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Study of Audience Emotions in Epic Cinema

-- Taking Genghis Khan Film as an Example

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Abstract: The purpose of epic films is not only to tell a good story, but also to let the audience have more and deeper feelings while being entertained. The audience's emotions go deeper and deeper in the process of watching the film, from pleasing the eyes to understanding the characters to triggering empathy, which also fits the three parts of Freud's theory of the structure of consciousness, and in fact is the process of the audience's consciousness going deeper and deeper into the film step by step.

Keywords: Epic Film; Audience Emotion; Genghis Khan.

1. Introduction

The story of Genghis Khan is a story of heroic characters that is famous in Asia and Europe, even all over the world, and many countries have made films about Genghis Khan, whose deeds and stories have a long history, grand war scenes, prominent heroic protagonists, and a significant impact on history, making it a veritable heroic epic film. Throughout the history of world cinema development, epic cinema reached its peak in the 1950s and 1960s, which is closely related to the overall political, economic and cultural conditions of the world in the first half of the 20th century.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, driven by the Industrial Revolution, the world's science and technology and economy developed rapidly. With the birth of modern technologies such as the automobile, telephone, television and cinema, people's lifestyles changed dramatically. However, even though lifestyles have changed, it is still impossible to cover up the deep disasters brought to mankind by the two world wars. The material losses caused by the wars and the breakup of many families plunged people into social unrest, lack of material, spiritual panic and other vortexes. The development of television and film technology found a way out for human beings to escape from reality, and the stories of the ancient heroes became a good medicine for temporary departure from reality, invigorating the spirit and encouraging morale, and the epic film came into being and flourished at this time.

2. The Threefold Emotional Realm of Watching Epic Films

Emotion is unique to human beings, "a psychological phenomenon that responds to the relationship between the object and the subject's needs in the form of self-experience" [Guo Jingping. Sociology of Emotion: Theory and History of Reality [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Sanlian Bookstore, 2008:40.], emotion and human social needs, as well as consciousness are closely linked, the objective thing itself is the real reason to touch the mood and emotion. Art is the concentrated manifestation of human emotion, and art itself carries emotional consciousness. On the one hand, art embodies human emotions, and on the other hand, human beings also feel emotions through art. Epic film as a form of art, also contains emotions, the face of this historical theme of the film, the audience's understanding is progressive, the emotion is step by step in depth.

2.1. Embodiment of the Audience's "Self"- Entertainment

Epic film is a branch of cinema, so it carries the function and purpose of entertaining the public from the very beginning. People watch films not only to understand a film text, but also to get a feeling of relaxation and leisure, which is the initial motivation for people to watch films. The overall environment created by the film in just a few hours, whether it is the cinema environment, the mood of the audience around the film, the ups and downs of the storyline, or the picture and sound effects of the film itself, all give the audience a temporary detachment from the real world of the premises, to give people mental and psychological relaxation, which is the release of the audience's animal instincts, but also under the suppression of the emotional self-redemption.

Where does the audience's aesthetic interest come from? The audience is an independent individual with aesthetic expectations, and the film opens up the audience's original aesthetic vision and further satisfies the audience's aesthetic expectations, which is worthwhile and entertaining for the audience.

Epic films are from a world that is very different from the modern world, the landscape, customs, humanities and so on are all brand new, things that people have never heard of or seen in their lives, plus the art of twentieth-century cinema is a brand-new way of expression, epic film is a different narrative mode from that of history books, which gives the audience a brand-new feeling. "The technique of giving something 'artistry' to distinguish it from other everyday things" [Zhao Zhiyong. Re-conceptualisation of Brecht's Theory of Strangeness[J]. Drama (Journal of the Central Academy of Drama),2005(03):29-43.] This kind of 'strangeness' is also a kind of rabbit hole for people to get rid of the real world temporarily, and its origin comes from people's expectation of life. The origin of the technique comes from people's expectation of life, hoping to discover a brand new, different and unique world in the ordinary life.

2.2. Awakening of the Audience's "Self" - Understanding

In addition to releasing their own emotions by laughing

along with the plot, viewers will also sigh with the plot, which is a response to the storyline in addition to the purpose of entertainment. The audience is not only watching a laughable programme, but also a heartfelt process, in fact, it is also from a purely viewing point of view, into the internal process of the film, and is also the embodiment of the audience's self-awareness into the film's narrative.

The story told by the epic film, on the one hand, can make people immersed in the narrative of human history, on the other hand, can make the audience feel the majesty of history and culture and the warmth of historical figures, the audience has been integrated into the self-emotion at this stage.

Emotional stories in epic films are most likely to trigger the audience's life experience and drive the audience's emotional feelings. People project their self-knowledge and self-understanding of the world into the film when watching the film, feel the emotions of the characters in the story, and when the film world and the audience's self-world are in agreement, the audience will have emotional identification with the content of the film. Emotional stories are the most popular and easily accepted by the audience, they are the outward expression of people's inner good feelings, and they are the world that the audience hopes for. The recording of these warm stories enables the epic film to form an emotional identity with the audience and achieve the understanding and recognition of the plot.

Suspense in epic films is most likely to attract the audience's attention, which actually reflects the audience's understanding and identification with the plot. Layers of suspense will gradually bring people's emotions to the highest point, and make the audience get great emotional satisfaction at the moment of the result announcement. In the process of suspenseful build-up, the audience's emotions are constantly invested, forming a stable emotional interaction with the film. The audience's attention to the suspenseful narrative lies in the emotional stimulation brought by the real suspense, gathering emotions in the tense events and experiencing the truest joys and sorrows of ordinary life. From the perspective of epic films, the ambiguity of the general public's knowledge of history in their daily lives helps to amplify the suspense in historical films, and the tense and exciting suspense narrative further amplifies the emotional feelings, immersing the audience in the unknown and affecting the historical progress of the storyline, and satisfies the audience's need for humanity, spectacle and emotion.

