The Artistic Features of Indian Films*-Taking “3 Idiots” as an Example

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Abstract. As one of the masterpieces of Indian movies, “3 Idiots” uses its unique comedic art to point out social problems and reflect critical thinking from the outside to the inside. At the same time, it repeatedly uses story conflicts to strengthen the expression of the film’s core ideas. The plot combines a high-level singing and dancing art form with regional characteristics through a two-line narrative structure of time and space. The connotation and expression of the film complement each other, strengthen the viewing experience, and deepen the social and aesthetic value of the film.

1 Introduction

“3 Idiots” tells the wonderful story of the protagonist Ranchoddas and his two friends Raju and Farhan bravely challenging the school’s old-fashioned teaching system, demonstrating their wisdom and characteristics, and defining their own life. Since its release in 2009, the film has successively won 16 awards including Best Picture, Best Director, Best Supporting Actor, and Best Screenplay at the Bombay Expo Awards. It can be said to be the classic peak of modern Indian cinema in recent years.

Figure 1: Exaggerated performance

2 The Spirit of the Movie

Most of the Indian movies are based on the society, with a strong atmosphere of life. While they give the audience a strong visual experience, they do not forget to convey the hidden thoughts and spiritual connotations to the audience. As a comedy, the film is full of humorous elements. The seemingly absurd dialogues in the film are filled with huge spiritual treasures. This is similar to the poetry of writers and the works of artists. It guides the audience to comment. To interpret the connotation. The connotation of movies often has profound criticism and reflection on society, but it is always full of positive force.

2.1 Social Criticism under the Surface of Comedy

With humorous plots, language, and exaggerated action performances, the film uses humorous techniques to create plot conflicts, point out social issues, and trigger audiences to think. Movies often use the simple actions of the characters to express their opinions, the so-called “smile and cry” during watching the movie. (Figure 1)

The education system in India is a social issue pointed out in most of the film. To discuss the educational pain points touched by this movie, there is a character that cannot be avoided, that is, the dean of the Polytechnic Institute who is known as the “virus”. This is a very rigorous and rigid character. There is a wonderful plot in the movie that reflects the conflict of ideas between the protagonist and the director.

The protagonist was asked by the professor during class: What is a mechanical device? Ranchoddas introduced the mechanical device in an easy-to-understand sentence: the mechanical device is the one that saves effort. Ranchoddas also drew up and down the zipper to show how the machine was effortless. The professor was furious and threw the chalk head directly at Ranchoddas. On the contrary, the student Chatur stood up and recited the complex definition of mechanical devices in the book verbatim, but won the professor’s heartfelt praise. The professor drove Rancher out of the classroom. After Ranchoddas walked out of the classroom and turned back soon, the professor asked him what he wanted to do.

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Ranchoddas said he wanted to take something, and the professor asked him what to take. Ranchoddas used one or two hundred words of description to express what he wanted to take. When the professor heard this, he was confused and asked what he wanted to take? Ranchoddas said: Books.

This story makes people laugh and seems absurd, but this story exposes some obvious social problems. The film does not directly point out the theme of “the purpose of education”, but instead comics and artisticizes the conflict between the characters, so that the audience can find social contradictions in the laughter and reflect on social problems.

2.2 Deepening Themes

The film demonstrates the core point through one case after another. The protagonist Ranchoddas uses his own behavior all the time to show his freedom, shining with the brilliance of human nature, and from this, he expresses the theme of the film—independence and freedom.

In the film, Ranchoddas was dragged into the classroom by the principal and asked him to demonstrate how to teach. He asked everyone to look for two non-existent nouns in the materials, but of course they couldn't find them. Later, Ranchoddas said the following: What is the purpose of learning? Is it scores, certificates, scholarships? Affirmation and envy of others? Perhaps it is, but when the motivation to do something is externalized into material affirmation and the evaluation of others, we lose our original intention to do it. (Figure 2)

Figure 2: Stills: Different Views on Education

The theme of the film is expressed with the protagonist's words: learning is originally derived from people's exploration and curiosity of the external world, but also to achieve their own improvement and perfection. The last three protagonists in the movie all developed and struggled in their favorite careers, and all made their own achievements. The movie is like this, repeating a stack of small plots, repeating the movie's viewpoints from

multiple angles and accumulating arguments. And stimulate thinking.

3 The Art of the Film

The connotation of the film is expressed through shooting techniques. The artistic technique in Indian movies has a unique personality. In this film, the two-line narrative structure of time and space brings a rich plot to the film. With the development of the plot, the musical art of the film stimulates the audience's thinking, and at the same time feeds back the plot, which further promotes the development of the plot. The unique singing and dancing forms of Indian movies balance the excitement of the plot to the audience. The final happy ending made the film's regional style.

3.1 The Two-line Narrative Structure of Time and Space Enriches the Plot of the Movie

Movies are the art of time, composed of space-time movements expressed through hundreds of shots. One of the special expression methods and important characteristics of the film is the space-time design. As a typical time-space two-line film, this film flexibly manages the length and breadth of time and space, laying a solid foundation for the necessary artistic rendering, and the film time and space are changeable and the film structure is rich. The space-time design of the film adopts a mode that combines reality and memory. One is the reality line, the other is the memory line, and the two lines are told at the same time, switching flexibly.

