

Exploration of Chinese Poetry Cinema Based on the Study of Jiangnan-Themed Films

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Abstract: This paper takes several Jiangnan-themed films as examples to conduct an analysis of the expression of Chinese poetry films aided by Jiangnan elements, and thus proposes problems and solutions in the development of Chinese poetry films.

Keywords: Jiangnan Elements; Poem Movie; Narrative Kernel; Camera Language; Expression Methods

Introduction

In recent years, many domestic movies have emerged and the trend of domestic movies is improving. However, through the vertical comparison with domestic movies in the past years and the horizontal comparison with foreign movies, it can be found that domestic movies still have the problems such as single theme, simple expression methods, weak camera language, etc., which can easily lead to the problem of shoddy production, and in particular, there is a serious lack of Chinese poetic movies with the theme of Jiangnan as the important content. Therefore, it is one of the important tasks for contemporary filmmakers to regain the lens language and expression techniques, create a mood with Chinese characteristics, and tell a story with the kernel of Chinese culture.

1. Introduction to Chinese Poetry Cinema

In the 1920s, some Western film artists began to create poetry films with the aim of transcending the limitations of photographic documentation of film activities. While the basic elements of Western poetry films are metaphor, symbol and rhythm, Chinese poetry films have distinctive aesthetic characteristics compared with Western ones, mainly because they have creatively inherited the rich tradition of Chinese poetics. The essence of Chinese poetics lies in the blending of feelings and scenes, which creates a mood of endless meaning. The spirit of Chinese landscape painting is similar to that of the poetry movie, which is undoubtedly a good medicine to buffer the spirit in the fast-paced life nowadays. At a time when cultural forms are blossoming, Chinese poetry films are an important part of China's cultural output due to their distinctive oriental characteristics, which not only helps contemporary young people to diversify their aesthetics and traditional cultural heritage, but also helps to highlight China's characteristics and show China's cultural self-confidence.

2. Example Analysis of Jiangnan-themed Movies

2.1 Take “where is the sound of the flute” as an example

This 2007 movie is based on kunqu, and takes kunqu as a clue to link up two similar love stories between Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China, and between two generations of grannies and Ouyangs. The movie adopts a lot of Jiangnan elements - the continuous rain, the melodious and sad flute sound, the cascading lotus leaves and the laughter of the handsome men and women picking lotus under the leaves, the boat in the water town, the Su embroidery with modern elements, and most importantly, the kunqu and its costumes.

The narrative of the film is characterized by the monologues of the hero and heroine, focusing on the psychological ups and downs of the characters rather than the logical completeness of the story, not describing in detail the photographs found by the hero and the letter found by the heroine, but rather focusing on the emotional fluctuations of the protagonists triggered by the plot, which is also in line with the sense of blankness of the poem film under the Jiangnan theme and gives the audience the space to explore and revert to the imagination again.

2.2 Take “The Wind and the Moon” for example

Set in Suzhou and Shanghai, this 1996 movie uses a more subtle and depressing atmosphere to show the oppression of the feudalism and to give a voice to women who find it difficult to pursue freedom in the feudal era. In terms of mood and atmosphere, the film's depressing

and horrifying feeling is shown by the misty air brought about by the rain and humidity of Jiangnan, the labyrinthine corridors with winding paths that are slightly cramped, and the light spots reflected by the leaky window panes, etc. It also contrasts the traditional gardens with the then intoxicated Shanghai metropolis, and borrows a lot of traditional elements of Jiangnan to create a feudal, closed and depressing and gloomy Pangfu. The Pang Mansion is a feudal, closed-off, depressing and cold mansion.

In terms of camera language, “The Wind and the Moon” focuses more on close-ups of the characters, combining the emphasis on light and shadow portrayal of the face in different roles, at different times, and in different scenes, to reflect the psychology of the characters in a more profound way, and even more so in the back-and-forth illumination of the eyes and movements to subtly add to the logic of the story.

3. Problems

3.1 Camera language

In the traditional Chinese culture, focus on the “text to the moral”, put in the current context, that is, with a variety of artistic expression for the exposition of the truth, while the Western film is the opposite, which is often narrative as the main body to avoid the film camera may exist “didactic sense of”, and most of the contemporary Chinese films influenced by Western films, often also follow the West using a lot of side bias positive and negative , but the lack of Fei Fei. “Most of the contemporary Chinese films influenced by Western films tend to follow the example of the West by adopting a large number of side-biased forward and backward shots, etc. but lack of Fei Mu’s Spring in a Small Town in the abandonment of the front and backward shots that must be cut in order to realize the dialogue, and more use of the way out into the focus on the consistency and correlation between the lens of the lens flow brought about by the camera sense.

