Vol.1 No.11 2020
https://doi.org/10.37420/j.cer.2020.109

Communication in the Antagonistic Space—Aesthetic Analysis of the Ending Song of *The Wild Goose Lake*

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Abstract: *Bengawan Solo which is the ending song of The film Wild Goose Lake creates an absurd and pure emotional utopia and also constructed a superego existence world of a character of Zhou Zenong. This song sublimates a sad story about nobody into a meaningful social emotional structure and creates communication between antagonistic spaces such as Above/below ground and edge/center. This song also shows the way of the marginal groups in society in China fighting against their fate and this way has a special aesthetic significance.*

Keywords: *Wild Goose Lake; Sound-picture relationship; Film music research*

Introduction

Wild Goose Lake is the only Chinese film to be nominated for the main competition unit at Cannes Film Festival in 2019 which continuing director Diao Yinan's usual style of combining crime, black and love. The story in *Wild Goose Lake* happened 10 years ago took place in an villages within cities in Wuhan. The hero who is Zhou Zenong (Hu) was the leader of a gang that stolen cars and he ran away after having mistakenly killed a policeman. After the police issued a 300,000 reward for Zhou Zenong, he made a fantastic decision, hoping that his wife would report him and get the reward.

Bengawan Solo: Created an Absurd and Pure Emotional Utopia

> *The beautiful Solo River/I sing for you/Your glorious history/I remember it forever/Your source comes from Solo/mountains send you all the way/Rolling waves flow away/all the way to the sea...*

The above lyrics are part of the *Bengawan Solo* which is the ending song of *Wild Goose Lake* (2019) directed by a Chinese film director Diao Yinan. This song is a popular Indonesian folk song. Lyrics suggests Zhou Zenong's fugitive trip to the south. Especially in the beginning of this song, the low cappella soothing melodies sang by Huge sounds like the self-talking from Zhou Zenong to his hearts which forms a vertical audio-visual contrast to violence throughout the full film and constructs an unique emotional utopia which successfully represents features of marginal groups in society in China in recent years such as the chaos of life and absurd emotions. This song played a positive and unique role in the film and has a special aesthetic significance.

The whole film is full of violent scenes but the ending song is so pure and quite. This deliberate 'absurdity' is a metaphor for the emotional world of China's underclass cities represented by *Wild Goose Lake* (village in the city) , Zhou Zedong not only shoot the police, but also is full of warmth and kindness towards a strange local hooker (emphasized as 'pei yong nü', a girl who accompanies her client swimming in the titular lake) .Zhou Zenong fled as hard as he could, but he did not have the nervous emotion of being chased and killed. On the contrary, he was more calm than the police. Zhou Zedong did not lie as a murderer but the police Liu squad with all kinds of means to deceive Zhou Zedong's wife Yang Shujun. These scenes around Zhou Zainong provide the audience with a variety of unique and complex experiences of urban absurdity and create an emotional utopia that is both absurd and fresh, thus becoming a unique perspective for us to understand the complicated situation about current urban in China.

Bengawan Solo: Constructed a Superego Existence World of a Character of Zhou Zenong

The montage in the end of the film will inspires Zhou Zenong's romantic emotion which was depressed for a long time and shows his tender which makes it hard for the audience to simply evaluate whether Zhou Zenong is good or bad. From the perspective of the police, Zhou Zenong spent years in jail and had no commitment to home but in the end it turned out that he had a superior extreme sense of family responsibility which made him do not hesitate to be shot dead actively and let his wife won the reward. From the point of view of Liu Aiai, Yang Shujun and the small thugs who followed Zhou Zenong, he was the leader of a gang of thieves who hid in the dark basement all day, but they also thought he was righteous and worth sincere. They loved him and depended on him. In the end of the film, when the *Bengawan Solo* rings, as if in represents the image of Zhou Zenong see a part of the light. The courage hidden in the song and a firm heart that never never lost constructed a superego existence world of a character of Zhou Zenong. This song promotes Zhou Zenong from the dark shadow slowly walked into the light and calmly waiting to meet with his superego and meet with people who love each other. However, we can think that the hand of death pushed Zhou Zainong to the highlight of his life. As director Diao Yinan said, He finally gets a death as good as life. At the moment of Zhou Zenong was captured, he really realized his values to his wife and children which mean both economic and emotional security. In the brave way of abandoning himself, Zhou Zenong regained the trust and respect of his wife and his companion Liu Aiai. In the process of self-redemption, he also completed the redemption of his wife and his companion, allowing them to restore their trust in human nature and go back to the jungle to live.