The total length of the film is about 160 minutes. The first 10 minutes is the introduction, which is the reality line. At 20 minutes, things started to flash back, and until 80 minutes, the main content was reminiscing about college time. 80-90 minutes jumped back to the reality line, 90-150 minutes into the memory, and the last 10 minutes returned to reality. In the memory line, the film is a typical youth movie. Love, friendship, school work, and work have awakened countless people's youthful memories. In the film, the linear narrative that the audience has been accustomed to is combined with the artistic non-linear narrative. The plot changes and rhythm are relatively stable, the structure and content are processed maturely, the transition of the two-line paragraphs is very smooth, and the viewing experience is excellent.

In the process of time-space conversion, the film adopts the expression technique of compressing time and jumping space: the three people cross-edit the two time periods of reality and memory from the past to the present, and use the transition of time to jump from one clue to another. Every paragraph in the film uses photos as a transition point to clearly explain the plot. At the end of the story recalled by the character, the film will use a photo to freeze the frame to represent the end of a story, discarding redundant words and content, and the form is simple and clear. The time-space compressed jump link not only saves space, but also enriches the artistic effect, renders the atmosphere, and strengthens the rhythm. (Figure 3). As a comedy, the film has no clues that make

the audience difficult to understand, and the jump of space and time is not abrupt and monotonous. Suspense and foreshadowing are also unfolded one by one with the development of the story. The whole film has a smooth plot and novel and changeable framework.

Figure 3: Graduation photo

3.2 Musical Art Promotes Plot Development

As an indispensable element in a film and an important means of conveying the soul of a film, music art can not only promote the development of the plot, but also reveal the theme and connotation value of the film, render the overall atmosphere, and enrich the lens information.

In this film, music relies on its own characteristics to feed back the picture, further rendering the atmosphere of the picture. At the beginning of the film, a background music sounded on Raju and the others looking for Ranchoddas. The scene of a group of people running along the winding mountain highway continued for three full minutes with music. The winding roads are accompanied by long-sounding music, all signs suggest the ruggedness of the road. In addition, Ranchoddas's character traits are expressed through lyrics. The lyrics of "He is as free as the wind" is warm and full of power, which not only hints at Rancher's character, but also renders a mysterious atmosphere.

In its essence, music is the least good at concrete expression, but it can highly generalize the inner psychological changes and subtle and rich emotional states of the characters. In the second half of the film, Raju was forced to commit suicide by jumping off the building. Ranchoddas, Farhan and Raju's family and friends worked together to make plans to restore Raju's health. "We won't let you go, we will continue." This lyric appeared in the scene where Raju's friends exhausted their efforts to restore him to health, fully demonstrating the friendship between Raju and his friends.

When film music is matched with different pictures, its inherent characteristics will also change. It can be freely elaborated and exquisitely enlightened the audience, thus illuminating the central idea of the film. There is only one song that runs through all the memories, and that is "Give me some sunshine" sung by Joey (Figure 4). The song was first sung by Joey in the film after his graduation application was rejected. The last appearance was at the graduation ceremony of Ranchoddas and others. Although the music of the two episodes is the same, the connotations expressed are quite different. When Joey sang this song for the first time, the whole environment was dark, only the character's face was illuminated by light, combined with the lyrics "Give me another chance, I want to grow up again", thus showing that Joey wants "Be Myself" but

unable to break free from the shackles of the education system at that time, and then introduced the concept of "crawling education". When the song was played for the second time, the principal of the symbolic "diehard" had already compromised Ranchoddas's innovative ideas. At this time, the theme of the film - "Rationalization of the Education System" is unreservedly expressed through these plots and atmosphere.

Figure 4: Stills: Give Me Some Sunshine

Another function of the music in the film is to connect scattered singing and dancing shots to further promote the development of the plot. For example, when the characters in the film stop the water in the bathhouse, the music suddenly sounds. At this time, the songs begin to directly participate in the development of the plot. The lens of this piece of music uses a large number of oblique composition, which is a metaphor for the unreasonable education system. The lyrics "Little Chickens Will Not Know the Fate of Eggs" use metaphors. The contradictions in the film are reflected in the contrast between the old ideas of most Indian parents and Ranchoddas's innovative ideas, which promotes the in-depth development of the storyline.

3.3 The Form of Singing and Dancing Balances the Mood of the Film

The colorful singing and dancing scenes are the basic characteristics of Indian movies. The dreamlike atmosphere of the film is conveyed through the singing and dancing scenes. (Figure 5) The performance of a large number of singing and dancing, the gorgeous modeling of

the actors, and the atmosphere of singing and dancing make the audience break away from the usual busy and tired life, and feel the relief and relaxation of body and mind.

Figure 5: Bollywood traditional song and dance

Many reporters who interviewed Indian film audiences got the same answer. The busy life has made them tired enough. During the movie watching, the performance of singing and dancing can greatly relieve their psychological pressure.

The plot of “Three Fools in Bollywood” is intertwined, and the film advances the plot development through the artistic expression of beautiful song and dance. Moreover, the plot usually has a huge turn after a period of carnival. The change of the camera stimulates the physiological perception of the audience, and the ups and downs of the plot brings a unique psychological experience to the audience. Song and dance is a special film language in Indian films, combined with film stories, has become one of the important means of film narration. The singing, dancing and the plot in “3 Idiots” are smooth, and this nearly three-hour movie is not dull at all. The audience relaxes themselves in a relaxed environment and inspires thinking.

4 Conclusion

Culture, art, technique-the high reputation and strong vitality of “3 Idiots” is closely related to its unique artistic style and intriguing spiritual connotation. In the iteration of Indian movies, music and dance will never be absent. Because of this, Indian movies have their unique artistic charm. The film is integrated into the local culture of India, in which the artistic expressions and profound spiritual connotations complement each other. The advancement of the plot combined with the two-line narrative of time and

space brings the audience an immersive viewing experience.

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