

Explore the Relationship Between the Stereotype of Self-orientalism and Actual Cultural Symbols in Films and Television Series

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Abstract: Self-orientalism is the embodiment of Occidentalism's appropriation; in fact, it is submission and obedience to the colonisation of the occidental spirit. The characteristics of modernity opposed by other ethnic groups and indigenous groups are opposed by Occidentalism. And is Orientalism considered the antithesis of civilization? Non-European civilization is regarded as the eternal "other" so long as the West has maintained a one-way gaze on the East. When social problems spark discussion, the West is frequently used as a positive example, while China is the target of attacks and criticism. It appears that if we do not become "Western", we will continue to be ignorant and barbaric. When western cultural symbols become mainstream standards and have great discourse power, they will exert a subtle influence on the personality of Chinese culture, and the loss of a nation's cultural identity will be detrimental to its vitality and creativity.

Keywords: occidentalism, self-orientalism, stereotype, representation of culture, qualitative analysis

1. Introduction

Is it possible that the cultural image of eastern nations can be represented by the self-orientalist stereotype? How to correctly display the symbols that can represent the cultures of eastern countries; how to overcome the cultural background differences that exist between the East and the West; how to shape the image of the East by utilising the benefits of western culture; how to avoid cognitive bias and break down the barriers that self-Orientalism represents the stereotypical image of the East; and how to shape the image of the East using the advantages of western culture. This paper examines the expression and compositional conditions of self-orientalism in Westernism in *Crazy Rich Asians* and *Fresh off the boat* by using them as examples. Using *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* as an example, this paper analyses in depth the film's rebellious spirit and differentiates between self-orientalism and the dissemination of Chinese culture through the telling of Chinese stories to western audiences.

2. Representative Analysis of Classic Film and Television Series

The American media referred to *Crazy Rich Asians* as a turning point in breaking the stereotype of Asians (Visalvanich, 2017), because Asians are no longer merely functional roles who are adept at kung fu and mathematics. But in it, the female character believes it is her duty to marry a wealthy man, while the male character enjoys objectifying women.



Figure 1. Poster of movie *The crazy rich Asians*
(<https://ew.com/movies/crazy-rich-asians-photos-constance-wu-henry-golding/>)

The mother had extremely high academic standards for her children from the Fresh Off The Boat.



Figure 2. Poster of TV series *Fresh off the boat*
(<https://televisionpromos.com/shows/fresh-off-the-boat/>)

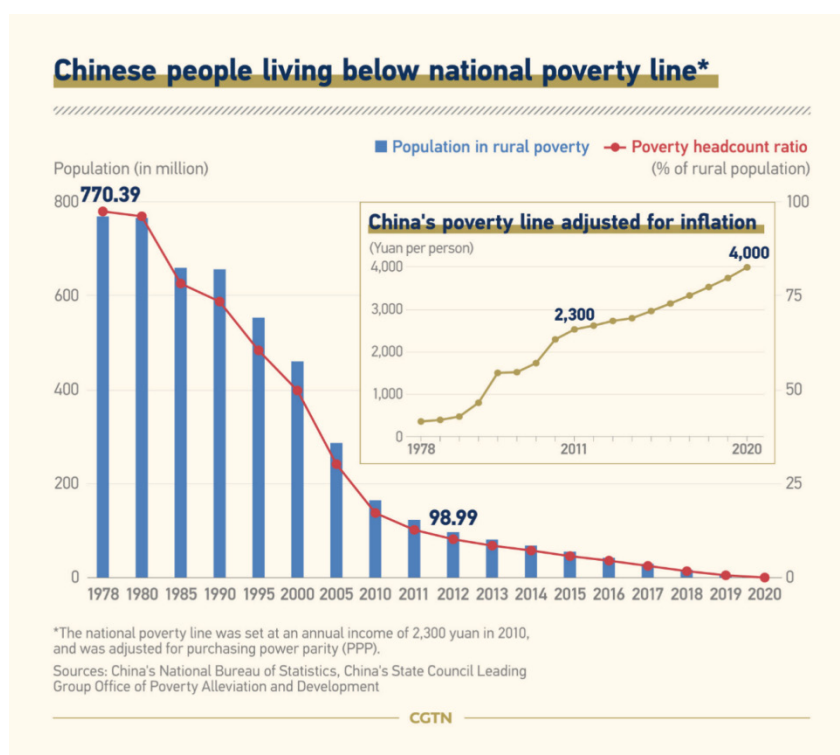


Figure 3. Chinese people living below national poverty line
(<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2020-12-14/China-s-poor-rural-population-lifted-out-of-poverty-Xi-says-WdIG3oHKdq/index.html>)

