Research on the Presentation and Action Mechanism of Reverse Narrative—Taking "Andhadhun" as an example

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Abstract: This paper takes the Indian movie "Andhadhun" as an example to point out that the reverse narrative is presented through the information difference between the subjective perspective and the objective perspective and the reversal of the plot. Summarize the operating mechanism of the reverse narrative, and further lead to the reverse aesthetic value from the shaping of the round characters in the film and the critical thinking of human nature.

Keywords: reverse narrative, schema, Andhadhun

1.Introduction

The satisfaction of curiosity is an inner psychology of the audience in appreciating movies. The audience not only expects to obtain the satisfaction of psychological curiosity through the foreign space in the movie and the characters whose lives are different from their own, but also to get the satisfaction from the plot of the movie. This kind of satisfaction, and the satisfaction from curiosity at the plot level far exceeds the satisfaction from space. This determines that all narrative forms, including movies, will continue to innovate narrative methods around the satisfaction of the receiver's curiosity. As the development of film genres becomes more and more mature, how to present audiences with unfamiliar plots in the framework of genre narratives, and then satisfy the curiosity of audiences has become the direction of film narrative exploration. Among all narrative methods and techniques, reversal is likely to bring a strong emotional impact to the audience because of its breaking of the audience's existing cognitive schema, ending, and reversal of the plot, and it is also easy to bring the audience a "reasonable feeling". The climax experience of "in the middle, unexpected" is not only widely used in film narrative, but also has received extensive attention from scholars.

1.1 Research objectives

This article will take the movie "Andhadhun" as the main analysis object. Through the analysis of this movie, I hope to answer three questions. First, how is the reversal presented through audio-visual language and plot? Second, what is the aesthetic value and psychological mechanism of reversal? Third, what is the operating mechanism of the reversal? In the end, the purpose of two levels is achieved. From the theoretical level, the narrative technique of reversal is systematically sorted out, and from the practical level, it provides reference

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and reference for the creation of works.

1.2. The Subject Of The Study

This article will focus on the reversal in the film narrative, by comparing the difference between turning, sudden turning and reversal, analyzing the internal relationship between reversal and suspense, and completing the systematic sorting out of reversal narrative. The research on reversal is very extensive, and the more generally accepted discourse on reversal comes from Aristotle's discussion on "sudden turn". Aristotle pointed out in "Poetics": "The structure of tragedy is the most important. Among the structures, the sudden turn is the most critical." "Sudden turn refers to the change of the situation in the opposite direction... It happens according to the law of probability and necessity." Although the word used here is sudden turn, but from the perspective of related interpretations, in Aristotle, reversal and sudden turn are consistent. Since modern times, there have been many discussions about reversal.

Although there are not many papers on reversal research in China, and there are only 45 articles related to drama, film and television studies, these papers cover many aspects. The formation process and aesthetic psychology of the book were analyzed from the perspective of Western narratology, and "The Internal Logic and Aesthetic Features of Reversal Structure in Korean and Japanese Suspense Films" analyzed the internal operation logic and external The aesthetic characteristics are explained, and "Research on Korean Reversal Dramas from the Perspective of Postmodernism" takes Korean Reversal Dramas as the research object and analyzes the reversal.

In English literature, "Inviting a Scandalous look: Detecting the fabulous Promoted by the twist film" first sorts out the history of the application of reversal in film narrative, and second points out the role of details in the construction of reversal. "Puzzle films: Complex Storytelling in Contemporary Cinema" analyzes the inversions in puzzle films, emphasizing that for puzzle films, the aesthetic experience that inversion brings to viewers is as important as the film's presentation of hidden details . And Roland Barthes discussed the value of reversal in the book "S/Z". He said that when the audience is deceived by the reversal, they can create a short-term enjoyment, and in the production of this enjoyment, the audience's Active participation and psychological construction played an important role.

1.3 Research Object

This paper takes the Indian film "Andhadhun" as the research object. This film adapted from a French short film not only successfully uses the narrative technique of reversal, but more importantly, the use of reversal fits well with the plot and characters. It is said that although there is a reversal, its presentation process is natural and smooth, without traces of artificial carving, which represents a high level of reverse narrative application. In addition, reversal is the main narrative technique in this work, and suspense is less used, and the narrative method is relatively single. Because the interference of suspense is excluded, the analysis of reversal can be more concentrated. , South Korea, Australia, Russia, the United Kingdom and other countries, with a cumulative box office of 170,000 US dollars in South Korea, 47 million US dollars in China, and 13 million US dollars in India.