2.3. Audience's "Superego" - Empathy

The audience's emotion is a necessary condition for the formation of emotional identity. Taking the audience's identity as the starting point, it is obvious that there is another realm of empathy on top of the audience's emotional experience of understanding and identity. The audience's empathy reflects the humanistic characteristics of epic films, starting from history and arriving at the hearts of contemporary people, the humanistic meaning of epic films no longer stays purely inside the work but extends to the outside world, the deeper creative intention of epic films can be shown, which is also the reason why epic films are popular all over the world, not only do viewers watch the historical stories and characters in the film, but they also look back on their own lives and gain life experience. This is why epic films are so popular all over the world.

Through vivid images, epic films bring history back to the audience, and in the process of retrospecting history, they feel the vitality of history, and in the collision between modernity and history, they broaden the emotional boundaries of the audience. Whether it is a biographical performance that is faithful to history or an overhauled "performance" of history, the "love of history" always infects the audience, leading them to feel the emotions of the film through vivid historical events. "Through modern media technology, history can be brought back to life, ... can attract people to learn from the past and learn from the present" [Chen Dandan. Reflections on the Content and Value of Current Humanistic Documentaries [J]. China TV,2022(02):97-101.]. "Using history as a mirror, one can know the rise and fall" is exactly the reason. Different "horizontal viewpoints" come from the viewing construction of different cultural groups, "the ritual view of communication does not lie in the acquisition of information, but in a certain kind of dramatic behaviour, in which the audience joins the world of power struggle as a bystander of the dramatic performance. " [American] James W. Carey. Communication as Culture: Proceedings of Media and Society [M]. Translated by Ding Wei. Beijing: Huaxia Publishing House,2005:7,9.]

3. The Emotional World of Genghis Khan Film Appreciation

3.1. The Closeness and Appreciation of Man and Nature

When epic films tell stories and express nature and humanity, most of the emotions expressed are poetic, connecting the human emotional world through the beauty of the mood.

In the filming of the story of Genghis Khan, the creators used a lot of landscapes such as grassland, blue sky and yurts, which were both the living environment of Genghis Khan and his sight. When these shots appeared, especially in the big screen projection, to bring the audience a long and quiet beautiful emotional experience, the audience's body and mind are brought to the prairie, the ear caresses the breeze of the grassland, the nose breathes a unique mixture of grassland flavour, and heard a variety of sounds from the animals in the distance, this experience is how beautiful and rare. In the face of this scene, the audience just need to quietly enjoy it, this kind of film watching experience is simple and beautiful. This is also true for the animals in the film, whether they are horses as mounts, eagles with vibrating wings, or wolves that are honoured as "Everlasting Heaven", all of them can bring people a touching feeling, presenting the emotion of human-animal interoperability, and bringing the audience a primitive and instinctive trust and appreciation of the aesthetic experience.

3.2. The Contradiction and Understanding of Human Emotion

Art works more or less contain the creator's concern for nature and reflection on society. By telling historical stories, epic films trigger people's thinking, drive people to think about the life world, and form humanistic emotions centred on epic films. The importance that peoples show to the phenomena and problems in epic films can reflect their recognition and understanding of epic films.

In the story and film of Genghis Khan, his wife Marco Polo was captured by his enemies, and he was in a competitive position with his good friend Zamuhe, all of which could not be avoided in Genghis Khan's life, and these two people could

not be separated from him in his life, all of which made him contradictory, struggling and insisting, and this kind of dilemma and choice led the audience into a real society created by virtual means, and reminded the audience of daily life's This dilemma and choice lead the audience into a real society created by virtual means, allowing the audience to associate the dilemma with the daily life and salvation, generating richer emotional associations. The prominence of this contradiction and the audience's understanding of it in relation to their own daily experience make Genghis Khan more realistic and closer to the audience's heart, who respect and understand the character's choices, thus bringing the audience's viewing experience to a higher level.

3.3. Responsibility and Empathy of Human Society

Epic film as a heroic epic, the hero always bears the responsibility of saving the public, no matter how much difficulty encountered, the heroic characters never give up, is a sense of responsibility, but also a reflection of the human spirit. To a certain extent, epic films have the ability to awaken the humanistic consciousness of modern society, and the embodiment of genuine emotions in historical stories is a sharp blade to impact modern interpersonal indifference.

Genghis Khan story and many hero stories, heroes have a sense of mission "must" to do something, Genghis Khan to revive the tribe as its own responsibility, which and the modern society "should do" "can do" "want to do This is a great contrast to modern society's "should we do it", "can we do it", "do we want to do it" and "is it worth doing", and people in the position of being chosen are most grateful for this kind of hero who "falls from the sky". For the audience, not only did they watch a film, but they also saw a film that was not only about the hero, but also about the hero. For the audience, not only do they watch a film about salvation, but they are also saved again. The fate of the film characters is linked to the fate of the audience, and empathy is born.

Audience emotion is a vocabulary that appears along with the awakening of individual consciousness, and the audience's emotional identification reflects not only the importance of individual emotion in today's world, but also a kind of respect and understanding for others and empathy. The audience's emotion is not a priori, nor is it a one-way transmission, but a two-way communication that accompanies the advancement of the film, a recognition of the film from the bottom of the heart. The audience's emotion of epic film is a more profound topic, what the audience wants to get from watching epic film, what they can get, and what they get in the end, this is both the audience's question, but also the creator should think about, how the creator can guide the audience to get a new emotional experience and spiritual resonance from a familiar story.

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