China has a large population and a vast territory. Prior to the complete eradication of poverty (Dash, 2022), many children living in remote mountainous regions had very limited educational resources. To compete with students from regions with superior educational resources (W. Zhang & Bray, 2021), they must exert greater effort. There are not a few such cases in China, so such a culture has been formed and higher achievements have been pursued. In the plot, the mother is extremely frugal. In China, people have endured countless natural and manmade disasters for thousands of years. Drought, famine, the majority of working people know how to value their labour's fruits. In reality, if we want to talk about frugality, every country has its own culture of frugality, which is entirely dependent on different family situations (Sharmelly & Ray, 2018);

however, this is the stereotype of Chinese mothers. In these two works, a particular phenomenon serves as the source of inspiration, but there is no positive guidance or explanation.



Figure 4. Film stills of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*
(<https://messthemoviefreak.wordpress.com/2014/10/13/crouching-tiger-hidden-dragon/>)

Some creators deeply rooted in China's local culture, is intended for an audience who are familiar with the cultural symbols can resonate sufficiently (Hartley, 2022). In *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, In order to pursue a higher purpose in life, Yu Jiaolong gave up everything because she received the final response was that "freedom itself cannot be considered within any context or logical relationship; freedom is itself. "Only by giving up everything, can we truly experience the ID's freedom. According to the sixth chapter of the Tao, Everything originates from the Tao and ultimately returns to it. It shows that the entire film begins with Li Mubai's confuse with human lust and concludes with Yu Jiaolong's attainment of enlightenment on the mountain, forming an exquisite ring structure (J. Zhang, 2021).

The Dragon King is a god believed in Buddhism and Taoism. In movie, the term "Duron" which used to describe Yu Jiaolong from the Li Mubai refers to evil thoughts and delusions that may lead to his inner desires (Woei Lien Chong, 2001b). For western audiences, the intertwining of familiar themes such as sexual fantasy, sexual repression, the pursuit of freedom, female development, heroes, reason, and emotion places their perception of oriental space in an imaginary realm. This fantasy is constructed for western audiences, catering to their aesthetic preferences by depicting an exotic atmosphere and emphasising the presence of mainstream western ideology in the film (Wu & Chan, 2007). It cultivates the western audience's understanding and cognitive system of China's films, which must begin with the knowledge that seems very basic to the China audience, and answers the western audience's questions regarding the common elements of China's films (Wang & Yeh, 2005). In the scene depicting a bamboo forest, for instance, bamboo represents the tough and upright character sought by the Chinese. What China Kung Fu has been discussing, what kinds of weapons it possesses, etc.

Ang Lee stated, "Honestly, I believe that, from a modern perspective, China's classical things have some flaws that must be addressed with western knowledge and techniques. I hope to do enough, as opposed to relying on my artistic sense to do unisexual play (Wang & Yeh, 2005b). In general, there is no doubt about China's cultural wealth as a source of film material, but it takes skills and techniques to produce these elements into a time-limited film, and it is worthwhile to learn these western advantages (Kim & Brunn-Bevel, 2020). China's distinctive culture, which is distinct from the images of fighting and fighting in western action films, serves as a counterbalance to Hollywood's films. *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* reveals the exquisiteness and aestheticism of traditional oriental martial arts in a subtle and understated manner (Woei Lien Chong, 2001c), a feature that is absent from western films.

3. Conclusion

As long as the west retains the hegemony of discourse, it will be difficult for us to escape the dilemma of having to produce what the viewer desires in order to gain the attention and accommodation of the west. I believe one-sidedness is the key to understanding the stereotypes. It is the westerners or some orientals who use what they observe to create their imagined orient and satisfy the westerners' desire to observe the orient. Despite the fact that *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* is a controversial work, I do not believe it to be an example of self-orientalism. It embodies the spirit of resistance, holding

the “being watched” of the East in its own hands as a form of resistance to the self-orientalism that appears to be so deeply rooted. Take off your clothes in advance, expose yourself completely to the western view, seize the initiative of “seeing” by exposing yourself completely. Rather than one-sided stereotypes, the core of China’s traditional culture and philosophy is finally presented to the western audience.

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