1.4 Research Methods

This thesis mainly adopts two analysis methods, one is the literature research method based on the existing literature, from the perspective of psychology, narratology, film studies, etc., and the other is the case analysis method based on the work "Tuner".

2.Reverse Narrative Presentation

2.1 Angle Switch

Although Genet used the word "focus" in "Narrative Discourse" to express the degree of limitation of narrative information, and based on this, he divided focus into three forms: zero focus, internal narrative focus and external focus. However, from the perspective of narratology, narratology focuses on exploring the laws of objective existence within the story, and does not pay attention to the interaction between the audience and the work. Therefore, the focus of narratology is used to describe the presentation of the reversal, especially the description of the audience and the work. relationship is not particularly appropriate. On the contrary, the subjective perspective and objective perspective commonly used in film and television studies emphasize the relationship between the viewing object and the watched object, especially the information difference between the audience and the participants of the event, which can more powerfully explain the presentation of reversal , so this article takes "Andhadhun" as an example, and uses the concept of subjective perspective and objective perspective to explain how the reversal is presented through the change of perspective in audio-visual language.

Subjective perspective, generally speaking, is the perspective of the participants and parties involved in the plot. Compared with the information seen by the audience, the information obtained from the subjective perspective is incomplete; the objective perspective, also known as the omniscient perspective, often represents the perspective of the audience. The amount of information obtained from this perspective is far greater than the information obtained by the parties. The information gap between the two, that is, the information hidden from the parties but presented to the audience, is precisely the important content of the reversal. Therefore, we can think that the inverted audio-visual presentation is inseparable from the switching of subjective and objective perspectives in the movie.

Taking "Andhadhun" as an example, the process of the pianist taking off the contact lens is presented from an objective perspective, which means that the audience can know the fact that the blind man is fake, but the audience (in the movie) Characters) do not know that this process actually constitutes the "discovery" mentioned by Aristotle. It is precisely because of the "discovery" of the audience that the subsequent reversal has the power to shock people. At the end of the movie, the scene where the protagonist uses a cane to accurately sweep away the cans on the ground is omniscient to the audience and is presented from an objective perspective. This information is different from what Sophie saw through her perspective. On the contrary, for Sophie, the hero is a victim and is still kind; but for the audience, this action exposes all his lies. From this, we can see that the information gap formed by the objective perspective and the subjective perspective is necessary for the inverted visual presentation.

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2.2 Reversal Of The Plot

As mentioned above, Aristotle’s affirmation of the reversal is based on the structure and explained from the perspective of the plot. In fact, the essence of the reversal is the change of the plot in the opposite direction. Reversal is a story structure method in which the plot changes from one situation to the opposite situation, and the character's identity or fate changes in the opposite direction. Therefore, the switching of perspectives only constitutes the superficial layer of the reversal, and the essential presentation of the reversal still depends on the plot.

It should be noted that the film "Andhadhun" uses reversals more than Hitchcock's reversals in his suspense films. In the early practice of reversals, reversals exist not only in single-line narratives , is more concentratedly reflected in the reversal of the ending. In other words, there is only one reversal in the plot, and the so-called climax brought about by the reversal is only once. However, with the development of film narratives, in addition to using reversals to organize the plot in multi-line narratives, "Andhadhun" presents the main form of multiple plot reversals in multi-line narratives. In terms of small reversals, there are many reversals in the whole movie. Some viewers said that there are 55 places, such as who is the real culprit who killed the great singer. Eat the poisoned cake and become a real blind person, etc., but the main points that are closely related to the expression of the protagonist's humanity are concentrated in the following three places:

At the beginning of the film, when the audience praised the hero's superb skills, and later learned that he was a fake blind man, there was a reversal; growth; when the hero met the girl Sophie, everyone thought that the hero would become a good person because of love, but the hero did not change as the audience expected, which constituted the second reversal; and at the end, the hero passed When his own narration makes the audience mistakenly think that he has become a victim and sympathizes, the fact that he is not blind is used at the end of the film to imply his selfishness and despicability.

