

“Sister”: Narrative Style and Female Writing

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Abstract: The film “Sister” told us a family story about the relationship between sister and brother. The protagonist is An Ran as a sister in the film. After her parents died in a car accident, she had to bear the obligation of raising her young brother An Ziheng. From the perspective of narration, the film has the typical type characteristics of family ethics film, such as taking emotion as the story core, adopting linear narration and paying attention to the expression of realistic spirit. From the perspective of characterization, the film also has many characteristics in the characterization of female characters, especially the female images of the protagonists An Ran and An Rongrong. Therefore, This paper focuses on narrative style and female writing.

1. Introduction

Narrative works need to be moving us with emotion, and family stories are the key objects of this kind of works. The film “Sister” told us a family story about the relationship between sister and her brother. The protagonist is An Ran as a sister in the film. After her parents died in a car accident, she had to bear the obligation of raising her young brother An Ziheng. By showing a series of emotional stories between siblings, the film shows the their family affection that blood is thicker than water hidden in the story. This paper analyzes the creative characteristics of the film from two aspects: narrative style and female characters' identity writing.

2. Narrative Style of Family Themes

“Sister” is a typical film based on the type and mode of family ethics films. Its type creation characteristics are similar to the creation mode of family ethics drama, and its main characteristics: emotion as the story core, linear narration and paying attention to express the realistic spirit.

First of all, the story core of the film is based on sincere emotion. The construction process of the relationship between sister and her young brother in the film is based on the process from the lack of understanding to the confirmation of emotion. The main reason why An Ran refused or even hated her brother at the beginning of the story, because she lacked of understanding of her brother. After an unhappy relationship, she began to have a good feeling for her brother. Finally, when her brother was adopted, she felt reluctant to give up and resolutely assumed the obligation of raising her brother. Obviously, the emotional change between An Ran and her brother is deepening. That's why she said to her brother, “If I had known you earlier, would I love you more and love myself less?” In other words, An Ran has begun to feel remorse for her initial indifference and refusal to her brother,

and she has fully accepted her brother in her heart. So when she was about to sign her brother's adoption agreement, she no longer thought that her brother was her burden, but her only family in the world. Throughout the film, the creator intends to show many tragic plots for the audience. So the audience can personally experience the sincere feelings between sister and her brother, in order to arouse the emotional experience in their own memory.

Secondly, the narrative structure of the film adopts linear narrative. Linear narration is a drama mode that tells stories in chronological order, emphasizing the integrity of narration. In other words, it is based on a complete narrative line, relying on the drama elements of "Beginning, Development, Climax and Ending". So as to immerse the audience in the plot and achieve an attractive viewing purpose. The film "Sister" begins with the death of sister and brother's parents in a car accident. In this way, the stability of life is broken. And it makes them have to face a new life that they haven't encountered before.

They had to face the death of their parents and the dilemma of whether An Ran chose to raise her young brother alone or give him to others for adoption. The plot of the "Development" section of the story mainly focuses on the process of An Ran looking for a foster family for her brother. This process is obviously also the process of deepening the family relationship between sister and brother. After all, the emotional construction between people can only be achieved in the process of two people getting along. The "Climax" of the subsequent story shows that An Ran's affection for her brother burst out directly when her brother was about to be adopted. She was deeply aware of her emotional dependence on her brother. This emotional experience that blood is thicker than water directly prompted her to resolutely choose to raise her brother alone. Then, the ending of the story is reasonable: An Ran led her brother out of the family that wanted to adopt him. However, compared with the general "Happy Ending", the final ending of "Sister" is relatively open, and the film creator did not clearly explain how to live in the future. But the audiences don't want to know their future life, but just clearly know that they will live together is enough. In addition, the drama mode of linear narration can also give the audience a sense of simplicity, because it continues to develop and extend like life itself. Therefore, compared with nonlinear narrative, linear narrative is more helpful to express emotional stories.

