

The Landscape Narrative of Jia Zhangke's Film

Liu,Yuxiang¹ Li,Meiqi²

Taishan University, Taian, Shandong, 271000, China

Abstract: What is landscape? In a general sense, it refers to the scene presented in a certain area, that is, the visual effect. This visual effect reflects the land and the complex of space and matter on the land, which is the imprint of complex natural processes and human activities on the land. Most of the stories of Jia Zhangke's films are set in county towns or urban fringe corners in China, where there are few natural landscapes in landscape presentation. At the same time, from Jia Zhangke's own perspective, landscape selection is not arbitrary, especially in the use of realistic film themes, landscape needs to have a certain grand significance. This paper takes the landscape narrative analysis in Jia Zhangke's film as the main line throughout the whole text, and is committed to carefully examining the landscape narrative text in Jia Zhangke's film by using the methods of literature research and specific text analysis.

Keywords: Jia Zhangke; Landscape narrative; Narrative space

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1. The Landscape in Jia Zhangke's Film

As the sixth generation of China's new generation of directors, Jia Zhangke has won international recognition mainly because of his unique realism, narrative style and his humanistic concern for the Chinese social reality, especially the living environment and spiritual difficulties of marginalized groups. In terms of narrative methods, Jia Zhangke adopts the perspective of ordinary people. He is deeply influenced by the "real aesthetics" advocated by Bzan to record "present". This demand for "real" can be seen from Jia Zhangke's unmodified view of the living environment of the bottom of society and the use of a large number of non-professional actors. Since most of the stories of Jia's films are set in Chinese counties, or in the corners of urban edges, Among them, fewer natural landscapes appear in the landscape presentation, At the same time, from Jia Zhangke's own perspective, The selection of the landscape is not casual, Especially in the use of realistic film themes, Landscape needs to have a certain grand significance, therefore, This section will be based on the narrative space-time and space background of Jia Zhangke's film, Classified and summarize the landscape in Jia Zhangke's films, In order to better study the landscape narrative in Jia Zhangke's film.

(1) The natural landscape of different regions

1) The natural landscape of my hometown

The three works are all shot in Shanxi Province, and they all tell the story of Shanxi Province. Jia Zhangke radiates the whole changing face of China with the characteristic landscape of his hometown. Fenyang county is a unknown small county in the Midwest of China, in jia zhangke "small wu", "platform" and "free" the creation of the three works, the narrative landscape space in his hometown Fen Yang, "hometown trilogy" hometown Fen Yang characteristic

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About the Author

Liu,Yuxiang (1989-12), male, Han ethnicity, native place: Tai'an, Shandong. College of Literature and Media, Title: Lecturer, Doctoral Degree, Research Direction: Film and Television Production and Communication.

Li,Meiqi (1994-03), female, Han ethnicity, native place: Liaocheng, Shandong. Cheongju University, South Korea, PhD degree, research direction: children's films.

landscape presented for Jia's later film style laid the tone. In the "Hometown Trilogy", Fenyang is a dirty, shabby, backward small county, Jia Zhangke's attitude towards hometown is honest, non-professional actors play, no camera and editing modification and beautification, so that his film landscape to the greatest extent.

Platform, is both the end and the starting point, we are always constantly looking forward to, looking for, towards the next distance. Film "Platform" on the use of natural landscape than Jia's first work "Small Wu", "Platform" in the natural landscape is the typical regional features of central China, Jia using realistic style lens extended the narrative space, like marking in the process of reform and opening up the change of Chinese small county landscape symbol. For example, in the 87th minute of Platform, Jia Zhangke presents a picture of the truck falling into the river and unable to start. The picture shows the Luliang Mountain in the background in a light and cold blue tone. The endless mountains is not only the landscape of the hometown, but also the hometown feelings of people in the change of The Times. The bleak and bleak mountains, the hills with ravines and the desolate land left over by coal mines convey the characteristic landscape of Shanxi, providing a real narrative space for the film to tell the plight of marginal groups in small counties in China.

The movie "Ren Free and Easy" is set in 2001 in Shanxi Datong, where bankrupt state-owned factories are everywhere and laid-off workers are filled with despair. The director talked patiently with the city with cameras. In the early 20th century, when China's planned economy went bankrupt, the gray sky, dilapidated buildings and noisy street music made up the third-and fourth-tier county in the north. The film Ren Xiaoyao is more humanistic than the previous two works. Jia Zhangke presents the most real narrative space from the perspective of the film, and the landscape in the film is like the background label of an industrial town under China's economic transformation. For example, in the 99th minute of "Ren Xiaoyao", in the camera, low earth houses, newly built roads and barren loess show the natural style of Datong in the changing century, driving to the morning distance to find his own dream. The straight road is not only the scenery of his hometown, but also the direction of freedom. Through the real narrative landscape, the film let the audience see their young self, see the long gone youth.