3. How reverse narratives work

German philosopher, esthetician Kant and psychologist Piaget's theory of "schema" and German acceptance aesthetics representative Jauss's related theory of "expectation horizon" can effectively explain the operation mechanism of this narrative technique of inversion . Kant believes that: "Before human experience, the human mind has been equipped with various transcendental categories and schemas". In Aristotle’s view, schema is inherent in human beings and has nothing to do with the external world; Piaget used the concept of schema to give a more reasonable explanation of “schema” from the perspective of psychology He believes that a schema is an understanding of external things formed in a person's mind based on existing knowledge and experience. holistic cognition. The horizon of expectation refers to the recipient’s potential directional psychological structure schema about the form and content of the artwork, which is comprehensively transformed from the recipient’s previous life experience, aesthetic experience, knowledge, literary accomplishment, and appreciation taste. The reverse operation, in essence, is to establish a schema to meet the audience's expectation horizon, and then subvert the audience's existing cognitive schema, and go beyond the process of establishing the audience's expectation horizon. Next, the article specifically discusses the establishment of the reversal mechanism in conjunction with a reversal in "Andhadhun".

3.1 Establish a Schema

After the metaphor about the rabbit at the beginning of the film, a scene of the protagonist playing the piano is presented. In this scene, every action of the protagonist is trying to convince the audience that he is a blind man. From the beginning of the work, many actions of the protagonist in a scene, combined with the audience's existing cognition about the blind in their daily life, let the audience establish a schema in their hearts: the protagonist is a blind person.

3.2 Strengthen The Schema

In the many scenes that follow, whether it is going down the stairs, using a cane, being given alms by others, walking on the road, going to Sufi's house to play the piano, each scene reinforces the fact that the protagonist is blind. Every detail here is a positive reinforcement of the audience's existing knowledge and a positive construction of the existing schema, that is, the protagonist is really a blind person.

3.3 Breaking of the schema

Until the 17th minute of the movie, when the protagonist takes off his contact lenses and looks at the mirror in front of him, the audience's existing schema is broken by the protagonist's action, and the audience's vision of expectation is also surpassed. The protagonist is not blind, and the schema that he is a normal person is established.

For the audience, in the process of establishing and breaking the schema, what they get is not a sense of being deceived, but the pleasure of obtaining new information and the pleasure of breaking the existing schema. This pleasure can be used in psychology Maslow's theory about "peak experience" to explain. Peak experience is a kind of "feeling a trembling, euphoric, satisfying, and transcendent emotional experience from the depths of the soul". The audience's sense of wonder at the moment of knowing that the protagonist is not blind is the main source of this peak experience. Although the process of establishing reversals depends on the plot, when multiple reversals are presented continuously in this movie, you will find that it is the human nature outside the plot that promotes the establishment of each reversal, which not only provides logical The consistency of rationality and human nature provides various inversions with a kind of interpretability from character and logic, and rationality is the foundation for inversions to be established. On this basis, the mechanism of inversion about establishing schema, strengthening schema, and breaking schema can be established, otherwise inversion becomes inversion for inversion's sake and loses the value of existence.

4. Reverse Narrative Aesthetics

4.1 Round Figures Presentation

For any movie, whether it is audio-visual language or plot, it is never the core of a movie's storytelling. For movies, the way the story is presented is not the purpose, and the presentation of the characters is the center of the story. The reason why a movie becomes a classic is often because the movie presents vivid characters

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through the development of the plot. As far as character creation is concerned, the British novelist Forster's discussion on round characters and flat characters in "Aspects of Fiction" is widely known. "Flat characters are created according to a simple idea or characteristic". So flat The character of the characters is often single and lacks variety; while "a round character must give people a sense of freshness and be convincing". which means that the personalities of round characters are often changeable, containing more contradictions and inner tensions. From the practice of film and television creation, there is no distinction between flat characters and round characters. Taking American western films and most commercial films as examples, flat characters like "Transformers" constitute the main body of these types of movies. Good people That is, a good person has no bad elements; a bad person is a bad person, and there is no good element. The advantage of this is that the audience can watch the stories presented on the screen in a relatively relaxed mood without psychological burden. Pleasure comes from each carefully moving scene. The round characters often represent a kind of change, a kind of struggle from the inner part of human nature. Like "Schindler's List", it often presents a kind of complexity of character and the change of characters from bad to good. In this situation, the aesthetic enjoyment that the audience gets comes from the soul rather than visual stimulation.