3.2 Narrative core level

In Bi Zhifei’s short film “Spring in a New Small Town”, there is the problem of only copying the slow pace and the lack of story kernel, the root of which lies in the fact that the original version of “Spring in a Small Town” pioneered the psychological realism of the movie’s expression, reflecting the country on the home, embodying China’s old and new at that time with the characteristics of the characters and the significance of the women’s voices, but the “Spring in a New Small Town” under the adaptation has not changed the kernel of the story, which is placed in the script’s setting of the Nine Cities, which has been changed. However, the adaptation of “Spring in a New Small Town” has not changed its story kernel, and such a kernel is obviously no longer reasonable in the 1990s, when the script is set; as for the movie “Where is the Flute?”, it can be seen that in the 10th anniversary of Hong Kong’s return to China, the love story triggered by Kunqu Opera of Jiangnan serves as a bridge to show the emotional connection of traditional culture with Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, and mainland China in a small manner, and it is clear that this story kernel was understood and recognized by the general public at that time.

4. Suggestions for Development

4.1 Explore a distinctive camera language for Chinese poetic films, and do not stick to imitating the original works

Rich lens language sometimes complicates simple issues and easily destroys the meaning of white space, but too simple lens also easily leads to unclear narrative, character psychology and other communication is not in place, Hollywood-style camera techniques easily lead to the failure to convey the oriental aesthetic mood, so according to the rhythm of the storyline will be the poetry of the film lens language is extremely important to use just the right way. For example, Jia Zhangke’s short film Love on the River, compared to Fei Mu’s Spring in a Small Town, which is a poetic expression of side description, borrowing objects as a metaphor for others, and expressing emotions through the scenery, Love on the River is more inclined to the direct expression of the poem, and its emphasis on the portrayal of the characters’ emotions and psychological changes can be seen in the close-ups of a few large characters. In addition to this, long shots often appear in Jia Zhangke’s films, accompanied by the movement of the central character to unfold the relationship between different characters and their inner emotional fluctuations, which is similar to the use of the lens in Spring in a Small Town, which, in my opinion, is precisely a kind of inheritance and

innovation of the lens language of the poem's film, making it more compact in its plot and in line with the aesthetics of the contemporary audience, and at the same time, using the poetic oriental aesthetics to convey the emotions.

4.2 The combination of music

The mood created by visual expression is limited, while the combination of music can guide the rhythm of the work, and at the same time give the work a more complete atmosphere. On the level of music, Chinese poetic films and western films have a more obvious distinction. Western films mostly use accompaniment music with a stronger sense of existence and longer duration to create a sense of atmosphere, while in Chinese poetic films, the music can be so weak as to give people a sense of a long and slow flow, or so short as to use a few simple sounds to set off a section of a story or an emotional twist. In the works mentioned above, I am most impressed by the music in director Jia Zhangke's works, which is briefly interspersed between the storylines and plays the role of tugging at the heartstrings, and such a role also precisely mirrors director Fei Mu's air, i.e., through the four ways of mobilizing the elements of the scene by means of the camera itself, the camera itself, the target object, the bypass and the audio to change the atmosphere and arouse the audience's aesthetic sensibility, so as to make the audience assimilate with the characters of the play's environment^[3].

4.3 Sense of identity with the times

Chinese poetry movie is never to the audience can not understand the direction of development, on the contrary, the creation of poetry movie is precisely the purpose in the absence of strong plot conflict with the characters of psychological, emotional ups and downs fascinating, triggering the audience's emotional resonance, such as Fei Mu's director of the "Spring in a Small Town", focusing on a small number of characters emotions, but also sideways to show the then current era background, the use of poetic methods to embody a sense of identity of the times, and how to make the audience How to let the audience always resonate with the characters in the movie within an hour-long length, in addition to the technical expression techniques such as lenses and music mentioned above, it also needs a sense of the era's identity of the story's kernel, and at this level, we have to mention director Jia Zhangke's movie, "the era is the main theme of his movie", which is precisely the reason why he can still attract the audience to immerse themselves into watching the movie even under the performance of the direct narration. This is precisely the reason why his movies can still attract the audience to immerse themselves in them despite their straightforward presentation. Movies are not only a way of entertainment, but also bear many responsibilities, and gathering the voices of the public is also one of the important roles of movies. By giving full play to the image characteristics and dissemination ability of movies, and by giving the audience a sense of identity with the times, excellent movies with Chinese characteristics and oriental aesthetics can be created.

Conclusion

Under the influence of Chinese thought, the poem movie integrates beauty, goodness and truth, and has the function of aesthetic inculcation without any sound. Under the development of the current impetuous movie market, whether Chinese movies can stop the fast-food output and refine more Chinese poem movies similar to the Jiangnan theme movies, so that the Chinese characteristics of the art of movies can shine in the course of the development of the movie, this is what the Chinese movies need, and even more, it is what the times need. This is what Chinese movies need and what the times need.

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