2) Natural landscape of a foreign land

After Jia Zhangke's hometown trilogy, in his works, the presentation of natural landscape begins to walk out of his hometown Fenyang County with the change of narrative space. If in the "hometown trilogy", show is a kind of block, desolate, secluded, dry northern inland town, then the good fengjie and the southwest bashu "mountain city" structure, as the subjective perspective of Shanxi, is a very different "wushan cloud" under the poetic and beautiful. The film "Good People of the Three Gorges" is set in the construction of the Three Gorges Reservoir, a historic project of China's reform and opening up, and presents the living state and mental outlook of the three Gorges migrants from the perspective of two foreigners from Shanxi Province. Han Sanming from Shanxi and Shen Hong in the film, to fengjie county in order to find their lover, take we witnessed the construction of the three gorges dam and the three gorges immigrants living space, through the foreign natural landscape, the hometown landscape rescue records, convey the director for the modernization and ecological environment conflicting thinking.

In the narrative perspective, "The Three Gorges Good Man" is a completely defamiliarization perspective. Fengjie county, where the film was shot, is directly in the middle of the Three Gorges area of the Yangtze River, a riverside county surrounded by mountains. The natural landscapes presented in the film are all related to the local mountains and rivers. These unique landscapes, the graceful mountains and the turbulent Yangtze River are completely strange to a person from the arid areas of northern China. Foreign natural landscape in the film in the perspective of the hero Han Sanming, got a defamiliarization: in the film, Han Sanming on the river low fishing boat finally see his lost wife for many years, two people did not expected warm embrace, but like strangers after four eyes, his wife said, a word "sit", two people insipid, blunt, mechanical dialogue suggests that their life distress, life they early life smooth edges, for Han Sanming, the wife as strange behind the natural landscape. In the film, there are many scenes of Han Sanming running by the river or looking at the mountains and valleys. In Han Sanming's eyes, the natural landscape

of Fengjie is not only the display of regional characteristics, but also the environment of the plight of the small people in the flood of The Times.

2. The Role of the Landscape Narrative

Theoretically speaking, landscape narrative belongs to the category of "spatial narrative" in the contemporary study of narrative science. No matter which region or which era, the landscape must have spatial attributes. All the plots and narratives in the film are carried out in a specific space, and the landscape picture presented in the film will inevitably participate in the film narrative. As the art of audio-visual language, the expression of the lens of the film has a more strict and irreversible "restriction" compared with the written narration of the novel. Therefore, the landscape in the film influences and interferes with the narrative to a greater extent, thus producing a variety of different narrative effects. For example, Jia Zhangke's *Twenty-four Cities* and *Mountains May Depart* both use and show a large number of natural landscapes in the narrative time or space switch, among which there is no repeated use of the same natural landscape. This method of using the natural landscape in the same film belongs to the parallel narrative and cross narrative structure, with the role as the narrative clue and narrative link of the film, while ensuring the continuity and relevance of the film narrative, and further creating the narrative atmosphere of the film. In addition, the characters of the activities in the film in the natural landscape narrative space, the story contains the emotion, the characters of inner emotions, director trying to promote thoughts and emotions, can be through the use of natural landscape and show, be more artistic, this is the emotional expression of natural landscape in the movie. This section will go deep into the specific use and presentation of these natural landscapes, and study their different narrative roles in different films.

(1) Parallel narrative of the landscape

Parallel narrative refers to the independent narrative structure in different Spaces under the same time background. According to this definition, Jia Zhangke's "24 Cities" and "Mountains May Depart" create a unique parallel narrative effect in different time and space background through the unique time and space background and plot setting, which belongs to the model of parallel narrative using landscape.