However, the presentation of round characters in reverse movies has its own uniqueness. For a movie like "Schindler's List", although the characters' personalities are presented in many ways, generally speaking, they show a one-way change from bad to good. Although this process is tortuous, it is often not too much There are many repetitions, and the shaping of the characters mainly comes from the emotional conflicts in the protagonist's heart. The audience is only a bystander in this process, admiring the process of the characters changing from bad to good. The inversion presents another path and direction of round figure creation.

Take "Andhadhun" as an example. The charm of this movie comes from the uncertainty of the protagonist's character. Throughout the plot, the audience has been answering a question, whether the protagonist is a good person or a bad person, kind or selfish ; He established his point of view again and again, and was shattered by the reversal of the plot again and again. The charm of reversal is also presented in the repeated smashing and reconstruction.

At the beginning of the movie, the audience knows that the protagonist is pretending to be blind. At this time, the protagonist cannot be called a bad person. He just hopes that the identity of a blind person will bring him special treatment. In the murder incident, although the protagonist saw the killing process, he pretended not to know However, when he went to the police station to call the police, the audience thought that the protagonist was still kind; when he became a real blind person, Sophie's mistrust caused the neighbors The boy’s bullying turned him into a pitiful person; in the process of continuous self-help, his evilness was revealed step by step, until the fact that his eyes recovered at the end let the audience know that he was not as kind as imagined. It can be said that this movie has been presenting the different personalities of the protagonist through reversals, and the coexistence of truth and falsehood gives the audience room to think, and at the same time, the audience also participates in the process of shaping the character. If the round character in the popcorn movie is a one-dimensional development process from evil to good, then this movie with reversal as the main narrative technique makes the round character more like a prism, which can be seen in the film Different processes see different aspects of a character's personality.

4.2 Reflection on Human Nature

The reason why "Tuner" is popular in China is not because he adopts a reverse narrative technique, nor is it because it creates a multi-faceted character image. Its greatest aesthetic value is that through the change of the protagonist, it shows a The influence of society on people shows the criticism of the evil of human nature through a movie. By reversing the narrative, the director can not only make the plot of the whole film more fascinating, make the audience pay more attention to some details in the film, but also make it easier for the audience to think deeply about the theme of the film after watching the film, resulting in a different view of the film Effect. "Andhadhun" presents specific themes and ideas through the plot through reversal, which is the key to this movie's attention and affirmation.

It can be seen that at the beginning stage, the protagonist is just a person who is greedy for petty gains, and furthermore, he is a selfish person. Whether it is his concealment of the murder or his avoidance of the police chief, the protagonist is always a person who protects himself. without the intention of hurting others. However, everything changed after he became truly blind. His neighbor's children bullied him because he was blind. The doctor saw that the protagonist was blind and instead of actively treating him, he wanted to take his organs. The taxi driver betrayed him on the road. It can be said that it was because of the neighbors. The evil of human nature presented by the child, doctor, taxi driver, etc. after he became blind gradually drove away the only remaining kindness in the protagonist. In other words, the film uses the process of a blind person from false blindness to true blindness, and then back to false blindness to present a society's harm to a person.

5.Conclusion

Reversal as a narrative technique, from the original ending reversal to the current multiple reversals, from the reversal in a single line to the reversal in a multi-line narrative, the driving force for its continuous development comes from the audience. As the audience continues to mature, it will also become an existing cognitive structure in the audience's heart, and the audience will also establish a schema and expectation horizon about the reversal. The process of satisfying the expectations and expectations also necessarily involves the breaking of the old schema and the transcendence of the expectations. Only in this way can a certain movie gain aesthetic surprise and peak because the transcending audience has already recognized it. Experience, in this sense, although reversal as a narrative technique has a fixed operating mechanism, when it is combined with a specific plot, it will present thousands of gestures, and this difference and uncertainty are also The source of the film's fascination.

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