that is, taking care of both work and family. This image is also the true portrayal of many professional women in modern society.

In the friendship relationship, Nezha and Aobing in the fairy tale, is no problem hostile relationship, and in the film, although the two people are friends, but also in the advancement of the film, is shaped as each other attracted, understand each other's bosom friend, even because the fate of the two sides, the position has to be opposed, or do not forget that the two people are still "friends", and finally together with the fate of the resistance. This complex relationship between the two people has been completely separated from the opposite of the myth, which is the subversive adaptation of the myth in the film.

### **The Integration of Modern Elements**

In *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*, modern elements can be found in many places in the adaptation of mythic stories, bringing the audience a sense of freshness and intimacy. For example, the unlocking method of the seven-color lotus in the film is the same as the current fingerprint password, and Nezha's master Taiyi Zhenzhen always enters the wrong password after getting drunk. After a blind press, he finds that "you can also use fingerprint authentication if you forget the password". Password unlock is already very modern, fingerprint unlock is more advanced, this modern element into the film, so that the audience feel fresh and interesting. At the same time, in order to enhance the audience's pleasure, in the film, some exciting projects in modern amusement parks are introduced, such as Nezha in the Li Li River and Mountains picture, when master Taiyi leads him through waterfalls, snow trails and ice

paths, they are similar to the thrill of amusement parks, bringing thrilling visual impact to the audience through the screen, allowing the audience to be brought into the atmosphere of the film. These are the typical pictures of "*Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*" integrating modern elements into the traditional story adaptation, which not only firmly captures the audience's attention, but also verifies that in the process of adapting traditional stories, the innovative integration of modern elements is essential.

The great success of *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child* lies in the fact that it integrates modern elements into the narration of mythic stories, and opens the new birth and reconstruction of traditional Chinese values in the work. This provides an effective reference for the modern promotion and promotion of traditional Chinese culture. In the modern interpretation of traditional stories, it is not a simple copy of various traditional cultural elements, but a modern interpretation based on the mining of traditional elements in the story blueprint, so as to realize the ancient and modern dialogue of traditional values. the success of *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child* comes from this. It makes us see the charm of successful modern construction of traditional stories in animated films, and also makes us more convinced of the commercial value of traditional Chinese stories.

### Summary

The excellent traditional Chinese culture provides rich material and deep connotation for the creation of animated films. Chinese animation film creators should draw valuable content from them and create animated films with Chinese national characteristics through innovative integration, which not only highlights the core values of China's socialism, but also leads the trend of The Times, achieving an animation era with excellent traditional Chinese culture as the core, and contributing to enhancing the self-confidence of Chinese culture and inheriting excellent traditional Chinese culture.

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