In all of Jia Zhangke's works, the parallel narrative structure of *The Twenty-four Cities* is very prominent. Full article is composed of three narrative, three stories through the characters between short separation and brush and wonderful connected together, formed a from China in the 1960s to 1980s and now three generations of life situation: beauty, from Shenyang in 1958, become the first generation of female factory, thousands of miles away migration brings her the past. Floret, in 1978 from the Shanghai aviation school assigned to the factory, nicknamed "standard parts", is the beautiful factory flower in the eyes of the workers. Nana, born in 1982 and walks between the fashion city and the old factory, says she is the daughter of the worker's work. The main spatial background of the three narratives is the very ordinary Chinese towns and factories. The three narratives are unrelated on the surface, but under the premise of the narrative position of the great development and prosperity of Chinese society, the three protagonists deduce the generational history of a state-owned factory. Their fate unfolded in the factory that made the aircraft. This requires extra caution in the treatment of the narrative transition. Therefore, the *Twenty-four Cities* is completed through the repeated appearance of the typical Chinese-style landscape, including the natural landscape with regional characteristics.

The river, as a natural landscape that appears in both the first and second narratives, becomes the link between the innovation of thought and the progress of The Times and the only one that appears in the first two narratives is that river. In 1999, the three people took a car to the river to set off fireworks, the river has just thawed; Shen Hong had gone to the river, witnessed the plane fell into the river, in 2014, Shen Hong walked with the death of her father, the camera also showed the flow of the river for a long time. With the leaping time advance, this recurring river,

as a real natural landscape, can be said to be one of the means to shape the film's narrative space, but the most important thing is that the natural landscape becomes the clue to connect the two narratives.



In *Mountains May Depart*, the recurring rivers

The vast and boundless flat grassland and ocean are the recurring natural landscapes in the third narrative section. For the audience who pass through two narrative Spaces, these natural landscapes are the real narrative clues in the visual sense. The natural landscapes, obviously corresponding to the two groups of river and ocean, make the third narrative —— clearly isolated from the characters and the time and space background properly integrated into the whole. That is to say, the natural landscape of rivers, grass and oceans, in *Mountains May Depart*, not only enriches the expression of the film as images, but also serve as clues or ties to connect three parallel narratives. This is the concrete embodiment of the role of the natural landscape in the parallel narrative structure in Jia Zhangke's film.

(2) Cross-narrative of the landscape

"*Ren Xiaoyao*" is Jia Zhangke's work with a relatively prominent cross-narrative structure in the film. The film is composed of two relatively independent narratives, both of which are Xiaoji and Bin, the children of laid-off urban workers, in the land of Shanxi Datong, a declining industrial city. Therefore, Jia Zhangke used a lot of spatial real scenes and images in the film, placed the two protagonists and their narrative promotion in the same spatial and space background, and completed the cross montage through a large number of landscape display, among which the use and display of natural landscape is the most obvious and the most typical. For example, when the two pursue their love world, the narrative switch uses continuous roads to transition.

Meanwhile, in Jia Zhangke's film "*Good People of the Three Gorges*," the film makes several times, using flowing rivers and rolling mountains. In the film hero Han Sanming narrative space to Shen Hong narrative space transition, Jia used the Fengjie local most regional characteristic natural landscape —— clouds under the low sky, towering peaks, set off the light gray sky light of river, lens from standing alone with Han Sanming figure began to move, after empty landscape, very natural transition to Shen Hong back. Here, as an important link of the film narrative, the natural landscape not only ensures the unity of the narrative time and space, which is facing the disappearing Fengjie town, but also connects the two narratives and echoes. Similarly, when the film shifts from Shen Hong's narrative space to Han Sanming's narrative space, just like the first switch, it also turns to the misty mountains and rivers in the eyes of the woman Shen Hong staring out of the car window. The camera continues to move sideways, and the other protagonist, Han Sanming, enters. Through the use and presentation of the natural landscape, the two narratives can be skillfully connected and integrated.

In *The Three Gorges*, the natural landscape not only serves as an obvious narrative transition tool, but also serves as the main material for creating the narrative atmosphere. The man Han Sanming and the woman Shen Hong both

came to Fengjie in Chongqing for "seeking". The two narratives are independent of each other in the relationship between the characters and the promotion of the plot. In order to make the film narrative not too loose, it depends on the creation of the narrative atmosphere. In the film, there are many pictures of characters standing looking at the river from the mountain. The large area is the natural scenery, or people are in a corner of the scenery, or with silent back. — The film intentionally highlights the main position of the natural scenery such as mountains, canyons and river water, creating a unified and continuous narrative atmosphere. The careful arrangement of the film in the structure, the deliberate construction of the image and the clever arrangement of the associated clues all show that Jia Zhangke is trying to integrate some new elements into his work, and the attempt to use the landscape presentation to make narrative transition also brings narrative changes to the work.

(3) The emotional expression of the landscape

In is famous for its social reality, documentary aesthetic style of jia films, natural landscape can not only be used as a series of different narrative clues and ties, under the background of specific characters, stories, the natural landscape through specific use and display way, but also can convey the characters or director intended to convey thoughts and emotions.