Bengawan Solo: Sublimate a Sad Story about Nobody into a Meaningful Social Emotional Structure

The montage at the end of the film transforms a redemptive story about nobody into a meaningful social emotional structure. Compared to the noise of the full film, Huge's low voice at the beginning calm down the audience who was very nervous because of long time watching cruel fight and interruption of Latin music creates a relaxed and happy atmosphere and finally calm. This song guide the audience understand the personal tragedy of Zhou Zenong step by step and transfer to thinking about the way that marginal groups in society in China fighting against their fate which suggests that people have absurd lifestyle in the present in

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a society of the complex chaos. Predictably, many black violent films can be simple repeated or paraphrased because implied a lot of black and white value judgment and their objectivity is stronger. However, because of the *Bengawan Solo*, complex emotions structure in black like this drama got better rendering and expression. The montage of the song which makes the aesthetic effect completely different. This is not only a simple trick that turn video stylized, it also has profound social significance, or we can say the beautiful melodious give black theme a special aesthetic significance and sublimate a sad story about nobody into a meaningful social emotional structure, otherwise it is just some bloody violence fragments. After the ending song, *Wild Goose Lake* is no longer a story about a thief shot by police so his family members can get reward, but a utopia made for marginal groups in society in China can always cringed emotional lives. In philosophical sense, the audio-visual montage which beautify chaos in reality and absurd and sublimate them to the realm of utopia is a place that was lit by the light of human nature, and there, even a thief from marginal groups in society shines with the brilliance of the human nature.

It is interesting that such a tragic story is strongly likes to have a happy ending because of the ending song and no one thinks it is a hard-pressed happy ending. I believe this is one of the 'absurd' and 'novel' experiences for many audiences. How can a violent film have a calm, peaceful and even refreshing ending?

In terms of aesthetics and artistic creation, the ending of the film is handled very successfully and the whole meaning of the film is finally presented in such a way that it is very complex and profound. Even for the marginal person in the society, they still have noble acts of expressing some kind of love by sacrificing themselves. Zhou Zenong has a strong ability of anti reconnaissance and familiar with the terrain, so in a sense, he is intentionally caught and to be killed, so we think that the *Bengawan Solo* is a new kind of the end or the end of the performance that the director tried to present a willing of life experience similar to 'Lamentations of joy' which shows director's unique wisdom.

Conclusion

Film likes prism and with the aid of prism, we can see the nature of the society which is a dark wild goose lake and the other one is a pure and fresh wild goose lake with human nature of good constructing a superego existence world of a character of Zhou Zenong and sublimates a sad story about nobody into a meaningful social emotional structure causing the audience's compassion. This film put the tragedy life of nobody as the art performance object directly and achieve the the communication between antagonistic spaces such as above/below ground and edge/center. It represents high emotional utopia full of turmoil and uncertainty. The world full of turmoil and uncertainty was presented.

In short, *Wild Goose Lake* likes a song of a wild swan and the director tried to use it to go across the edge of violence to show the precious actions of nobody in the current Chinese, as well as their moral judgments and dream. This film effectively change the reality of people's emotional structure and it is a contemporary form of tragedy of humanism.

Funding

This paper was supported by the Key Project of Philosophy and Social Science Research in Colleges and Universities in Jiangsu Province: "Aesthetic Research of Film Music in the 70 Years of New China" [No. 2019SJZDA124].

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