Finally, the film focuses on expressing the spirit of reality. Film works need to convey the spirit of reality. This requires the creator to dare to face the real life and show the context of the times, rather than hiding in the film of ivory tower as a dream space. The story of "Sister" is directly inspired by the "Two-child Policy". Since 2015, China has fully implemented the "Two-child Policy", resulting in a significant increase in the "two-child" fertility rate. From the perspective of realistic spirit, the "Two-child Policy" is not only a family planning policy, but also involves the spiritual level of relevant parties. Among these "stakeholders", the brother or sister of the "two-child" is undoubtedly the most mentally affected. They were originally only child and had the character characteristics and cognitive concept of being only child. When a younger brother or sister who seems to be the emotional "competitor" of paternal love in the family members. They often have mental anxiety, and they have no ability to change the environment, but could only change themselves. The sister An Ran in the film is like this. She needs to re recognize her brother. In addition, the accident of An Ran's parents in the story is due to the drunk driving of the truck driver. Furthermore, the creator put the problem of "drunk driving" on the film screen, so that the audience can personally understand the seriousness of the "drunk driving" and the necessity for the state to strictly control "drunk driving". Of course, the social problem of "son preference" is also one of the practical problems that "Sister" wants to express. And I will focus on this problem below.

3. Female Writing under the Elimination of Male Power

American feminist theorist Showalter believes that the research object of feminist literary criticism should include “the psychodynamics of women's creativity; Linguistic features and problems of female language; The development track of women's individual or collective literary career; History of literature; Of course, it also includes the research on specific writers and works “[1]. Furthermore, female writing requires that the subject of creation is women, and the content of creation reflects feminist ideas or shows women's life experience.

From the perspective of the creative subject, You Xiaoying, the screenwriter and Yin Ruoxin, the director of the film “Sister”, are both women. They can express their creative ideas as female, such as female identity and female situation. From the perspective of performance object, the film shows many typical female images for the audience, among which the female images of the sister An Ran and the aunt An Rongrong are the most typical. Due to their growth environment and other reasons, so there are some differences in the characteristics of their images.

An Rongrong is a traditional female image. She works hard and bears the family ethical mission of “elder sister is like mother”. For example, she has to take care of her sick husband in bed, feed and drink a pair of children, and also take care of and raise her brother, niece and nephew. In the film, she is working and running every day. An Ran's character image is different from An Rongrong. She dares to say “No”. When she thought her brother was a burden for her to escape from the small town, she would resolutely shut him out and find someone to adopt him. When her aunt and other relatives persuaded her to raise her brother by herself, she would refuse directly. In addition, she will contradict female doctors regardless of relationship between hospital leaders, and she break up with her cowardly boyfriend. Working in the hospital, she would take the initiative to stop her family from giving birth to a child regardless of the safety of pregnant woman's life. Obviously, she is saying “No” to the patriarchal society with her strength as a woman.

It should be pointed out that the creator weakens and dispels the male image as the “others”, while showing the female image. For example, An Ran's father died in a car accident at the beginning of the story. An Rongrong's husband is a vegetable, and An Ran's boyfriend is a coward. Furthermore, the identity characteristics of female characters often have the tendency of sublimation, in the case of the elimination of patriarchal discourse. Because they have transformed into a “composite identity” of the intersection of “men” and “women”. In other words, they not only have the inherent feminine side of women, but also have the family mission and growth responsibility after the elimination of male power.

4. Conclusion

In recent years, the number of works of female film directors is increasing. Their film works, such as “The Hurt Locker”, “To the Bone”, “Promising Young Woman” and “Nomadland”, have been loved by the audience and valued by the academic community. With their own femininity, female film directors express their views and feelings on life through specific film works. Their works often focus on shaping women's images and expressing women's feelings at the same time. Therefore, these works will be labeled as “Feminism”. However, female film directors are often troubled by this one-sided concept. They will characterize their film works as a tool to speak for women, which limits their creative quality. On a certain level, the film “Sister” has broken through this creative dilemma. The film no longer blindly emphasizes the feminine side of women, but it tries to explore the noble side of women. Undoubtedly, this creative exploration could provides a creative idea for the subsequent creation of female film directors.

References

[1] Elaine Showalter, “Towards a Feminist Poetics”, in K. M. Newton (ed.), *Twentieth-Century Literary Theory: A Reader*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997, p.216.