1) The natural landscape and the individual sadness

The documentary style reflected by the rough texture not only makes Jia Zhangke's film present a real, natural and dignified atmosphere, but also gives the dual emotional tone of individual sadness and warmth living in this state. With a kind of youth honesty and enthusiasm, Jia Zhangke freely captures the world he is in, writing the real survival reality and life state on the edge of culture and mainstream. One of the characteristics of Jia Zhangke's film realism is the attention on marginalized groups.

The natural landscape with the same narrative meaning is also shown in *Mountains May Depart*. In the film, Zhang Jiale, who is deeply involved in the plot of *Oedipus* because of his search for freedom and maternal love, is a confused person in a complete sense, who bears the multiple confusion of his hometown, life and *The Times*. In the film, Zhang Jiale is repeatedly seen walking on the endless grassland and gazing at the quiet sea. These shots often show the grassland and the sea itself in large areas, and weaken the dominant position of people. Thus, through the quiet and silent natural landscape, people sometimes show the sense of confusion and confusion in the face of the things that they cannot change or even participate in.

2) Natural landscape and nostalgia emotion

With the change of times and the deprivation of old life, the marginal groups are isolated from their homeland in order to survive, resulting in homesickness. It is a collective complex often produced by the marginal groups in contemporary Chinese society. The homesickness in "Platform" is mainly inclined to the homesickness in the changing era of China's reform and opening up. The homesickness in *The Three Gorges* is the spiritual homesickness brought by the disappearance of the homeland and the loss of life. The homesickness in *Mountains May Depart* is more like a kind of "integrated" homesickness. In this film, the transformation of life, the loss of relatives, and the suffering of people far away from home are deeply displayed in the three narratives. What the above three works have in common is that the use and display of natural landscape all play an important role in expressing the theme of people's "homesickness" in the film.

"Platform" uses the natural landscape to convey the anxiety experience of people and living space, which is the psychological expression of homesickness in witnessing the changes of the homeland. There are two meaningful natural landscape scenes in the film, which convey the homesickness of this anxiety: after Zhong Ping leaves Aunt Cui Mingliang's home, the camera and the desolate, mottled and lifeless mountains enter the camera. Shanxi Fenyang is located behind the cover of Luliang Mountain, and the whole Shanxi is located on the Loess Plateau. There are few flat fields, mostly ravines and hills, and uneven mountains can be seen everywhere. This kind of almost

natural psychological dependence on the mountain, in this combination of image language and dialogue, expresses a shallow light of primitive nostalgia for native life; Cui Mingliang and Sanming came to the hillside, smoking and standing wish, the lens is gray horizon, only sparse trees and the loess plateau unique ravines, the latter has been extended to the distance, blurred in the sky. This is a long shot of nearly two minutes, and the bleak and hazy horizon, which vividly expresses the pain of homesickness that always lingers in *The Platform*.

Similarly, the natural landscape characters nostalgia complex as narrative elements, for example, in the three gorges, lens directly show fengjie county-qutang gorge mountain gorge and calm and flowing Yangtze river, and through the ferry on the commentary of the guide, inform the audience the ancient riverbank and land with the three Gorges project, there are some implicit landscape expression, such as "was the deceased," zhang to music and Mia driving through the vast, gentle open grassland, two overlooking the blue without impurity calm ocean on the helicopter. This seems to be a different regional landscape between time and space naturally show, but actually has a more profound meaning: rivers and oceans, not only a metaphor of different spiritual nostalgia, but also point to the "lost" spiritual situation; facing the mountains and rivers in the mountains and Shen Hong, still can not get rid of the old life, in the face of the new life of helpless and unknown, in nature.

3. Conclusion

In Jia Zhangke's films, the landscape often appears together with people, and evolves in a corresponding presentation way along with the change of people's spirit and emotions. In *"The Good Man of the Three Gorges"*, Shen Hong stands on the bank of the river many times, looking confused and glazed over at the misty mountains and the flowing Yangtze River in the distance. Such an ordinary person, lost in the fate of The Times and personal life, can only get possible spiritual comfort by pouring his eyes and attention into the natural mountains and water. Natural confusion is also his confusion as a small person. Similarly, in *Mountains May Depart*, the hero has repeatedly faced the confused scenes of natural landscapes such as rivers, grasslands and the sea. Landscape, which pays highly attention to the spiritual space of the people at the bottom of Chinese society, has formed a unique emotional expression of ordinary people.

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